

INFORMATION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	TOURISM AND LEISURE COMMITTEE	9 JANUARY 2020	11
BLUE FLAG BEACH AWARD			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

At the meeting of the Tourism and Leisure Committee on 9th March 2017, the committee considered a decision item on the potential to gain Blue Flag Award accreditation for St. Annes North Beach and St. Annes Amenity Beach. A list of the Blue Flag Award criteria was included in the report with any improvement works listed against each requirement that would need to be fulfilled by the Council to achieve Blue Flag Award accreditation. The report also explained the need for 'Excellent' bathing water quality to achieve and retain Blue Flag status.

After full consideration it was resolved:

1. To assess the list of requirements that would need to be fulfilled to allow a competent application for Blue Flag accreditation for the two beaches.
2. To decide if the proposed list of requirements are to be further detailed and costed and to be presented in a further report to the committee.
3. To offer 'in principle' support to any further capital bids and/ or revenue increases based on a more detailed list of requirements in a future report.

Following the meeting, officers undertook a more detailed review of the Blue Flag Award criteria including an assessment of the two beaches against a total of the thirty award requirements. An assessment table was completed with actions and costings.

In summary, St. Annes Amenity Beach fulfils the majority of the Blue Flag Award criteria if it was to achieve 'Excellent' water quality and the signage was improved. St. Annes North Beach does not currently fulfil the Blue Flag Award criteria as it does not have adequate level of facilities such as public toilets or seasonal dog controls on the amenity beach areas. The cost of installing public toilets on North Beach Car Park is estimated to be in the region of £90,000 - £140,000 dependant on the size and design of unit.

Defra's 2019 Bathing Water Classification results were released in November and St. Annes Amenity Beach obtained a 'Good' result and St. Annes North Beach obtained a 'Sufficient' result. The beaches are required to attain an 'Excellent' result to achieve a Blue Flag Award. In recent years, St. Annes North Beach has achieved an 'Excellent' result once and St. Annes Amenity Beach has never achieved 'Excellent' result.

Consideration was also given to the borough wide consultation exercise concerning the introduction of Public Space Protection Orders relating to dog controls on public open spaces. A seasonal Dog Exclusion Order will continue to apply to St. Annes Amenity Beach. However, a decision was made that no controls will be applied to St. Annes North Beach. A key requirement of the Blue Flag Award is that dogs must be seasonally controlled or excluded from the beach.

In consideration of these points, officers will prioritise their efforts towards a successful Blue Flag Award application for St. Annes Amenity Beach. The Parks and Coastal Services team have actioned the proposed infrastructure improvements and are progressing signage enhancements as part of the Coastal Signage Strategy, as advised from the assessment report, in readiness for future applications if and when bathing water results achieve the 'Excellent' result required.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

- Annual Bathing Water Quality (Information Report), Environment Health & Housing Committee, 7th January 2020.
- Blue Flag Award (Decision Item), Tourism and Leisure Committee, 11th January 2018.
- Blue Flag Award (Decision Item), Tourism and Leisure Committee, 9th March 2017.
- Blue Flag Award Assessment.

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION BEING GIVEN TO THE COMMITTEE?

To update members on the progress of the resolution from the Tourism and Leisure Committee Meeting on 9th March 2017.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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