

## **THE WAY FORWARD FOR ANGUS SPORTS COUNCIL?**

### **Introduction**

Angus Sports Council (ASC) has been in existence since 1986 with the aim of promoting and developing sporting opportunities in Angus. The aim is to act as a co-ordinating link between local sports clubs and leisure providers at local, regional and national levels.

Attendance at ASC meetings has been very low over the past few years and as such the proposal is to look at re-structuring / abolishing the current structure so that we can better meet the needs of local sports clubs and individual facility users by establishing a more locally based alternative.

### **Current Position**

ASC currently has approximately 90 member clubs.

This number of affiliated clubs would appear to suggest that ASC is a strong organisation. However, the majority of these clubs are only affiliated to gain club concession rates within Angus Council leisure facilities and therefore the organisation is not as strong as it would seem.

### **The Way Ahead?**

The proposed way ahead for ASC is to abolish the organisation and for Sports & Countryside Services to establish a structure of Local Sports Forums across Angus. This would mean abolishing the group as it stands at the moment but still engaging clubs and also individual facility users in locally based short meetings.

Forums would take place in the following three areas:

- Forfar / Kirriemuir
- Arbroath / Carnoustie / Monifieth
- Montrose / Brechin

Such forums have been piloted in each of these areas and the attendance was certainly encouraging. With feedback received including:

*"keeping issues local helped make the discussions more relevant to the clubs supporting the forum"*

*"I found the evening more constructive than I first thought it might be"*

*"small groups, in regular meetings help enlighten each other of options available which may not have been considered before"*

*"good format much better than previous committee"*

The forums dealt with local issues for local clubs and facility users. Local Sports Forums give the ideal opportunity for local clubs and facility users to come together and discuss issues that affect them with other clubs, facility users, area managers, facility managers and sports development team members.

By communicating with our customers we hope to improve the service that Angus Council Sports & Countryside Services are providing.

### **Make up and purpose of the Local Sports Forum**

The suggestion would be that Local Sports Forums be as open as possible but should include representation as follows:

- Local Sports Club reps (previously affiliated ASC clubs and also those who were not)
- Local facility users (individuals)
- Facilities Managers (all facility managers in the area)
- Senior Development Officer
- Education / Schools rep for dual use facilities
- Active Schools rep
- Regional Sports Partnership rep
- Volunteer Centre Angus
- Local Councillor

Notes could be taken during the Local Sports Forum meeting but the meeting will be kept as informal as possible and a formal 'committee structure' will be avoided.

We hope that by inviting local clubs and facility users to attend the meeting together the chance is available for people to have their say on issues that may effect them and updates can also be provided to them on a number of topics. Topics that have been suggested are:

- Equipment provision to better improve facilities
- Risk assessment/ Health & Safety
- Input from senior management
- Details of local events that clubs could attend and promote their sport to a local audience
- Updates on legislation and support to comply
- Funding
- Strength & Conditioning
- UKCC
- Club insurance issues (committee & members)
- Volunteering
- Child Protection
- Pathway from participation to performance, including school-club links
- Club Development
- Coach development/ mentoring
- Facility Access
- ACE Awards, NASA, ACCESS
- Facility improvements
- B-Active memberships

If Local Sports Forums are to be provided in each of the areas listed above the proposal would be that the meetings are rotated round each of the facilities in the area, making the need for travel to and from the meetings fair and balanced.

### **When would the Local Sports Forum meet?**

Each area would need to look at the best possible evening for such a forum to meet to encourage as many clubs and facility users as possible to attend. It will be impossible to have the meeting on a night that will please all clubs and users but we would not ask already busy people to attend many meetings per year.

The proposal would be for each Local Sports Forum to only meet 2 times a year (Jan-Jun & Jul-Dec) for a maximum of 1-2 hours per meeting. We do not want to place too much burden on club members who attend more regular committee meetings within their own clubs but would like to open lines of communication with our sports clubs and facility users.

### **What would abolishing current ASC structure mean?**

The right to club concession rate will be maintained by affiliated clubs paying an annual 'club registration fee' to Sports & Countryside Services that would entitle them to this discount. This annual fee would not exceed the current annual ASC affiliation fee of £15.

This benefit to local clubs cannot be lost, as without a doubt this encourages clubs to provide excellent physical activity opportunities to a variety of age groups across Angus.

The Local Sports Forums will allow Sports & Countryside Services to keep an up to date contact list for all local sports clubs so that we can provide coach education updates, sponsorship/grant aid information, coach scholarship information, etc and also include as many local sports people as possible in events such as the Angus Sports Awards.

The other main aspect of ASC work at present is the Angus Sports Awards ceremony. This annual ceremony will continue to be organised and delivered by Angus Council's Sports Development Team. This is a crucial link to our local sports clubs and individuals and is essential in highlighting the excellent achievements of local sports people. Clubs who pay their 'club registration fee' will still be offered 2 complimentary tickets for this award ceremony.

### **Summary**

To conclude, the following points are suggested actions:

- Abolish ASC as it stands at present (including the Executive Committee)
- Establish Local Area Sports Forums in the three areas (meeting only 2 times a year)
- Clubs pay a 'registration fee' to Sports & Countryside Services which still entitles them to club concession rates within Angus Council leisure facilities
- Angus Club Excellence scheme will continue to be available to support club development
- Local Area Sports Forums will compliment the good work of sports specific development groups across Angus