

COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES

7 JANUARY 2009

SPORT AND LEISURE IN THE COALFIELD

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Coalfield Area Committee with information relating to provision of sport and leisure services.

2.0 NATIONAL CONTEXT

2.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government in April 2008 published the New National Performance Framework for Local Government (see below) that replaces all other sets of sport performance measurement. Whilst only a very small number of performance indicators exist which focus directly on sport and physical activity, as a city we continue to support and add value to a wide range of areas and indicators such as positive activities for young people, volunteering, regeneration, education, health and community safety targets.

NI 8 Adult participation in sport and active recreation

NI 57 Children and young people's participation in high quality PE and sport

NI199 Children and young people satisfaction with parks and play areas

2.2 The national review of sport and physical activity by Sport England has culminated in the need to ensure we have one joined up 'Single Delivery System' for sport in order to plan, deliver and evaluate improvements in participation from grassroots through to excellence. Within the Single Delivery System, the County Sports Partnership is the strategic lead for regional sport in Tyne and Wear, and supports local authorities' work with its partners in a range of areas to increase participation levels. Sunderland currently hosts the Partnership.

3.0 SUNDERLAND CONTEXT

3.1 At a local level, the Single Delivery System requires a mechanism to plan, prioritise funding and ensure a vibrant network of delivery exists. To achieve this, it is a requirement by Sport England that each local authority establishes a Community Sport Network. Sunderland has responded to this challenge by recently establishing the ActiveSunderland Board, which will drive forward participation in sport and physical activity at a local level. The aims of the Board will be to drive forward the implementation of local priorities, including the prioritisation of funding and the increase in physical activity participation levels.

3.2 The council's Sport and Leisure service are working towards the delivery of a universal 'core offer' to all residents. All residents will have the opportunity to participate in four core areas of physical activity. This core offer comprises of:

- Sport
- Wellness
- Aquatics
- Play

- 3.3 In addition to this 'core offer', a range of shorter term targeted services are provided in partnership to reach a specific age group or target audience, predominantly to inspire adults and young people to participate in physical activity with a view to improving their overall health and wellbeing.
- 3.4 A range of specialist services are also delivered on behalf of, and fully commissioned by other partners, such as the Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust, the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Home Office.
- 3.5 The Council has embarked on a significant investment and modernisation programme of its facilities to support continuous improvement in the manner in which services are delivered to reach the previously mentioned targets. Given this changing context nationally and indeed locally, it is important the service has a structure which is fit to perform and work in partnership.
- 3.6 The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy adopted by the Sunderland Strategic Partnership in September 2005, defines the development of sport and physical activity into three main processes:
- Increasing Participation in Sport and Physical Activity
 - Improving Facilities in Sport and Wellness
 - Developing New Facilities
- 3.7 As Members will be aware the Council has reviewed the ways subsidy is targeted and a new pricing framework was introduced on 1 April 2008, based on an individual's "ability to pay". Where a resident is on a low income and can least afford to pay, sports activities can be accessed at a cheaper rate, particularly where price may previously have been a perceived barrier. This is driven by the Council's aim to ensure that we encourage more people to take part in sport and physical activity and to minimise barriers to participation amongst those individuals on low incomes. The pricing framework is linked to a new membership card called 'Life', which is available for adults, children and young people. All 'Life' card holders receive discounts and special promotions, and all children and young people aged between 3 and up to their 18th birthday can receive their card FREE.

4.0 AREA WORKING AND PROVISION IN THE COALFIELD

- 4.1 As detailed above, the 'core offer' is viewed to consist of **Sport, Wellness, Aquatics and Play**. In addition, there are a number of city programmes and projects which are cross cutting in nature and draw opportunities together to ensure provision is 'connected' at a local level. Many of these programmes are increasingly offered with local partners on an area basis. Progress in the delivery of leisure activity within the Coalfield is detailed below:

4.2 Sport

Sport Unlimited is a nationwide £36 million investment to get younger people taking part in sport and physical activity that most interests them outside of school. This three year programme offers young people a 10 week block of taster sessions, which aims to get young people to continue with the activity once the weeks are completed. The programme is funded by Sport England in partnership with the Youth Sports Trust through the County Sports Partnership and is delivered locally by partners, from City Council facilities and the three School Sport Partnerships. The programme will make a significant contribution toward the Government's target of giving young people the opportunity to do 5 hours of PE and sport a week at school or in the community.

The city has received £45,011 to run the initial first stage of the programme until April 2009. The programme is still in the initial development stages, all secondary schools across the city, City of Sunderland College and the University have been offered access to the programme. It is estimated that 100 young people in The Coalfield will take part in the programme in the first two terms of the delivery programme.

