

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2009**

### **EAST AYRSHIRE/SOUTH AYRSHIRE (EASA) QUALITY SCHEME FOR COMMUNITY RECREATION FACILITIES**

#### **Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise members of the progress that has been made on developing a Quality Scheme for the management of Community Recreation facilities.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A quality management system known as Quest is the accepted industry standard for larger leisure centres, however Quest is not ideal for smaller facilities. In an effort to identify a quality management system for smaller facilities, staff from Leisure Services consulted with both Sportscotland and the members of the Leisure Networking Group. This led to Sportscotland engaging PMP Consultants to initiate a pilot scheme to investigate the potential for a more effective quality management scheme for smaller facilities.
- 2.2 The pilot scheme, which involved East Ayrshire facilities was completed, however the costs associated with developing a new version of Quest have proved prohibitive at a national level. The findings of the pilot scheme were made available and as a consequence Leisure Services staff, in partnership with South Ayrshire Council have developed a quality management system, based on EFQM and Quest. The system is known as the East Ayrshire/South Ayrshire (EASA) Quality Scheme and will be administered by staff from both Councils who will carry out site audits and benchmark performance.

#### **3. THE EASA QUALITY SCHEME**

- 3.1 The key objectives of the scheme are to ensure that sports facilities in East and South Ayrshire have a tool that will drive forward service improvements, whilst allowing each authority to benchmark and share best practice in appropriate areas of operation.
- 3.2 East and South Ayrshire have many similarities and this is particularly true of small sports centres, which for the most part, are situated in village settings. East Ayrshire has eight facilities that will be put forward for initial assessment, whilst South Ayrshire will put forward six facilities. The process began in January 2009 and will continue throughout the year until all facilities have been assessed. Thereafter, facilities will be assessed every two years.

- 3.3 The first two audits in each authority's facilities were carried out by two assessors, one from each authority. This will ensure that there is a degree of consistency throughout the process. The individuals nominated by each authority will be designated as chief assessors, and as such, will be tasked with developing the scheme further throughout 2009/2010.
- 3.4 It is expected that the scheme can be adapted to suit the needs of swimming pools and one of the main challenges for chief assessors will be to have an appropriate scheme in place for 2010.
- 3.5 As the scheme develops it is highly likely that the number of assessors will need to increase and therefore it is planned that a further assessor will be trained from each authority to lessen the load at a future date. Future assessors will be required to shadow the two original assessors for a minimum of two assessments with each before they will be considered competent enough to carry out audits on their own.
- 3.6 Service quality schemes require to change and develop to ensure that continuous improvements are made, therefore it is envisaged that criteria within the scheme will change slightly as the scheme progresses.
- 3.7 The scheme will be scored on a percentage basis i.e. the actual score the facility gets will be worked out as a percentage of the maximum potential score of the scheme. To gain accreditation a facility will have to score a minimum of 51%. Thereafter, accreditation will be awarded on a star basis whereby the % score will land the facility in a predetermined star grouping, which is:
- 51 to 60% - One Star
  - 61 to 70% - Two Star
  - 71 to 80% - Three Star
  - 81 to 90% - Four Star
  - 91 to 100% - Five Star
- 3.8 The scheme should encourage the organisation to develop local and area wide action plans that will improve services on an ongoing basis. The scheme offers managers/supervisors a higher degree of autonomy and affords them the opportunity to develop localised improvements that may be unique to the facilities location and the profile of the local community.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The EASA Scheme will be administered by existing staff and any costs will be absorbed by Leisure Services, however additional costs will be minimal. Efforts will be made to secure funding from Sportscotland to help sustain the programme through the initiation and development stages. It is hoped the scheme can be accredited by a quality accreditation body in the future. The alternative method of benchmarking, the Quest Scheme, would have cost the service £2000 per facility every two years.

## **5. LEGAL AUTHORITY / IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Nil

## **6. COMMUNITY PLANNING / POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The EASA Scheme meets the aims of the Improving Health and Improving Community Safety themes of the Community Plan. It will also help meet the Single Outcome Agreement commitment to National Outcome15.

6.2 The implementation of this scheme will allow the section to drive improvements forward and demonstrate a commitment to Best Value.

6.3 The improvements for Community Recreation are included as part of the action plan in the forthcoming Leisure and Cultural Strategy.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The EASA Quality Scheme will assist in managing the risks associated with public safety and delivering budget targets.

## **8. SUMMARY**

8.1 The EASA Quality Scheme offers the authority the opportunity to drive forward improvements, using a quality system tailored to the needs of small community sports/leisure facilities.

8.2 The scheme has the potential to expand as there are many other authorities who manage smaller sports facilities in the same manner as East and South Ayrshire.

8.3 The scheme offers Community Recreation the opportunity to benchmark in a way that would otherwise not be available to the Section at this time.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i. approve the implementation and development of the EASA Quality Scheme,
- ii. remit to the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services to report back on progress with the implementation of the scheme in due course, and
- iii. otherwise note the contents of this report.

William Stafford  
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG/RL 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Quest - Managers Guidance Pack
2. Quality Assurance Scheme for Community Clubs/Centres – Sportscotland
3. EASA Score Card 2

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone 01563 554027 and ask for Ricky Lohel

Implementation Officer – ([john.griffiths@east-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:john.griffiths@east-ayrshire.gov.uk))