

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET - 17TH SEPTEMBER 2008

LEISURE AND CULTURAL STRATEGY CONSULTATION

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to implement a consultation process associated with East Ayrshire's draft Leisure and Cultural Strategy.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The draft Leisure and Cultural Strategy is the culmination of a process lasting a number of years as a result of changes to planned legislation. The draft strategy has been developed in partnership with colleagues from various services within the Council and will dovetail with the new corporate service plans and performance management system.

- 2.2 The draft Culture (Scotland) Bill was withdrawn by the Scottish Government and it is envisaged that it will be replaced by the Creative Scotland Bill in due course. The Creative Scotland Bill, which would merge the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen may be reintroduced later in 2008, however, this Bill will not have a direct impact on local authorities and therefore it is proposed that East Ayrshire's draft Leisure and Cultural Strategy can now be subject to consultation with stakeholders.

- 2.3 The consultation draft of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy consists of two parts. The first is a general overview of leisure and culture. It shows why they are important, what drives the services, where leisure can demonstrate partnership working and work towards meeting other targets, such as improving health and lowering crime statistics and lastly sets out the key aims for leisure and culture over the next three years.

The second part contains action plans which are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound), details key delivery partners and shows strategic links with the community plan and other linked plans.

The main content of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy is as follows:

Part 1

- Introduction
- What are Leisure and Culture?
- East Ayrshire Council's Duty to Residents
- Equality

- This is East Ayrshire
- East Ayrshire Council's Leisure and Cultural Services
- Monitoring and Performance

Part 2

- Service Action Plans for-
- Arts and Museums
- Community Recreation
- Dean Castle County Park and Countryside Services
- EA Library, Registration and Information Services
- Leisure Development
- Outdoor Amenities
- Overarching Leisure Action Plan

2.4 The Leisure and Cultural Strategy meets a number of challenges for East Ayrshire Council;

- It is a method of public engagement for Leisure Services – giving the public a better idea of what we do and a means of commenting on how we can meet their needs.
- It brings together all the drivers (such as the Community Plan, the Single Outcome Agreement, key legislation and national strategies) for the sections that make up Leisure Services.
- It sets SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound) targets for the services.
- It works seamlessly with the Corporate Service Plan Template piloted by Leisure and will function with the new performance management system that is to be adopted.

2.5 The Leisure and Cultural Strategy will mirror the review process of the Community Plan. The action plan's performance indicators will be reported on annually and will use the council's performance management system to allow transparency.

3. Leisure and Cultural Strategy Consultation

3.1 The Leisure and Cultural Strategy consultation will adopt a number of methods to obtain views from a wide variety of individuals and groups within the community, online consultation will also be used to minimise costs, offering best value for residents. Focus groups will also be used if there are enough respondents willing to participate. Publishing the draft strategy and seeking views on where value can be added by internal and external stakeholders, will help forge new partnership working initiatives.

3.2 Alongside the Leisure and Cultural Strategy consultation, will be the statutory requirement of consultation on the associated Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3.3 The consultation process will run for a period of six weeks from 1/10/08 until 12/11/08 and will include:

- Web based consultation
 - In PDF format on the council's intranet - for staff consultation and consultation with other departments - and the internet and key stakeholder websites for external consultation.
 - Hard copies available in local offices and leisure outlets
- Consultation with targeted stakeholders
 - Distribution to relevant national and local groups and organisations including Community Planning Forums and the Community Federations
- Residents Panel Consultation
 - Mail out to all members of residents panel with specific consultation questions
- Focus Groups / Drop in Events
 - Specifically focusing on gauging the opinions of non-users

3.4 Following the completion of the process appropriate amendments will be made to reflect the views of respondents and the intention is to submit the final document to Cabinet for approval in December 2008.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific financial implications. However, the Leisure and Cultural Strategy will prioritise work, which may have financial implications. These will be addressed within existing resources and inform the budget setting process.

5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Leisure and Cultural Strategy will demonstrate where Leisure Services meet the obligations and legal duties placed upon them from national strategies and legislation.

5.2 The corresponding Strategic Environmental Assessment that is required by statute will be consulted on at the same time as the Leisure and Cultural Strategy. This assessment will help avoid or mitigate any negative impact on the environment. It has been written in partnership with the Planning and Economic Development Department.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Leisure and Cultural Strategy works to meet the priorities of East Ayrshire's Community Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement. Part one of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy has been peer reviewed by the

Community Planning Partnership Unit during its development. An Integrated Impact assessment will also be carried out to address systematically, the implications for various groups within the community of implementing the strategy.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The Leisure and Cultural Strategy sets out East Ayrshire Council's future direction and priorities for leisure service provision. The Leisure and Cultural Strategy consultation is a way for the public and other stakeholders to engage and inform this provision.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- (i) approve the consultation process associated with the draft Cultural and Leisure Strategy as outlined in 3.3 of this report; and
- (ii) remit to the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services to submit the Leisure and Cultural Strategy to Cabinet for approval following the public consultation period, and
- (iii) otherwise note the contents of the report

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG
10th September 2008

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Leisure and Cultural Strategy

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone 01563 578178 and ask for John Griffiths, Head of Leisure Services.

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