

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

5 AUGUST 2008

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ORGANISATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO LEADER - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

QUALITY ACCREDITATIONS FOR LEISURE AND MAJOR PROJECTS

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Members on the continuous improvement made with regards to the latest quality accreditations received in respect of Chase Leisure Centre, Rugeley Leisure Centre and the Sport, Active Recreation and Community Development Team (Sports Development Team).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Members note the achievement made with respect to these three quality awards.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The Quest accreditation is a nationally recognised, externally validated quality award for the sport and leisure industry involving service providers from the public, private, trust and voluntary sectors.
- 3.2 The Council's three most recent assessments conducted between February 2008 and June 2008 have all demonstrated significant improvements in the way the service is managed and delivered to our customers.
- 3.3 The two leisure centres and the Sports Development Team were subjected to a rigorous two day assessment conducted by a trained assessor, during which the following areas were scrutinised in considerable detail:
- Facility operation (systems, procedures and management);
 - Customer relations;
 - Recruitment, training and service development; and
 - Performance management
- 3.4 In addition, both facilities were also subject to a mystery visit and telephone based enquiries.
- 3.5 Chase Leisure Centre and the Sports Development Team were both "Highly Commended" and improved their assessment score to 79% (an increase of 9% from their previous score). Rugeley Leisure Centre improved its assessment score by 10%, rising from 75% to 85%. This achievement means that the facility is categorised as "Excellent".
- 3.6 At the time of the assessments Chase Leisure Centre was the highest scoring facility in Staffordshire and in top 4% of leisure centres nationally, similarly the Sports Development Team also achieved the highest score in Staffordshire and Rugeley Leisure Centre's

assessment ensured it was the highest scoring dual use facility (with a school) in the country. The national benchmarking graphs attached as Annex 1, 2 and 3 to this report show how the three assessments compare with average scores achieved across all Quest accredited sites and services. A copy of the full reports can be viewed on the Cannock Chase Council website; under the Leisure and Culture section.

- 3.7 Without exception all three assessments identified the commitment and passion of the staff to deliver a first class customer focussed service and it is due to this level of dedication that significant continuous improvements have been possible in the Council's Leisure services.

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Background Papers

A copy of the full Quest reports are available on the Cannock Chase Council website under the Leisure and Culture section.

Annexes

- 1 Sports Development National Benchmarking Graph**
- 2 Chase Leisure Centre National Benchmarking Graph**
- 3 Rugeley Leisure Centre National Benchmarking Graph**

Section 1

Background

Quest is a tool for continuous improvement, designed primarily for the management of leisure facilities and sports development. Quest defines industry standards and good practice and encourages their ongoing development and delivery within a customer focused management framework.

Quest is endorsed and supported by the four home country Sports Councils and supported by a wide range of industry organisations. PMP, the sport, leisure and culture consultancy manages the scheme.

There are two Quest Assessment models:

1. The Facility Management (FM) model is aimed at the management of any facility which provides an activity for customers; public, private, trust and voluntary sector.
2. The Sports Development (SD) model is aimed at the management of any team which provides or facilitates participation in an activity; public, private, trust and voluntary sectors.

And three main stages to a Quest Assessment:

1. Self Assessment
 2. External validation
 3. Ongoing maintenance
1. **Self Assessment** – This stage of the process enables managers to self assess their own facility/operation in order to:
 - Make informed judgements about how they are performing against recognised industry standards.
 - Identify strengths and areas for improvement
 - Draw up action plans to raise the standards of service delivery to customers.
 2. **External Validation** – This second stage involves an external assessment including an intensive two day site visit by a trained assessor and for the FM model this also incorporates a mystery visit. The assessment reviews progress against industry standards and provides a percentage score which are categorised as follows:
 - Approved – over 60%
 - Commended – 68% to 74%
 - Highly Commended – 75% to 83%

- Excellent 84% and above
3. **Ongoing maintenance** – Quest approval status lasts for two years and is supplemented by an additional mandatory Maintenance Visit and Mystery Visit (FM Model only) to ensure that quality and service delivery is maintained or improved in line with standards.

After every two years the cycle of stages 1, 2 and 3 is repeated.

Quest also provides the opportunity to:

- Exchange information across the industry on quality issues
- Promote good practice
- Identify areas where the service is under performing and
- Develop advice and guidance to help raise standards.

Section 2

Details of Matters to be Considered

Chase Leisure Centre

Chase Leisure Centre has participated in the Quest Accreditation scheme since 1999 and throughout this time has demonstrated continuous improvement, with the exception of 2001, in its assessment scores:

1999 – 61% 2001 – 61% 2003 – 67% 2006 – 70% 2008 – 79% Highly Commended

The latest assessment, which took place on 7 and 8 February 2008, resulted in an improvement of 9% on the previous assessment and at the time placed the centre in the top 4% of facilities in the Country, top in Staffordshire and the joint highest scoring facility in the West Midlands.

During the assessment and the mystery visit, the following key strengths and area of good practice were identified in the Executive summary:

- All of the team have put a great deal of effort into ensuring that the Centre looks its best. Housekeeping standards are regularly reviewed and are described well to staff.
- The new marketing image for the Centre has been well constructed and executed. There is a clear identity within all the promotional documentation.
- The development of the staff team has lead to more accountability and confidence in the direction of travel. Staff know their role and how this affects what the centre is trying to achieve.

