

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 9 SEPTEMBER 2002

REPORT ON: BROUGHTY FERRY YELLOW AND BLUE FLAG INITIATIVE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE PLANNING

REPORT NO: 656-2002

1 PURPOSE

1.1 This report outlines the measures and associated costings which will be required to achieve Blue and/or Yellow Flag status at Broughty Ferry Beach.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that:

- a) Dundee City Council makes an application in 2003 for a Seaside Award to achieve Yellow Flag status for Broughty Ferry beach in the summer of 2004.
- b) Dundee City Council applies for designation of Broughty Ferry beach as a Blue Flag beach once Scottish Water has achieved guideline water quality. This may not be achieved before 2005/2006
- c) Relevant Departments are remitted to introduce the measures to meet the requirements of the Yellow and Blue Flags.
- d) The Chief Executive is remitted to continue to press the Scottish Executive to designate Broughty Ferry as an Identified Bathing Water

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The capital costs associated with this report will be met from the £45,000 allocated for this purpose from the reallocation of Scottish Budgets as detailed in Policy and Resources Committee Report No 649-2002. The annual revenue cost of achieving and maintaining Yellow Flag status is £15,000 and provision for this expenditure will be included in the Leisure & Arts Department's 2003/2004 Revenue Budget.

4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 **Key theme 2:** Pollution is limited to levels at which natural systems can cope.
Key theme 8: Health is protected by creating safe, clean, pleasant environments.
- 4.2 The issues which are considered in the designation of a Yellow Flag and a Blue Flag include water quality, safety, management, cleanliness and information provision.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Both the Yellow Flag and the Blue Flag designations would indicate that Broughty Ferry Beach is safe and clean according to the stringent criteria of a designation.
- 5.2 All citizens, and in particular the disabled, would have access to a safe and clean beach. Broughty Ferry beach is easily accessible to low income families in Dundee who may not be able to afford to travel in order to enjoy beach activity.

6. BACKGROUND

6.1 The Bathing Water Directive

- 6.1.1 Knowing that water is clean and safe to swim or play in while on holiday abroad or at home is an important factor in choice of a holiday destination. Moreover, for the tourist industry, clean and safe water is an important argument to attract visitors to their area.
- 6.1.2 The EEC decided therefore in the 1970s that bathing water quality should be monitored and tested in order to protect bathers from health risks and to preserve the environment from pollution. This resulted in 1976 in one of the first pieces of European environmental legislation: the Directive 76/160/EEC on Bathing Water Quality.
- 6.1.3 The Directive requires member states to identify bathing areas, monitor them during the bathing season and to report the results of the monitoring to the European Commission. The Directive includes two levels of water quality: **mandatory** and **guideline**.
- 6.1.4 Identification as a bathing water means a statutory commitment from Government in terms of water quality. The Bathing Waters (Classification) (Scotland) Regulations 1991 set the standards which SEPA have to ensure are met at these waters in order to ensure compliance. SEPA also aim that stricter standards are achieved at identified bathing waters. This means that Identified Bathing Water must meet the **guideline** water quality standard.
- 6.1.5 Dundee City Council applied for designation of Broughty Ferry Beach as an Identified Bathing Water in 1999. Advice received from the Scottish Executive at that time, and again in 2001, was that no further bathing waters would be identified until a new Bathing Water Directive was agreed and no date is available to confirm when this will be achieved. If Broughty Ferry Beach achieved Identified Bathing Water status, Scottish Water would be required to carry out work to upgrade treatment works for sewage discharge, or other pollution reduction measures to improve water quality.
- 6.1.6 Scottish Water are of the view that Broughty Ferry beach will meet the **mandatory** water quality level in summer 2002. **Guideline** quality would only become a requirement if the beach was designated as an Identified Bathing Water. Scottish Water would then take 2 to 3 years to carry out the necessary work to meet the guideline water quality standard. Because of the nature of the Tay estuary, Scottish Water believes that upgrading treatment works will not guarantee guideline standard quality being met. Nevertheless to guarantee investment to reach guideline quality the Council will continue to press the Scottish Executive to designate the Broughty Ferry as an Identified Bathing Water.

7. YELLOW AND BLUE FLAG AWARDS

- 7.1 A group of officers from relevant Departments were remitted by the Local Agenda 21 Member/Officer Working Party to investigate the feasibility of a Blue Flag designation for Broughty Ferry Beach.
- 7.2 **European Blue Flag** is an initiative co-ordinated by the Foundation for Environmental Education in Europe (FEEE) and, along with the complementary **Seaside Award (Yellow Flag)**, is administered in the UK by Environmental Campaigns (ENCAMS, formerly known as Tidy Britain Group). Both these awards are only valid for one year.

