

Policy Update

March 2008

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1. SPORT & POLITICS

1.1 Budget

Alistair Darling, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, delivered his first Budget on 12 March. CCPR's Subs for Clubs campaign to enable Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) to claim Gift Aid on junior subscriptions had garnered support from all quarters, including sports clubs, NGBs, and MPs and peers from all sides of the House. CCPR's team engaged with HM Treasury, DCMS and HM Revenue and Customs to make the case; however, despite the strength of the campaign, the proposal was not taken up by the Treasury. Items of note for the sports sector were as follows:

National Lottery

Chapter Four of the report notes that the Government will continue to consider the case for moving to a Gross Profits Tax for the lottery and will announce their plans at the Pre-Budget Report later this year.

Gift Aid

As of 1 April 2008, the basic rate of income tax will fall by two pence. This would have affected the amount of Gift Aid that could be claimed on donations to CASCs and charities. However, over the next three years, Gift Aid will continue to be paid at a transitional rate of 22 per cent. This will be a relief to those organisations concerned about the drop in income.

Alongside the Budget, the Government published its response to the consultation on Gift Aid, which CCPR responded to, highlighting the case for Subs for Clubs. The response notes that the Government will now implement a package of measures aimed at increasing take-up of Gift Aid over the long-term, including major reform to the auditing process and the launch of the Gift Aid web information service - www.direct.gov.uk/giftaid.

CCPR, through its CASC-dedicated website, has already developed guidance for clubs seeking to maximise the usage of Gift Aid. The guidance is available at <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/giftaid/maximisinggiftaid.htm>.

Gambling duties

Sports clubs should note that from 12 March, all rates of amusement machine licence duty will increase in line with inflation; and gaming duty bands will increase in line with inflation for accounting periods starting on or after 1 April 2008. Clubs with bars should also be aware that a six per cent increase in all alcohol duty rates will come into effect on 17 March 2008. This will add four pence to the price of a pint of beer, 55 pence to the price of a bottle of spirits and 14 pence to the price of a bottle of wine.

Fuel duty

Like any sector, the sports world will be hit by increased fuel costs. Although the fuel duty rise planned for April has been postponed until October, the Chancellor announced an increase in fuel duty by ½ pence per litre in real terms from 2010.

Key links

For those interested in reading the Budget and supporting documents, please visit http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_08/report/bud_bud08_repindex.cfm.

The Government's response to the Gift Aid consultation - http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/budget/budget_08/documents/bud_bud08_giftaid.cfm

CCPR's response to the Gift Aid consultation - <http://www.ccpr.org.uk/ourcampaigning/uk/consultationsandbriefings/pastconsultationsandbriefings/>

2. REGULATION AFFECTING SPORT AND RECREATION

2.1 UK Sport consults stakeholders on new National Anti-Doping Organisation

UK Sport has been charged by the Government to project manage the development of an independent National Anti-Doping Organisation (NADO). No new legislation is required to develop the NADO, and the intention is that it should be operational by 2009.

What this means for sport: The independent NADO will have greater powers, enabling it to tackle issues such as trafficking, and to achieve greater consistency in pursuing offences than is currently possible. It will also see a more centralised approach to anti-doping in terms of the allocation of tests and results management.

Next Steps: UK Sport held its first stakeholder forum on 27 February, and will continue to engage with NGBs as the project progresses. Those NGB colleagues who were unable to attend the forum should visit http://www.uk sport.gov.uk/pages/new_national_anti-doping_organisation for the presentation and other relevant information.

2.1 Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Bill

The Government introduced the Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Bill into the House of Lords on 7 November. The Bill, which takes forward the Government's plans to reinvest money from assets in dormant bank accounts in the wider community, with a focus on 'youth services', received its Third Reading in the Lords on 26 February. The Bill now needs to go through the House of Commons and received its First Reading (a formality) on 27 February 2008.

Scope: UK

Next steps: In CCPR's response to a consultation on the scheme earlier this year, we highlighted the case for investment in sporting opportunities and CCPR will monitor the progress of the Bill closely to ensure this case is heard.

3. COUNTRYSIDE & WATER

3.1 Natural England to offer guidance on discovering lost ways

The Board of Natural England (NE) has decided to move from its current role of researching and claiming individual lost ways to providing advice and guidance to those that wish to do so at their own initiative. NE anticipates that by the end of March it will have drafted the guidance on research standards and on quality routes. It will also have drafted the terms of reference and a timetable for the fundamental review and agreed with the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Countryside Council of Wales whether the Rights of Way Review Committee should be asked to oversee that review. Please see link below for more details:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/about/board/feb08/NEBPU0910-DiscoveringLostways.pdf>

Scope England

What this means for sport and recreation: The Discovering Lost Ways project always looked unlikely to be an efficient means of clarifying such lost ways. Nonetheless, the decision by Natural England to step back from the project emphasises the need to repeal the 2026 deadline for establishing these ways as stated in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Next Steps: CCPR will be considering how best to address this issue, and would welcome members views.

3.2 Water Framework Directive – Wales

DEFRA is inviting views on the above joint DEFRA and Welsh Assembly Government consultation and the questions contained within it. The documents below may be found on Defra's website

(<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/river-basin>):

- Consultation on River Basin Planning Guidance Volume 2
- Updated Impact Assessment for Implementation of the European Water Framework Directive

Scope: Wales

Next steps: deadline for responses 19 May 2008, please forward this on to your counterparts in Wales.