Diversionsary Activities for Young People: additional funding from the Working Neighbourhood Fund has been used to deliver the successful components of the original Targeted Youth Engagement (TYE) project and work towards a more sustainable model of provision. The programme was designed to support youth organisations and community groups to encourage young people to participate in physical activity and to provide pathways for sustained use of leisure centres, community clubs or programmes. This is also linked with the promotion of the city's Lifecard to ensure a more sustainable model for youth activity.

In the Coalfield, the project worked with Herrington Burn YMCA the commissioned youth work providers in the area to utilise the skills of their youth workers to engage and encourage young people to participate in activities at Houghton Sports Centre. The young people were offered activities mainly in the Wellness Centres and were supported by the both the centre staff and the youth workers. The programme also contributed to 10 young people attaining the Asdan award.

The project enabled Herrington Burn YMCA to upskill 4 youth workers who now are able to deliver activities, sports and fitness elements of the Asdan award.

Herrington Burn YMCA was the host venue for the delivery of the FA Level One Coaching Certificate. This provided an opportunity for young people over the age of 16 years and indeed youth workers, to gain a National Governing Body Coaching Certificate, in addition to learning how to deliver football coaching sessions in the community.

Active Sunderland Bus Project (awaiting a Sport England decision on funding of £347,000 for three years)

The Active Sunderland Bus Project scheduled for roll out early 2009 is about targeting non-participating adults on an area basis with a combination of:

- Lifestyle 'check and testing' services using a newly fitted SAFC Foundation bus
- A range of beginner's activities which offer extra 'handholding' and support
- Partnership working to develop new volunteers.
- Training and support for new volunteers
- Smart monitoring of increased participation.

The area based approach will be a partnership, harnessing the skills and energy of local agencies, where suitable, from community centres to sports clubs. The funding enables each area to be allocated a part time Activator who will help to lead some activities, network and support the programme development across the locality. It is anticipated that in the Coalfield, the three year funded programme would offer an estimated ten additional hours of activity each week targeting 20 new participants every 15 weeks.

Football in the Coalfield

Participation in football within the Coalfield remains popular, despite significant challenges with the current quality of provision.

It is identified in the 2003/2004 Playing Pitch Strategy, that the Coalfield has an excess number of football pitches. However, it is recognised that the quality of some of the pitches and ancillary facilities is an issue and need improvement. Football sites in the Coalfield include Shiney Row, Herrington Colliery Welfare, Leyburn Grove, Hetton Lyons and Easington Lane Flatts.

The Coalfield has benefited from the recent improvement works from a City Council £200,000 Strategic Investment allocation, with the Herrington CW pavilion undergoing decorative works. This funding was to address immediate and essential works only on sites which would benefit from small allocations.

Work is underway to complete a city investment strategy which will identify priorities for investment, meet FA requirements and hopefully attract investment from the Football Foundation.

Sport in Schools

Sport in Schools is a mentoring programme to up skill primary school teachers in sports coaching. Qualified sports coaches provide high quality sports and physical activity experiences for the young people, whilst sharing good practice with the teaching staff. The Coalfield has received 26 hours of Sport in Schools subsidised sports coaching during the summer term. Schools involved in the project include Easington Lane Primary School and Newbottle Primary School.

Houghton Sports Centre

Houghton Sports is the local hub for sports within the Coalfield and incorporates a sports hall, indoor bowls pavilion with six rinks, a recently added soft play room, welfare hall which supports functions and events, outdoor skate park and a state of the art Wellness Centre.

The Centre has various local groups which use the facilities, including the Houghton Rock and Roll Club, who hold fortnightly functions within the welfare hall, martial arts clubs including karate, aikido, taekwondo, kickboxing and Tea and Sequence Afternoon Dancing Club.

The Houghton Indoor Bowling Club is a popular group, who run coaching sessions for all levels and participate in national and regional leagues from April – September each year.

Sports hall activities include sports such as gymnastics, various martial arts, basketball, 5 a side football, table tennis and can also accommodate birthday parties with a bouncy castle.

The Centre are currently promoting courses in gymnastics from beginners to elite, mini tennis and a new gym time session which has been programmed, incorporating sessions designed for the pre-school children under 5, with climbing, soft toys, trampolines, hoops and balls to encourage fun and participation development.

Over the last six months the Centre has held special events including an Open Day, Houghton Feast, Horticultural Show and skatepark displays.

