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RED TAPE

Red Card to Red Tape next steps

The Alliance's Red Card to Red Tape provided a host of recommendations and actions which could help sports clubs when it was launched in April but, as budgets continue to be cut and fears rise for community sports facilities, what hope is there for the local club that the recommendations are being acted on?

The Department for Culture Media and Sport is painstakingly going through the proposals in the report; they did commission the report after all. But progress is already being made on several fronts. The Alliance is restructuring its support system for Community Amateur Sports Clubs and revamping the cascinfo website, while the Department for Communities and Local Government have agreed to promote CASCs locally in their newsletters. The Minister for Sport will be taking the platform in the summer in an event organised by the Alliance which will launch our new CASC support structure, celebrate the 6000th CASC and £100m saved for community sport and hopefully allow the Minister to tell us what progress he has made towards the CASC recommendations in the review.

Taxation and charitable donations are of vital importance for sports clubs too. The Alliance sits on the Charity Tax Forum and has been invited to be part of the small donations working group which will review Gift Aid as announced in the budget. HMRC too are reviewing the Red Tape report and are meeting with the Alliance very soon.

The Alliance has also been hard at work persuading others to act on the recommendations in the review. So far we have discussed outdoor pursuits with the Health and Safety executive, talked to the Home Office about Alcohol licensing, reviewed vetting and barring and child performance legislation with the Department for Education, continued to negotiate with PPL and PRS on music licensing and will sit down with the Secretary of State on policing sports events. There is more to do, of course, as we lobby DEFRA for help on water recreation, DfE for access to school facilities and DCLG for local planning- to name but a few!

Red Tape Challenge Website

The Government has launched a [website](#) which aims to tackle red tape through three stages. Firstly, they will publish details of all the regulation relating to a specific sector or industry on the website, people or organisations can then respond to these by commenting on what that they find unnecessary or burdensome, and based on this feedback Government promises to start removing red tape.

The site is divided up into two main areas, one focuses on general regulations that cross all sectors, this covers health and safety, equalities, employment law, pensions, environment and company law. The second area is sector specific, with a different sector as the focus every couple of weeks.

The website appears to be primarily directed at businesses rather than the voluntary sector and it is disappointing that sport and recreation wasn't currently included in any of the specific sectors or industries already outlined. The Alliance has discussed the Red Card to Red Tape review with the Cabinet Office and it has agreed to bring sport and recreation in as a sector theme in the autumn and we will work alongside DCMS to help deliver this.

What you can do

Despite the business focus, it is possible to comment on regulations as an individual or from another perspective (i.e. a voluntary run organisation). Amongst the general regulations section of the website there are a number of regulations which might be relevant for your organisation and your members. Add your comments and encourage your clubs to do the same to give sport and recreation a voice in this challenge.

There may also be a number of sector specific areas where sport and recreation may be able to comment; in particular you (and your clubs) may find one or more of the following sectors relevant to their regulatory gripes!

20 May – 1 June	Road transportation
2 June – 15 June	Fisheries, marine enterprises and internal waterways
23 June – 6 July	Healthy living and social care
21 July – 3 August	Utilities and energy

Finally, watch this space for news on when the sport and recreation sector will be live for your comments and for those of your members!

PARLIAMENT

Abolition of cheques to be reviewed

The Treasury Select Committee has announced that it is reopening its inquiry into the future of cheques, which were due to be abolished by 2018. This could mean a reprieve for cheques which are so often used in our sports clubs. The inquiry will consider:

- trends over time in the use of cheques as a payment mechanism, including estimates of likely usage over the next five to ten years;
- the advantages and disadvantages of abolition, including the impact of abolition on

particular groups in society;

- analysis of the likely costs and benefits of the abolition of cheques;
- progress in the development of suitable alternative payment mechanisms; and
- the decision to close the Cheque Guarantee Scheme and the implications for cheque usage and the future of cheques.

