

# **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

17 JANUARY 2012

## **BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE AND LASTING LEGACY IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY REVIEW 2011/12: REDUCING THE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Strategic Priority: Healthy City**

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES: C101: Delivering Customer Focussed Services, C102: Being 'One Council', C103: Efficient and Effective Council, C104: Improving partnership working to deliver 'One City'**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides information to the Scrutiny Committee in relation to the barriers identified by residents of the city in accessing sport and physical activity provision. This report contributes to the evidence for the Committee's policy review for 2011/12; Building a Sustainable and Lasting Legacy in Sport and Physical Activity.
- 1.2 The report will be presented by Helen Lancaster, Scrutiny Officer. Representatives from Sunderland City Council, Sunderland ABC Boxing Club, Hendon Young People's Project and Pennywell Community Centre will be in attendance to give the Committee the opportunity to have a discussion with providers from every sector about the barriers to participation and ways in which to overcome them.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 13 September 2011, the Scrutiny Committee agreed the approach to the Policy Review; Building a Sustainable and Lasting Legacy in Sport and Physical Activity, which included identifying the barriers to participation and ways in which to encourage greater take up of sport and physical activity.
- 2.2 This report contributes principally to the following terms of reference for the review;
  - (d) To understand the range of sport and physical activity provision currently being delivered across the city by the Council, the voluntary and community sector and private sector;

- (e) To understand the current level of diversity of provision across the city, considering the opportunities available for traditional and non traditional and alternative forms of activity; and
- (i) To consider the city's 'priority' sports and physical activity opportunities and the pathways in place to sustain and increase participation.

### 3. BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

3.1 Barriers to participation can affect people of all ages, ethnicities and socio-economic groups, however they are often more apparent for socially excluded groups, including workless or low-income families, homeless people, young people, women, BME groups and people with disabilities.

#### ***Local Issues***

3.2 In the Summer Survey undertaken with the Council's Community Spirit panel in 2009, residents were asked how easy or difficult it is for them to be physically active in their local area. Overall, the majority of residents said this was easy, however a fifth of respondents said it was difficult.

3.3 Residents with a disability were significantly more likely to say they find it difficult to be physically active than those without a disability. The analysis also showed that males were slightly more likely to say they find it easy to be physically active in their local area than females.

3.4 The vast majority of comments around this question were from those who believed that they have the opportunity to exercise if they wish, which some said they were already doing. The majority of opportunities identified by respondents included visiting a Leisure Centre (where cost was not felt to be prohibitive), or for general walking, jogging or cycling out and about in the local area.

3.5 The main reasons given from those who found it difficult to be physically active were around disability or because they felt they were too old. Other reasons included costs, distance, fear of crime in the local area or that it the area in which they live is not maintained well enough to do physical activity in.

3.6 The most significant barriers to being physically active were identified by residents as being:

| <b>Barrier</b>         | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Lack of time           | 47%               |
| Cost of activities     | 46%               |
| Location of activities | 30%               |
| Disability/ill health  | 28%               |

- 3.7 Residents were asked to identify things that would encourage them to be more physically active. These included:

| <b>Encouraging factor</b>                              | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|
| Activities available at times that suit me             | 43%               |
| Promotional discounted activities                      | 39%               |
| Opportunities in other facilities, not Leisure Centres | 35%               |

### ***Current consultation and engagement***

- 3.8 The service area is currently engaging with residents, partners and activity providers to understand the type of sports and physical activity people would like to see available in the city. Within this consultation individuals also asked to identify where and when they would like to take part in sport and physical activity. Responses from this process will help shape future sport and physical activity priorities and provide further evidence as to what people want, where they want it and when they want it delivered.

### ***The cost of accessing sports facilities***

- 3.9 In order to reduce barriers associated with cost to sports facilities, the Council's aim as far as its sport and leisure pricing policy is concerned, is to direct funding to services for the benefit of its residents. Subsidies are targeted towards those residents who least can afford to pay for sport and physical activity. A new pricing framework was introduced in 2008 and facilitated by the Lifecard. All young people in the city under 18 years of age receive a free Lifecard, which allows discounted access to sports facilities. This approach ensures that an inclusive approach is adopted towards pricing regardless of a resident's ability to pay.

## **4. OPPORTUNITIES TO OVERCOME BARRIERS**

- 4.1 The Council and the industry has long recognised the barriers its residents have to participation in sport and physical activity and Sport and Leisure have supported the community for a number of years by providing assistance, developing sport opportunities, raising awareness and tackling prejudice within communities, specifically with regard to ethnic minority groups. The service was also awarded national Beacon Status for its contribution in engaging with 'Hard to Reach Groups' through sport.

