

TITLE: District Sports & Physical Activity Strategy: Update Report

Committee: Community Services Committee

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1. ISSUE

- 1.1. To review the development of sport and physical activity in East Cambridgeshire.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. A sport and physical activity strategy was endorsed by the Commercial Services Committee in November 2016. The purpose of this strategy is to foster strengthened physical activity levels and opportunities for sustained participation across the community as a whole.
- 3.2. The adoption in September 2017 of the countywide Let's Get Moving project, with two years' funding from Public Health, allowed for the introduction of a new Activity Coordinator post with a strengthened focus on the more inactive population. The scope and purpose of the project fit perfectly with the sport and physical activity strategy, and both align closely with the ECDC Health & Wellbeing Strategy - which was reviewed by Members earlier this year with a conclusion that physical activity and partnership working are the current priorities. The recent decision of the County Health Committee (December 6th 2018) to extend funding for the Let's Get Moving project to June 2020 is welcome affirmation of the project's value, and allows us to continue building its momentum and scope.
- 3.3. The opening of the Hive has also provided increased capacity, as it offers - for the first time in East Cambridgeshire - a comprehensive single-site facility, with the associated programming opportunities. Support for the established trust-managed facility network continues, and this is also geared to broadening opportunities wherever possible.
- 3.4. This report seeks to draw together these strands of work in so far as they are concerned with the activity strategy. The wider aspects of the Hive operation, and current recommendations for SLA grant funding, are the subject of separate reports.

4. ARGUMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. The Let's Get Moving project has continued to evolve, with a strong focus on opportunities at the gentler end of the spectrum for those who may not have been regularly active of late. These range across walking netball, new health / leisure walks and running groups, 'taster' fitness programmes, chair-based exercise classes and an after-school club. A countywide cycling initiative is in preparation for 2019, and we are looking at a range of other opportunities for programme development.
- 4.2. Such programmes need to be supported by consultation and community engagement, to ensure that we are responding to community needs and that people are aware of the available opportunities. A significant element of the Let's Get Moving project is to provide signposts at an individual level, and over the coming year officers are seeking to engage more directly with community groups and partner agencies – initially focusing on Littleport - with a view to building capacity and momentum at local level. The aim is to connect the activity agenda with established local networks, and strengthen partnerships (for example, with health and education). Based upon the outcomes of this work, the approach may then be extended elsewhere.
- 4.3. Work with the local trust-operated facility network, through the SLA grant-programme, continues to balance operational and business needs with community interests, for example through programmes and pricing initiatives. The 'Re-Play' programme at Littleport for example (which has been delayed but is expected to begin in January) has the same aims as the Let's Get Moving project and wider participation agenda and its outcomes will be watched with interest. At the Hive, GLL are developing good working partnerships with a small number of anchor clubs, which operate their own coaching programmes, but also provide coaches where necessary to run open junior sessions, typically priced at an affordable level and taking place in the late afternoon. These sessions do not assume any particular aspiration or prior expertise; but should provide an easy link to the relevant clubs for those who wish to pursue the sport more seriously. In addition, the clubs run their own targeted development sessions - in some cases with concessions on facility charges in order to remove any financial risk – and GLL are seeking to directly develop sports for which no such partnerships exist, such as gymnastics. Following on from a project run through the Let's Get Moving project at Ely College, it is also planned to develop out-of-school programmes at the Hive but aimed at current non-participants in the 14 – 18 age group.
- 4.4. The opening of the Hive also allows us to take a more structured approach to exercise referrals. These schemes recognise that physical activity can help to reduce the incidence or manage the impact of a wide range of health conditions (such as diabetes, arthritis, cardio-vascular disease, and even some cancers), but that those most likely to benefit may not readily take up such a programme without close support. Medical professionals

therefore have the option of ‘prescribing’ a structured activity programme, in collaboration with a fitness or leisure provider. The development of such arrangements in East Cambridgeshire has historically been limited by the facilities, although the three largest trust centres all have some level of provision. The opening of the Hive represents a step-change in facilities; and the operators (GLL) have an established referral system with well-developed protocols, already in place in Cambridge. Similarly, Littleport now has both a more modern facility and greater technical expertise within the team. Health linkages of this kind are of increasing importance. Officers are therefore seeking to promote a more concerted approach across the District, and again this would sit well alongside the Let’s Get Moving project.

- 4.5. Overall, work in this area seeks to balance the needs of those who are less active, and the provision of informal activities, with provision for more structured sport. None of these stands in isolation; they are merely points along a continuous scale of activity, and work is needed across the system in order to build participation over the long term. Further reports will be submitted to this Committee as appropriate over time.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 1.1. There are no financial implications; the costs of the Let’s Get Moving initiative are contained within the external funding, and align with existing budgetary provisions.
- 1.2. The strategy continues to provide a platform for the development of wider opportunities; no adverse equalities impacts are anticipated, but the outcomes will be monitored and evaluated in relation to any new programmes or initiatives which follow its adoption.

Background documents

None

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