The Payments Council, the body charged with the phasing out of cheques and identification and development of alternative methods of payment, has also announced a consultation on its national payment plan. The Alliance will respond to the consultation, which can be found on the Council's [website](#), by the July 1 deadline. If you have any concerns with respect to the abolition of cheques, let our team know by contacting [James MacDougall](#).

What this means for sport and recreation

The Sport and Recreation Alliance has been working hard with the Payments Council to make absolutely sure that proper alternatives for cheques would be put in place if they were abolished to protect sports clubs which currently rely on cheques for payment mechanisms. The Alliance welcomes the fact that Parliament has reacted to the public's concern and will review the abolition of cheques.

Protection of Bowling Greens

Labour MP John Woodcock has introduced a Bill to give greater protection to bowling greens from the threat of development. The Bill would 'require local planning authorities to ensure that certain criteria are met before planning permission involving the redevelopment of bowling greens can be granted; to introduce a community right to buy for bowling greens in certain circumstances; and for connected purposes.' This is along similar lines to powers under the Localism Bill however it seeks to ensure additional rights of veto to bowling clubs.

The Bill has brought welcome focus on the sport as local authority cuts begin to bite and bowling clubs around the country fight to protect their greens. The Sport and Recreation Alliance is working with Bowls England to create a lobbying pack to help raise the profile of bowling in Westminster and help clubs at a local level. We are asking MPs to support John Woodcock's Bill, sign the EDM and write to Eric Pickles to ensure changes to the planning system give protection to all sports facilities.

Opening of roads for motor sport

On 30 March 2011, Mike Penning MP, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport announced the launch of a public consultation on how to amend the Road Traffic Act to enable closed road racing events. The announcement occurred in a Westminster Hall Debate introduced by the Conservative MP Ben Wallace. Mr Penning said, 'we are in a very exciting situation. The consultation, which will last for three months, will proceed from today, and I hope that many different people from across the motor sport and other racing industries come forward with innovative ideas. This country is fantastic at innovation, not just in manufacturing but in terms ideas about how the exciting events that we see around the world can take place in this country.' This took the Sport and Recreation Alliance by surprise because

although we had recommended this action in our publication 'Red Card to Red Tape' and the MSA had been ramping up its campaign, we did not expect such a quick success.

Following the announcement queries by the Sport and Recreation Alliance to the Department for Transport found only confused and surprised civil servants. Eventually a phone call with a private secretary to the Minister revealed that the announcement was a mistake and we would have to contact the Minister directly for more information. We are now awaiting the response and will update you as soon as possible.

U-turn on forestry policy

Following the Government's U-turn on the proposed sale of public forests an independent panel was set up to review public policy for forests. Disappointingly the panel contains only one of our members, the Ramblers, despite strong representations made to the Secretary of State by the Sport and Recreation Alliance and other members. In response to this decision a forestry working party has been created to ensure that the independent panel do not forget other sport and recreation users of the forests.

The Minister for Agriculture and Food, Jim Paice MP, responded to a joint letter from the Ramblers, BMC, CTC, BHS, IMBA, MSA, BCU and the Alliance asking for contributions and engagement from members. The panel has yet to decide how what information it would like but there will be a 'call for evidence' so it is important for members to start pulling together examples of forests where your activity works best. Please contact [Martin Key](#) for further information.

POLICY PROPOSALS & CHANGES

Care Quality Commission

On 28 March the Sport and Recreation Alliance hosted a meeting of NGB and Care Quality Commission representatives to discuss the implications of new registration requirements. The meeting provided an opportunity to raise concerns about the possible unintended consequences of recent legislation (which could have seen sports grounds needing to register as care homes) and seek clarity in regards to the application of regulations to care delivered by sporting organisations and NGBs.

What this means for sport and recreation

During the discussion it was determined that treatment services provided by NGBs will normally be exempt from CQC registration requirements, but that some diagnostic services could potentially bring bodies back into the scope of the Commission. However, the Sport and Recreation Alliance is now working with the CQC to confirm that a blanket exemption will be applicable in all circumstances, based on the definition of occupational health schemes provided by an employer, which are exempt.