- There is some good activity evolving via partnership working both for the good of the centre and the local community.

Despite the positive results, there were some areas where the Centre could consider further improvements including:

- By implementing and reviewing the draft Integrated Management System (IMS) the Centre may be able to review the resources required to deliver the agreed standards.
- Reviewing customer comments for trends and including actions to address these trends as part of the Service Improvement Plan.
- Ensuring all standards contained within HSG 179 Managing Health and Safety in swimming pools are considered.
- Promoting and enhancing the relationship with the Sports Development team.
- Limited signage to the Centre (Mystery Visit)

Rugeley Leisure Centre

Rugeley Leisure Centre has participated in the Quest Accreditation scheme since it opened in 2005 with its first assessment taking place in 2006. Like Chase Leisure Centre Rugeley has also demonstrated continuous improvement, in its assessment scores:

2006 – 75% Highly Commended 2008 – 85% Excellent

The latest assessment, which took place on 1 and 2 June 2008, during the construction works for the new swimming pool resulted in an improvement of 10% on the previous assessment and placed the centre in the top 1% facilities in the Country.

During the assessment and the mystery visit, the following key strengths and area of good practice were observed:

- The Centre particularly the Changing Rooms are very clean. The Mystery Visitor graded changing areas and cleanliness as excellent and the Assessor agreed.
- The customer feedback point is well designed, providing post box, pens, comment forms, different methods of giving feedback and a summary of the previous months comments and actions.
- Staff are well managed and motivated to provide an excellent service to customers.
- The business planning process that started last year and involved staff input is very strong.

Despite the positive results, there were some areas where the Centre could consider further improvements including:

- The management team may wish to consider formalising the current systems and processes to create an Integrated management System (IMS).
- Cleanliness standards are achieved because of the quality of the staff, creating additional processes to monitor cleanliness standards may assist in maintaining these standards.
- By linking together a number of spreadsheets the Centre may be able to create skills audit that describes the training different roles should receive and provide a record of when this training was carried out and is due to expire.
- Adding measurable quarterly targets to the Business plan may assist the site to monitor activity against objectives and recognise quickly if annual achievement may not be as planned.
- Limited signage to the Centre (Mystery Visit).

Sport, Active Recreation and Community Development Team (Sports Development)

The team had its first assessment in 2006 and like both leisure centres has also demonstrated continuous improvement, in its assessment scores:

2006 – 70% 2008 – 79% Highly Commended

The latest assessment which took place on 13 and 14 March 2008, resulted in an improvement of 9% on the previous assessment and at the time ensured the team was the highest scoring Sports Development Team in Staffordshire.

During the two day assessment the following key strengths and areas of good practice were observed:

- It was evident that the Team were extremely committed and passionate about the service they provide, which was further complimented by a desire to want to improve and embed a culture of continuous improvement within the team.
- A strong strategic direction was managed through the implementation of the team's service plan which was reviewed by all staff on a regular basis. A significant amount of work had also been progressed to improve the team's engagement at a corporate level.
- The team's dedication towards ensuring that all activities provided were inclusive was commendable. It was clearly evident that all staff were prepared to go the 'extra mile' to make sure any access issues were overcome.

There were some areas which could be considered for improvement including:

- A common theme running throughout some of the improvements identified within the report was the need to co-ordinate matters further, for example the engagement of partners with strategic planning and the collation of data against performance indicators.
- The team could make better use of IT to support their internal operational procedures; this is particularly pertinent with the team now being split across different locations.

Section 3

Contributions to CHASE

The provision of high quality accessible leisure facilities and sport and recreation opportunities, that are nationally recognised and accredited, will assist the Council in achieving a number of its CHASE objectives, particularly around Children and Young People, Healthier Communities, Access to skills and in contributing to Building an Excellent Council.

Section 4

Section 17 Implications

There are no identified implications in respect of Section 17 arising from this report.

Section 5

Human Rights Act Implications

There are no identified implications in respect of the Human Rights Act 1998 arising from this report.

Section 6

Data Protection Act Implications

There are no identified implications in respect of the Data Protection Act.

Section 7

Risk Management Implications

There are no identified Risk Management implications directly associated with this report, although a poor report could result in adverse publicity and possibly loss of customers to other service providers. Similarly, there is the risk of continuing to maintain the standards achieved and to continuously demonstrate improvement given finite resources.

Section 8

Legal Implications

There are no identified legal implications directly associated with this report and the Council is under no legal obligation to seek accreditation by such bodies.

Section 9

Financial Implications

There are no identified financial implications associated with this report, other than those associated with the assessment and registration process, which are met from existing budgets.

Section 10

Human Resource Implications

There are no identified human resource implications arising from this report.

Section 11

Conclusions

Background Papers

Annexes

Annex 1: Sports Development National Benchmarking Graph

Annex 2: Chase Leisure Centre National Benchmarking Graph

Annex 3: Rugeley Leisure Centre National Benchmarking Graph