

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 28TH MARCH 2007

REALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL MULTI-USE GAMES AREA

Report by the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To review the allocation of a Multi-use Games Area within the community of Darvel following community consultation.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the success of existing Multi-use Games Areas, the Leisure Development Services Section has worked in partnership with Outdoor Services and East Ayrshire Sports Council to develop a network of these facilities across East Ayrshire. These new facilities compliment and extend the range of play facilities being made available through the Council's Playpark Improvement Programme.
- 2.2 Further to Committee approval at Community Services Committee on 8th November 2006, a network of Multi-use Games Areas is currently being developed via a range of external and internal funding allocations. A subsequent report to Community Services Committee on 31st January 2007 approved the allocation of an additional Multi-use Games Area to the community of Darvel. Final implementation, however, was to be subject to a community consultation process.

3. CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Based upon recent Police reports relating to high incidences of youth disorder and alcohol misuse, an area within Morton Park was chosen as the most appropriate site for the facility, in order to provide young people with a positive alternative to antisocial behaviour.
- 3.2 Following consultation with the local Elected Member, information leaflets were prepared and distributed to households within the vicinity of the proposed site. As with all other areas the information leaflets included contact telephone numbers for further details about the initiative. In response to the flier, initially the department received two phone calls and subsequently staff were invited to attend the Community Council meeting on 27th February to further discuss the proposal. Some residents from the Morton Park area were also present at this meeting. In general terms those present were opposed to installing the proposed facility within Morton Park and asked officers to investigate the feasibility of an alternative site at Gavin Hamilton Sports Centre.

- 3.3 Following correspondence with Darvel Community Council an alternative site within the Morton Park at the former putting green was also proposed. Whilst this site would have cost more in terms of lighting, the Department were willing to consider this alternative location.
- 3.4 Several letters in opposition to the site at Morton Park were sent to the Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services together with a survey carried out by a local resident. The survey had been completed by over 30 residents and whilst many respondents were in support of the facility within Darvel, all but one opposed the location within Morton Park. The Gavin Hamilton site was again suggested by many as an appropriate location.
- 3.5 In response to public opinion, sites around the Sports Centre have been investigated. Unfortunately they were deemed to be inappropriate for a number of reasons including impinging on other existing or proposed facilities, drainage issues, planning issues and the decreased potential impact on antisocial behaviour.
- 3.6 To this end it is now felt appropriate to withdraw from Darvel and to allocate the proposed facility to another community. Strathclyde Police have been consulted and have recommended that Crosshouse be the preferred option.
- 3.7 The community of Darvel will continue to receive youth diversion outreach programmes through the StreetSport Express Initiative during the summer months and in response to requests from the Community Police.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no perceived financial implications associated with the reallocation of the proposed facility to another community.

5. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. COMMUNITY PLAN/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The work of New Sporting Futures is completely embedded within East Ayrshire's Community Plan delivering across four of the six themes but with a specific focus on Improving Community Safety. In addition, the project delivers directly upon East Ayrshire's Antisocial Behaviour, Youth Justice and emerging Leisure and Cultural Strategies.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The establishment of a network of community based Multi-use Games Areas clearly demonstrates East Ayrshire's commitment in diverting young people from antisocial behaviour and encourage involvement in sport as a positive and healthy alternative.
- 7.2 The success of such facilities requires the support of the wider community and whilst the overall programme has received strong support across East Ayrshire and on a national basis, it is vital that the views of Darvel residents were considered in determining the implementation within their community.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-
- (i) consider and, if acceptable, approve the reallocation of the facility to Crosshouse; and
 - (ii) otherwise note the content of the report.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

WS/JAG/KK

19th March 2007

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Correspondence from Darvel residents and Community Council
2. Resident survey responses

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone 01563 578179 and ask for John Griffiths, Head of Leisure Services.

Implementation Officer: john.griffiths@east-ayrshire.gov.uk