For more information please contact Simon Butler on 0207 976 3902 or via [email](#).

Ticket Touting

The Rugby Football Union has been granted a court order forcing Viagogo, an online ticket sales site, to reveal the names and addresses of those who placed tickets for sale on its website for the 2010 Investec Internationals and the 2011 RBS 6 Nations.

This is great news for sport. Sport deliberately sets ticket prices below market value in order to enable true fans to see matches. Sites that allow tickets to be sold on for profit provide the opportunity for touts to buy tickets and create their own marketplace without being detected. This ruling means the RFU can identify and sanction those who have breached its ticketing terms and conditions by selling to secondary ticketing sites.

£110 million for England's rivers

Defra has agreed to £110 million clean-up which will bring more otters, salmon and other fish back to England's rivers. The funding will build upon work undertaken in the past two years with the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Association of Rivers Trusts. Defra is establishing a Catchment Restoration Fund from 2012, which will enable a significant part of the funding to be available to a wider range of stakeholders. For further information go to [Defra's website](#).

CONSULTATIONS

Equality Office backs youth sports events as non-discriminatory

The Equality Office's current consultation on discrimination on grounds of age recommends allowing sport and recreation to continue offer youth and senior events, showing that events are non-discriminatory when aimed at creating fair competition. In sports which do not require the matching of physical attributes, a further exemption is recommended to allow certain age groups to come together, avoiding isolation and keeping healthy. Given that many sports have Government targets for participation, the recognition that events targeted at specific age groups to increase participation should also be noted.

The Alliance's draft response can be found on [our website](#); you are welcome to use the paper as a basis for a response if you agree that participation should be explicitly exempt. For more info contact [James](#). The full consultation can be found on the [equalities website](#).

Charity Commission to review sport as a charitable aim

The Charity Commission is currently running a consultation on the advancement of amateur sport as a charitable aim. The objective of the consultation is to clarify in more detail the definition of the 'advancement of sport' as set out in the Charities Act 2006. Currently the definition is 'sports or games which promote health by involving physical or mental skill or exertion'. The consultation will reconsider this definition in relation to issues such as what level of mental skill or exertion is necessary to promote

health and the meaning of 'amateur' in the context of payment of players (including grant funding and sponsorship). The consultation will run until 31 May 2011.

What this means for sport and recreation

The primary intention of the Charity Commission is to broaden, rather than restrict, the scope of the criteria. This is certainly positive for the sport and recreation sector and it will hopefully allow more sports clubs to benefit from charitable status in the future. However, there are several contentious questions included in the consultation document, raising issues such as public benefit measurability, sponsorship, membership fees and professional players.

What you can do

The Charity Commission is looking to hear from sports organisations that are registered - or are seeking to be registered - as charities, national governing bodies, County Sports Partnerships, grant-making bodies and other interested organisations. The [consultation](#) will provide all interested parties with the opportunity to make their voices heard.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance will be submitting its response in the next few weeks, and this will be made available to members via the website and the next Policy Update. If you would like further information on this consultation or wish to submit a comment from your organisation, please contact [David Foster](#).

The future of Sport on the Radio

With the funding of the BBC under increasing scrutiny, there are fears for the future of sports coverage. The Sport and Recreation Alliance feels strongly that the BBC's local sports coverage is vital for community sport and local awareness. We are currently examining the threat to local radio stations and discussing the issue in Parliament and with the BBC.

While there will be much posturing over the coming months on the future of sport coverage, the first formal consultation is now out, looking at Radio 5 Live and 5 Live Sports Extra. The Sport and Recreation Alliance will respond to the consultation alongside our lobbying work recommending that local sport coverage is protected and sport retains its high profile for national coverage.

What you can do

Please send any concerns or information to [Simon](#) at the Sport and Recreation Alliance, and should you wish to respond to the BBC's consultations, they can be found on their [website](#).

