

ENCL: NO

DARWIN CITY COUNCIL
REPORT

DATE: 16/03/09

TO: COMMUNITY SERVICES/OPEN A

APPROVED:

FROM: GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITY &
CULTURAL SERVICES

APPROVED: AF

REPORT NO: 09C0047 SD:kl

APPROVED: SD

COMMON NO:

SUBJECT: FREE POOL ENTRY FOR DARWIN CITY COUNCIL STAFF

ITEM NO:

SYNOPSIS:

This report presents information on providing staff with free entry to Council's swimming pools.

GENERAL:

Council currently owns 3 swimming pools located at Parap, Nightcliff and Casuarina which are run by a contractor. Council sets the fees and charges for these pools hence there would be no impact upon the contractor if a discounted fee was offered to Council staff.

Providing free access to Council's pools would provide an excellent opportunity to encourage staff to become active. It can be promoted through Public Relations via the Dragon Flyer and highlighted as a part of the induction package for new staff.

Staff should be encouraged to swim before or after work or during their lunch breaks. Interested staff could form a swimming group at lunch times and arrange a car pool to swim for half an hour.

It is recommended that staff should obtain free access to a pool by presenting their Council photograph identification tag which will prevent cross-usage .

Other Councils and the Northern Territory Government (NTG) have various programs which provide an environment of support and encouragement in the workplace. Many programs offer free or discounted access to swimming pools, gymnasiums and golf, etc. Employees are also encouraged to pursue further study, other leisure activities and voluntary work.

Brisbane City Council (Qld) provides access to an active lifestyle by giving free gym membership and providing shower and change facilities at Council locations for those who ride, run or walk to work.

The City of Tea Tree Gully (SA) provides corporate fitness memberships along with other employee incentives to support a cohesive and flexible working environment.

Cairns Regional Council (Qld) offers a working environment to meet the demands for those who want to achieve a better balance between their work and other priorities including caring for children or elderly parents, gaining further education and qualifications or pursuing leisure or voluntary activities.

Adelaide City Council (SA) offers a work, rest and play program (WRAP) providing 50% discount at the Adelaide Aquatic Centre and the Adelaide Golf Links, half price on various products from the Council's Nursery, discounts at some of Council's UParks, conservation clinic days at the Council's Archives office along with discounts on historical photographs of the City. They also receive free Library and Community Centre membership which enables staff to access an extensive range of books, CD's, DVD's, videos, magazines and audio books. Along with discounts on DELL computers, Antivirus software and special offers through Telstra Mobile.

The Northern Territory Government (NTG) offers incentives for staff including discounted access to gymnasiums to encourage employee participation in an active lifestyle.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Whilst a number of assumptions could be made regarding the financial implications regarding this recommendation, the cost to Council will be minimal and outweighed, in any case, by the positive impact of the initiative on the health and well-being of staff (and therefore productivity), an increased awareness of facilities and a probable increase in staff morale in a difficult global economic context.

Under section 58P of the Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act 1986 (FBTAA) the provision of free pool entry can be defined as a minor benefit as the benefit is not being given as a reward for work completed or to be completed. This definition would stand as long as each staff member who accepts free pool entry does not exceed a benefit of \$300 in any one FBT year (April 1 to March 31) which is unlikely.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS:

The issues addressed in this Report are in accordance with the following Goals/Strategies of the Darwin City Council 2008 – 2012 as outlined in the 'Evolving Darwin Strategic Directions: Towards 2020 and Beyond':-

Goal

2 Enhance Darwin's Active, Positive and Flexible Lifestyle

Outcome

2.4 Increase community facilities

Key Strategies

2.4.1 Provide facilities and programs which encourage healthy lifestyle choices

PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPLICATIONS:

Potential for positive public feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT it be a recommendation to Council:-

- A. THAT Report Number 09c0047 SD:kl entitled Free Pool Entry For Darwin City Council Staff, be received and noted.

SIMONE DRURY
COMMUNITY RECREATION
COORDINATOR

JOHN BANKS
GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITY &
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Any queries on this report may be directed to Simone Drury on 8930 0627