4.3 Wellness

The aim of the Wellness Service within the city is to improve individual's health and well-being through the provision of physical activity opportunities, lifestyle advice and education. Working with Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust (STPCT), the local Voluntary and Community Sector and the Wellness Service is developing a citywide network of Wellness Centre 'hub' sites, 'spoke' sites and Community Wellness venues to provide opportunities for all.

Through the development of programmes and interventions the Wellness Service is targeting those individuals who are not yet engaged in physical activity, ensuring there are a range of preventative services, targeted interventions and specialist support services at a local level. Underlying the Wellness Service is the robust monitoring and evaluation framework that ensures evidence can be supplied to demonstrate the positive impact that the Wellness Service is having on the health of the city.

Wellness Centres

The Coalfield Wellness Centre is located at Houghton Sports Centre.

Services delivered from the Wellness Centres include:

- Physical activity opportunities
- Healthy eating advice
- Smoking cessation support
- Weight management advice
- Stress management advice
- General well-being and lifestyle advice
- Information on support services

In the first six months of this year (April - September) there have been over 14,000 visits to the Wellness Centre and 5,800 attendees at the 15 weekly Wellness Classes.

Spoke Sites

Spoke sites are generally smaller venues that operate under the Wellness Service umbrella by offering the same joined up programme. Spoke sites are currently available at Hetton School.

Exercise Referral Programme

From 3 November 2008, a new city-wide exercise referral and weight management programme will be operational providing greater choice of activities for patients. Exercise referral activities currently take place at the following venues in the Coalfield: Houghton Sports Centre and Easington Lane Community Access Point.

The Exercise Referral Programme (formerly known as the HELP programme) is a physical activity referral system which enables health professionals to recommend a course of exercise for patients with a variety of medical problems. The programme ensures that people at risk are identified sooner and referred to the appropriate health, diet and physical activity advice that will make a difference to their long term well-being.

The Exercise Referral and Weight Management programme is delivered by three partners: Sunderland City Council, NHS Teaching Primary Care Trust and City Hospitals Dietetics Dept. The programme lasts for 15 weeks (10 weeks for weight management) and patients are supported through an individually designed exercise programme by a team of fully qualified exercise referral consultants.

Further developments of the programme include opportunities for referred clients to include walking and swimming on referral from 2009.

Community Wellness Programme

The Community Wellness Programme was primarily designed to increase the provision of the Wellness service, enabling residents of Sunderland to access Wellness facilities at a local level. Community Wellness venues are currently located at Easington Lane Community Access Point and YMCA Herrington Burn. The scheme currently has over 130 residents attending Wellness education and training courses.

The functionality of the Community Wellness Programme allows other initiatives to 'bolt on' to the main theme with ease. There have been two recent additions which compliment the core offer of Community Wellness sessions. The first new programme offers seated and low intensity exercise for older adults and the second, is the expansion of the exercise referral scheme into community venues, thus providing greater choice for the referred client and increased capacity for the programme.

Case Study: Tom Damsell has been attending Community Wellness sessions at Easington Lane Community Access Point for approximately 10 months.

"I have never used a gym or taken part in any fitness sessions before this but I have found it to be very enjoyable and great fun. The sessions have helped me to meet new people and I now have new friends out of the sessions. I am overweight and these classes are helping me to lose the weight and get fitter. The only downside is that I need to buy new clothes which fit as my old ones don't."

Classes for over 50's

Exercise classes for people over 50 started in September 2008. Classes are tailored to the needs of individuals and include both seated and standing exercise. The classes improve mobility, balance and co-ordination which decrease the likelihood of falls and increase ability to continue to live independently into old age.

The 'Sit and Be Fit' classes take place at Easington Lane Community Access Point on Monday's and Friday's 2-3pm and YMCA Herrington Burn on Tuesday's and Thursday's 7-8pm. These sessions are part of the Community Wellness Programme.

As people become fitter, participants can progress from this programme to other community activities and Wellness Centre programmes, ensuring they continue to exercise and improve their general health and fitness.

Cycling on Referral

A new cycling on referral programme commenced on 3 November 2008, providing referred clients an opportunity to take part in physical activity to compliment their Wellness or community based programme.

4.4 Aquatics

As Members are aware, the City Council is looking to develop two new swimming pools in Hetton and Silksworth. Designs for the two new 25m swimming pools were examined by Cabinet in April 2008, following detailed consultations with partners, local schools, clubs and community groups regarding each of the designs submitted.

Six contractors expressed interest in the project during tender, which were then short-listed to two for the final decision. The contract for design and build for both pools was ultimately awarded to Pellikaan.