COMPLETED CONSULTATIONS

Health

The Department of Health recently closed its consultation on plans to reform public health in England. Under the Government's proposals money for public health would be ring-fenced and allocated to local authorities, who would work with local partners to achieve a set of stated outcomes. The Sport and Recreation Alliance responded to all three consultations, emphasising the contribution of sport and recreation to positive public health outcomes and highlighting how GPs can more effectively promote sport and recreation.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance's responses can be read here:

1. [Healthy Lives, Healthy People](#)
2. [Transparency in Outcomes](#)
3. [Funding and Commissioning Routes](#)

Meanwhile the Secretary of State for Health has announced that the progress of the Health and Social Care Bill will be "paused" while the Government engages in a "listening exercise" in light of growing concern about plans for the NHS. The concerns focus on the introduction of GP Commissioning and competition within the health service, and are not directly related to proposals for public health. The outcome of the public health consultations is therefore expected to be delayed until the Bill resumes its passage through Parliament.

National Curriculum

The Department for Education recently closed its consultation on the primary and secondary National Curriculum in England. In our submission, the Sport and Recreation Alliance argued that Physical Education is essential for the development of young people and highlighted clear evidence to show that high academic performance and physical activity are related. The submission called on the Government to take steps to ensure the UK is ranked as the best in Europe in terms of the quality and quantity of P.E. provision, and recommended that P.E. be made more meaningful by extending opportunities to pupils through the development of links with external sport organisations and the utilisation of school facilities.

The full response to the consultation can be read [here](#).

RESEARCH

Sports Club Survey update

The 2011 Sports Club Survey (conducted every two years) is well underway. As of 8 April we have heard from 1253 clubs with the data showing us that on average clubs are getting poorer!! 2011 interim data shows that clubs make a surplus of £1,105 a year; this is £881 less than in 2009.

Being able to actually show that sport club finances are tighter than ever helps the Sport and Recreation Alliance to make a real case for grassroots sport when asking for reduced rates for alcohol licensing, lower business and utility rates and reduced rates of VAT on for example, facility hire. Figures like these will be more authoritative if we hear back from as many, or more, clubs as we did in 2009.

The survey launched on 8 March and will run until the end of May, we still really need your help to get more clubs completing the survey (our target this year is 3000 responses!).

What you can do

Please promote the survey to as many of your clubs as possible. You can find material for doing so and further information about the survey on the [Sports Club Survey webpage](#). For more information please contact [Syann Cox](#).

Local Authorities Cuts

A recent survey by the Local Government Association (LGA) has indicated that 13% of local authorities intend to implement proportionally greater cuts to their budget for sports and leisure facilities when they finalise their overall budgets for 2011/12. This ranks sport and leisure facilities sixth on a list of 23 services which will be most targeted for cuts. To add to the negative picture, just 4% of authorities said that they would proportionally protect sport and leisure facilities.

We are concerned about what the reality of these cuts will be for sport and recreation, but are also interested in 'good news' stories of how clubs can benefit from this shake up. We are looking to speak with a number of clubs (across a range of sports) in each of the 12 regions to help us get a clearer picture of the situation and find out what NGBs and local authorities can be doing to help.

What you can do

We would like to work with NGBs to find the right clubs in each region and help identify the problems faced at grassroots level. We will start the project by setting up a small working group of national governing bodies who would like to help shape our work and research in this area.

If your NGB would like to be involved with this important and timely research please e-mail [Syann](#).

The Future of Sport

We have recently completed research work in partnership with the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) which looks at the landscape for voluntary sports organisations over the coming five years.

The research has identified six 'drivers' (trends, forces or driving factors) that could impact, either positively or negatively, on your organisation in the near future. Each 'driver' looks at how the scenarios might play out and what the implications for sport and recreation would be as a result. The six topics covered are:

Lottery Reform

Managed Migration and Social Cohesion

The 2012 Summer Olympics

Major Sporting Events

Regulation of Civil Society
The Value of Sport

What you can do

To learn more about the drivers, please visit the [website](#).

Want to follow us in a different way?