- 7.3 **The Seaside Award (Yellow Flag)** recognises well-managed beaches which are clean and relatively safe. There are two award categories: resort and rural. As a resort beach, Broughty Ferry would have to fulfil 29 criteria, one of which refers to water quality, which must comply with the **mandatory standard** of the Bathing Water Directive 76/160/EEC at the time of application.
- 7.4 **The European Blue Flag Campaign** recognises beaches throughout Europe which fulfil strict criteria relating to both the water quality and the surrounding beach area. To be considered a beach must have obtained the higher **guideline standard** of the Bathing Water Directive before being assessed for various other criteria. The area proposed for a Seaside Award/Blue Flag is shown in Appendix 2.
- 7.5 Achieving Yellow Flag/Blue Flag status will have social, economic and environmental benefits for Dundee.
- 7.6 The improvements made to the Broughty Ferry beach will provide an excellent facility for people living in all areas in Dundee. The opportunity for community activity will be enhanced, and in particular those living in Dundee's social inclusion areas will have access to an attractive location.
- 7.7 Yellow Flag and Blue Flag status will have economic benefits to Dundee. The boost to Dundee's tourism product will have benefits to local businesses, including local transportation. There will be potential for increasing the number of visitors to Broughty Ferry Castle.
- 7.8 Criteria for gaining Yellow Flag and Blue Flag status also relate to the environment. The improvement in water quality at Broughty Ferry, will improve the overall quality of the beach and subsequently the local wildlife and awareness of users of the beach.

8. **CAPITAL AND REVENUE FUNDING**

- 8.1 The financial implications as set out in Section 3.1 are based on a ten week season (mid June to end August) and recognise that additional investment is necessary to consistently meet the standards required to achieve and retain Yellow and Blue Flag status. The key areas where additional measures are required to meet these standards are in the areas of Safety, services and facilities, Environmental Management and Education; and Information and signage.

8.2 **Safety, services and facilities**

- 8.2.1 Beach guards must be on duty during the bathing season (June to August). There must also be adequate safety provision including lifesaving equipment and directions for their use and immediate access to a telephone. This recognises the potential dangers associated with swimming without care in tidal waters. Beach guards would have a wide remit to incorporate compliance with other criteria of the award eg daily beach supervision, first aid skills, maintenance of lifesaving equipment, and litter picking.
- 8.2.2 First aid must be available on the beach. The first aid room will be based in a portacabin located at the beach between June and August. Existing buildings and equipment must also be maintained, and access for the disabled must include handrails and steps, and a vehicle access sign.
- 8.3.3 A protected water source in the form of a shielded source of drinking water must be provided. Drinking water will be supplied adjacent to the Windmill Toilets.

8.3.4 Areas for swimming must be clearly indicated and separated from other water users such as windsurfers, jetskiers etc

8.4 **Environmental management and Education**

8.4.1 There must be an adequate number of litter bins. Some bins have been installed but there needs to be an increase in existing provision and bins are still required at the car park.

8.4.2 Information on natural sensitive areas must be provided. The information will be provided by the countryside ranger.

8.5 **Information and Signage**

8.5.1 A flag pole for Yellow and potentially Blue Flags will be required.

8.5.2 The major costs to achieving the Yellow Flag and Blue Flag are for signage. The signs must be of good quality to withstand adverse environmental conditions (salt and sand) as well as vandalism. Keep Scotland Beautiful and ENCAMS place great emphasis on provision of information to the public relating to many of the award criteria, including:

- Updated information on water quality
- Prompt public warning if the beach has become grossly polluted or unsafe
- Display of at least 5 educational activities offered
- The laws governing the beach use must be widely available, including display of information relating to areas zoned for swimming, and for water sports
- The code of conduct on the beach must be displayed
- The Yellow Flag and Blue Flag award poster must be displayed
- Emergency Plan details and contact address must be displayed
- Other examples of information are: road signs to the beach, signs to the first aid room, to the beach guards and to the public telephone, to the drinking water supply and to the toilets.
- Road signs to the beach and car park are required and information detailing the animal exclusion zone must be displayed. There must also be a map of the beach area.

8.6 The measures identified above would satisfy the demands of a Yellow Flag application in 2003 and can be achieved in 12 months subject to the allocation of resources proposed in this report. Keep Scotland Beautiful insist that a bathing season last a minimum of ten weeks and the above costing are calculated accordingly.

9. **TIMESCALE**

9.1 The process and timescale for securing a Yellow Flag for Broughty Ferry beach are as follows:

Milestone	Target Date
Measures in place	May 2003
Application to Keep Scotland Beautiful	May 2003
Assessment of beach by Keep Scotland Beautiful	July 2003
Awards made to successful beaches	November 2003
Flag in place	June 2004

9.2 Application, assessment and award of a Blue Flag can only be made once the water quality meets guideline standard. This would only occur following investment triggered by designation of Broughty Ferry as an Identified Bathing Water.

10. **CONSULTATION**

10.1 The Directors of Planning and Transportation, Neighbourhood Resources, Environmental and Consumer Protection, Leisure and Arts, and Economic Development have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Director of Corporate Planning

Date