The Hetton facility will feature the following:

- 5-lane 25m pool with a separate teaching pool
- Changing village
- Sauna and Steam Room
- Viewing area with vending provision
- 45 station Wellness Centre
- Studio

The contractor (Pellikaan) started initial work on the two swimming pools in late 2008, following the design development stage. It is anticipated that the pools could be open at the end of 2009, or the beginning of 2010. Consultation to inform programming of the new facilities is due to commence December 2008 and continue over the next few months.

Members may be aware of the announcement in June 2008, by the Secretary of State for Health and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, in relation to a free swimming scheme to be delivered in partnership with local government. In November 2008, Cabinet endorsed acceptance of the Government's two year funding grant offer to enable the delivery of a two year experimental programme of free swimming to the target group of 60 years and over and 16 years and under. Free swimming supports the Council's objectives in relation to increasing participation, improving health, tackling obesity and addressing anti-social behaviour through providing accessible positive activities. The Government funding, made available over the next two years may have potential to move the Council towards achieving its aspirations in relation to increasing participation. It is anticipated that the new initiative will be implemented from April 2009 and will support the delivery of free swimming, for the target groups, when the new pool opens.

4.5 Play and Urban Games

In 2007, the Play and Urban Games Strategy (adopted in 2004) was revised to meet emerging government guidelines - 'Moving Forward 2007-2012'. The strategy was based upon citywide consultation on the needs and wishes of young people; these are captured on a young people's friendly DVD version interviews.

The new strategy, based upon clear GIS mapping, sets out clear aspirations to improve access to high quality play and urban games facilities 1km from the doorstep. Just 15% Children and Young People had access to high quality provision citywide at the point the strategy was adopted. This has already improved to 19%. MORI satisfaction rates have progressively improved from the original strategy in 2004 from 37% to 43%.

The recent Play Pathfinder award of £2.1million (combined with a further £2million citywide from developer contributions and city funds), recognises the citywide progress and qualitative consultation led by children and young people will accelerate the delivery still further. The funding is however conditioned by extremely challenging deadlines which require a pragmatic approach towards engagement and delivery. Failure to deliver the first year's sites on schedule by March 2009 and the second year programme by 2010, has potential to result in funds being clawed back.

Since 2004 the following play developments have been undertaken in the Coalfield, Peat Carr, Low Moorsley, Hetton Lyons, Herrington Country Park play area and wheeled sports provision, Hetton Lyons BMX, Houghton wheeled sports park, Hetton Park, Trinity Park and through the Big Lottery Fund, Newbottle play area. Over the next two years the Play Pathfinder programme will see five new developments and refurbishments, which are prioritised by the Play and Urban Games Strategy. These are Barnwell, Grangewood, The Flatts, Rectory Park and Kier Hardy. Further details on these projects are provided at **Appendix 1**.

Pathfinder will also enable some educational projects to be delivered. Building upon feedback from young people, current discussions are underway around connecting the eco-rangers work with some of the current play provisions to use a high profile campaign against 'anti-social' litter in play areas, such as dog fouling, graffiti and needles.

Completion of the Pathfinder programme will see an estimated 6,400 additional children and young people having access to high quality equipped sites in the Coalfield. The Play Pathfinder programme will realise an additional investment of over £433,000 into Play and Urban Games facilities in the Coalfield.

The strategy has identified 28 sites citywide for development and improvement by 2010. Work will start shortly to determine the process for prioritising sites beyond 2010 and the Committee will receive a further report on this issue in due course.

In the meantime, the Committee is requested to provide feedback on locations they consider would benefit from future investment in play provision.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 The Area Committee are requested to note this report for information and provide Officers with feedback in relation to content and specifically in relation to the issue highlighted under section 4.5.

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 The following background papers were relied upon to compile this report.

- Leisure Facilities Research 2004
- New National Performance Framework for Local Government 2008
- Active Sunderland Bus, from application to Sport England 2008
- Leisure Centre statistics from Centre records
- Play Pathfinder Terms and Conditions 2008

Appendix 1

Play Pathfinder Projects in the Coalfield

Project	Number of Young People Accessing High Quality Play
The development of a play site on the outskirts of Barnwell Primary School /Barnwell Field. Consultation to be undertaken by Groundwork East Durham Completion due march 2010	460 within 400m
The new development of a play site at Grangewood Under negotiation with Persimmon Homes. Consultation to be supported by Groundwork East Durham. Completion due March 2010	2,178 within 1km
The development of the quality of the Flatts site Consultation by Easington Lane Access Point Completion due March 2010	655 within 1 km
Enhancement of play provision in Rectory Park Consultation by Sport and Leisure Completion due March 2009	1,675
Kier Hardy Play Area Extensive consultation in partnership with Barnardos Play area under construction, official opening Dec 2008.	1,473 within 1 km