**Swimming Transport Charging Academic Year 2020/21**

**Introduction**

This note explains the intended approach to the charging of swimming transport for the 2020/21 academic year.

Schools and academies will see in the explanation of the approach to charging given below that refund / supplier relief on the standard contract price has come from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and has been fully passed through to reduce the costs that are now required to be recovered from schools and academies.

We appreciate that schools and academies may take the view that they should not be charged when swimming has not taken place / not been permitted due to lockdown. However, there are contractual costs that are required to be met. These costs are present because individual schools and academies have commissioned transport services through the Local Authority for the 2020/21 academic year. Therefore, individual schools and academies have a contractual obligation. These costs are required to be met in the same way that schools that manage their own transport, or commission transport from another provider, have met their commitments from their own budgets.

The spirit and principles of the [Procurement Policy Note 04/20](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0420-recovery-and-transition-from-covid-19) and 02/20 apply here. The DfE’s [expectation on schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-schools/school-funding-exceptional-costs-associated-with-coronavirus-covid-19-for-the-period-march-to-july-2020#expectations-of-schools) also applies, that “Schools will continue to receive their budgets as usual, regardless of any periods of partial or complete closure, and this will ensure they are able to continue to pay for staff and meet their other regular financial commitments, while delivering the provision required during this unprecedented period.” Contracting schools and academies are being required to pay for swimming transport services in 2020/21 to support this service to remain in the future. The WYCA is contractually obliged to pay operators. The alternative to meeting contractual payments would have been / would be to give operators 8 working weeks notice of contract cancellation and then to re-procure services for a future restart date. In addition to operational difficulties (and uncertainties regarding a restart date), in doing this, the WYCA would lose the goodwill of operators and also would likely not retain the currently agreed price in new contract negotiations.

**Approach to Charging for the 2020/21 Academic Year**

Schools and academies are normally charged a single value per session for the full academic year. The value per session in 2019/20 was £2,186. Sessions are divided into ‘period 1’ (between September and February half term) and ‘period 2’ (between February half term and the end of the academic year). This is because the timetable for swimming and transport can change during the year.

Due to the application of refunds / supplier relief, the profiling of charging in 2020/21 is more complicated than normal. The profile of charging for the 2020/21 academic year is as follows:

* September and October 2020 – there is no cost to recover for these 2 months. Swimming transport was cancelled by the WYCA to ensure that sufficient driver and vehicle resources were available on standby to support the wider public transport network. The WYCA therefore, has not charged Bradford Council for this period because the service was not available. This position settled by the end of October and transport services were made available again by WYCA for the beginning of November.
* November and December 2020 – the full monthly contract value is to be recovered for these 2 months. The WYCA is contractually obliged for this period.
* January to March 2021 – 70% of the monthly contract value is to be recovered for these 3 months. Again, the WYCA is contractually obliged to pay operators. A reduced figure of 70% (30% discount) however, has been agreed to be charged to councils in line with what local councils across the region have considered to be acceptable when dealing with supplier relief requests in relation to COVID-19. The 70% will be a rolling arrangement and will continue until such time as swimming transport can restart.
* April to July 2021 – we currently assume in our indicative calculations attached to this note that swimming transport will operate as normal from April. On this basis, the full monthly contract value is assumed to be recovered for the remaining 4 months of the year. However, the reduction to 70% will continue if restart is further delayed during this period.

Following this profile, the charges per session for each period are as follows:

* Period 1 £1,321 (THIS IS A CONFIRMED FIGURE)
* Period 2 £2,115 (THIS IS AN INDICATIVE FIGURE STILL TO BE CONFIRMED)

These costs per session are inclusion of all charges. The spreadsheet attached within this note shows the indicative calculation of charges for each school and academy using the ‘number of sessions’ information that has been provided by Bradford Aquatics.

The period 1 charges are set out on a confirmed basis. Please contact School Funding Team if you have a query on the number of sessions that have been used.

The period 2 charges are INDICATIVE only and are still to be adjusted for:

* Whether the restart of services is delayed beyond 1 April 2021 (and so whether the cost to be recovered reduces to 70% for any of the April to July period).
* The number of sessions to be confirmed with schools and academies. This information will be provided by Bradford Aquatics after February half term. The current indicative calculation uses the same session numbers as used for period 1.

**What Happens Next - When Charges will be Processed**

In previous years, we have processed a single charge for the whole academic year typically in February. However, for 2020/21 we intend to charge schools and academies in 2 tranches.

* Period 1 charges will be processed at the beginning of March. All schools and academies will be charged by invoice.
* Period 2 charges are still to be confirmed and will be processed in late June / early July 2021. We will publish updated final calculations alongside the notification of final charging.

Please contact School Funding Team schoolfundingteam@bradford.gov.uk if you have any queries on this note or on how the charges have been calculated, including any queries on the number of sessions that have been used for period 1 charging.