3.3 DEFRA launches Outdoors for All and A Sense of Freedom

Outdoors for All was launched by Jonathan Shaw, Under-Secretary of State for Landscape and Biodiversity, last Monday at Kent County Council's Shorne Woods Country Park.

CCPR welcome this initiative - it contains many of the principles found within CCPR's own access policy. The Minister outlined the Outdoors for All Action Plan and DEFRA's aspiration to see an increase in the number of people, from all walks of life, getting out to places like Shorne Woods Country Park. He said, "... I'd like to see more people from under-represented groups using the natural environment. People from minority ethnic groups. Young people. Inner city residents. And the disabled."

Links to publications:

Sense of Freedom: <http://naturalengland.communisis.com/naturalenglandshop/docs/NE52-sense-of-freedom.pdf>

Outdoors for All: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/issues/recreation/diversity-actionplan/dap-ofa.pdf>

4. SPORT & THE ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Energy Saving (Daylight) Bill

The Energy Saving (Daylight) Bill had its second reading in the House of Commons on Friday 7 March. This is a Private Members' Bill, brought forward by Conservative MP and chair of the Environmental Audit Select Committee, Tim Yeo, who also chose this as a Private Members' Bill last year. The Bill is intended to move the clocks forward an hour for the entire year, keeping two clock changes a year, and meaning that there would be an extra hour of daylight in the early evening.

There is a robust evidence-based case for making this change, as it would improve road safety overall, reduce energy use and fuel bills, increase revenue generated by tourism and provide more opportunities to take part in sport and recreation and active travel in the evenings. CCPR has declared its support for this Bill in a letter to Tim Yeo MP, primarily for the beneficial impact it could have on increased opportunities for participation in sport and recreation and the additional social benefits these would bring.

The debate on 7 March was adjourned and will resume on 14 March.

5. EDUCATION

5.1 Independent review of the primary curriculum – call for evidence

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has commissioned former Ofsted Director, Sir Jim Rose, to undertake a review of the primary curriculum. The review aims to achieve greater flexibility within the curriculum – and in so doing raises the question of ‘whether pupils should continue to be introduced to... physical education and sport in year one’. The review also asks for views on how summer born children can be helped to progress.

What this means for sport and recreation: Clearly the potential for physical education to be introduced a whole year later is concerning, as this is the only opportunity to ensure that all children participate in physical activity, and have the opportunity to develop physical literacy. On the positive side, sport has long been aware that summer-born children suffer in comparison to their peers, and any solution to this issue would be welcome.

Next steps: CCPR will respond to the consultation and would urge members to do so also. All comments should be sent to Andrew Hanson (ahanson@ccpr.org.uk). The consultation documents are available at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/conDocument.cfm?consultationId=1537> and responses should be sent to primary.review@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk by Wednesday 30 April 2008.

5.2 £225 million for children’s playgrounds

The DCSF has announced a national investment of £225million in play facilities for children and young people. The money will build or upgrade playgrounds and supervised adventure playgrounds as part of the Children's Plan. Sixty-five local authorities will benefit from the funding to act as pathfinders for the development. For further information please visit:
http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0035.

5.3 Review of informal adult learning

The recently created Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills is now responsible for adult learning, and has a budget of £210 million per annum to invest in this area until 2010-11. The Department is now consulting on how best to utilise this funding. The possibility of providing funding directly to organisers of adult learning, rather than subsidising the cost of courses, is one of the proposals under consideration.

What this means for sport and recreation: The consultation document clearly recognises that learning to participate in sport and recreation is a legitimate form of adult learning, which is encouraging.

Next steps: CCPR will work with other interested agencies in sport and recreation to prepare a response to this consultation, and will emphasise the benefits that investing in sport and recreation can bring. The consultation documents are available at <http://www.adultlearningconsultation.org.uk/>, and the deadline for responses is 15 May 2008. Please forward any views on this issue to Helen Davies, CCPR Education and Training Development Officer (hdavies@ccpr.org.uk).

6. FISCAL

6.1 Community Amateur Sports Clubs

According to the latest figures from Deloitte, there are now 4,648 clubs registered as CASCs, claiming an estimated total cash benefit of at least £37.7 million up to 31 January 2008.

Over £3.5 million has been reclaimed via Gift Aid, despite only 10% of CASCs utilising this benefit. For advice on maximising Gift Aid, please visit <http://www.cascinfo.co.uk/giftaid/>.

What next: CCPR has recently met with a number of governing bodies separately to discuss the promotion of the CASC scheme in a way that is relevant to their clubs and members. If you would like to meet with CCPR to consider ways to improve the scheme's profile then please contact Ben Andersen-Tuffnell (bat@ccpr.org.uk).

7. COMPLETED CONSULTATIONS

7.1 Independent Safeguarding Authority

CCPR's response to this consultation emphasised the important role of national governing bodies in vetting those working with young people, and the difficulties with devolving responsibility entirely to club level.

7.2 Migration

CCPR's response emphasised that the new migration system must not deter amateur sports people from visiting the UK, nor place unsustainable burdens on voluntary sports organisations. The Government is keen to emphasise that the new system is based on the Australian model – which incorporates a sports person's visa. CCPR has therefore highlighted that this element is missing from the British proposals.

7.3 Department for Health Third Sector Funding

This consultation sought views on how the Department for Health could invest more strategically in the sector. CCPR stressed the need for clear objectives for investment – one of which should be increased levels of physical activity.

The CCPR is the voice for sport and recreation in the UK. If you do not wish to receive this service or would like to register other colleagues to receive this email, please register by signing up at: www.ccpr.org.uk.