### ***BME Groups/Community Cohesion***

- 4.2 A project established with the Young Asian Voices group engaged more than 50 males throughout 2011. Following the success of these sessions, an adult 11 a side Asian football team was developed who now compete in the North East Christian Fellowship League.

- 4.3 The Raich Carter Sports Centre (RCSC) is located in an area of proportionately high BME groups for the city and work undertaken in recent years has included:-
- Outreach coaching at the Bangladeshi Centre;
  - Programming specific gym and swim sessions for the Bangladeshi Centre;
  - Supporting the Refugee Centre Training Programme, by offering two refugees volunteer training in administration and life guarding;
  - Programming badminton for the Indian Cultural Centre on Sunday afternoons;
  - Midnight football for late night restaurant workers;
  - Private swimming for Bangladeshi women; and
  - Young Asian Voices provide sessions for young people 9-19 years. The group work in conjunction with Centre staff and programme a number of activities throughout the year including football, gym and swim.
- 4.4 Using football to tackle community cohesion issues, an annual tournament has been developed at the RCSC to bring together communities who would not normally participate or positively interact. The service supports the annual Show Racism the Red Card festival and activities (multi club football event) organised by the SAFC Foundation, Sunderland Samba and Young Asian Voices.
- 4.5 Crowtree Leisure Centre's strong partnership with the University of Sunderland has encouraged many sporting links with Eastern and Malaysian students in recent years, particularly for sports such as badminton and table tennis. Crowtree has also worked with the Hong Kong and Malaysia Society to celebrate national events, including the Chinese New Year.

### ***Homelessness***

- 4.6 Working in partnership with Centrepoin, the city's first 'homeless' football tournament was staged in November 2011. This attracted 14 homeless players and further work is planned with Centrepoin in 2012.

### ***Women***

- 4.7 The Get into Football Officer is supporting the work of a group called "We'Ar Out" and has undertaken consultation asking its members for feedback on a number of issues including sport. From this consultation 20 women indicated they wanted to play football. Casual football sessions will commence early in 2012 for the interested women.
- 4.8 Sangini is a women's organisation aiming to reach BME disadvantaged and excluded groups in an innovative and creative way whilst providing opportunities for tackling inequalities in health. The group have been proactive in the development of community wellness opportunities and have received assistance in accessing training and educational

opportunities. The group have a gym and swimming sessions one morning a week at RCSC.

- 4.9 Funding secured from the ASA has been used to develop a women's swimming network. The Council has engaged a number of organisations including We're Out, University of Sunderland and Wearside Women in Need. Currently two groups have been established with 30 participants.

### ***People with a disability***

- 4.10 The role of the Sunderland Disability Forum is to work with children who have physical and/or medical needs and who are attending a mainstream school within the city and to ensure these children the equality of opportunity through the provision of inclusive physical education and discrete disability sport events within an accessible and supportive environment. The Forum consists of representatives from Sport and Leisure, and other partners such as SAFC Foundation.
- 4.11 Currently the Forum is coordinating a Sportsability Morning to be held on 19 January 2012, at Silksworth Community Pool, Tennis and Wellness Centre. The event is open to young people in Years 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 with physical and/or medical difficulties attending mainstream secondary schools in Sunderland. The sports on offer include seated volleyball, sports hall athletics, tennis, wheelchair basketball and boccia.
- 4.12 The Sunderland Tennis Programme has developed a new Sound Tennis Club for people who are visually impaired. The adapted game is played on a short tennis court with a special foam ball with ball bearings inside, which shake to alert the player to where the ball has bounced. A series of taster sessions has also been delivered in schools with over 20 regular participants.
- 4.13 The Council has undertaken a significant investment and modernisation programme to assist those with disabilities. One area where significant progress has been made is ensuring that each area of the city has a swimming pool and Wellness Centre, therefore encouraging community involvement, access and participation. In planning new facilities the service has ensured that residents have access to facilities which are fully compliant with DDA legislation, such as the Aquatic Centre, new 25m pools, City Adventure Play Park and the Tennis Centre Sensory Room.

### ***Young People***

- 4.14 Whilst Sport and Leisure are not the strategic lead for the delivery of sports activities for young people, the service area does make a significant contribution to driving forward participation levels.

- 4.15 Funding from Sport England has enabled 3394 young people within the city to access and participate in the Sport Unlimited programme of new sporting opportunities over the last year. The programme was targeted at young people who may have some interest in sport, but aren't currently engaged with community or club sport. The project has now concluded and has engaged 6474 young people into regular sport outside of curriculum time over the past three years (the highest levels in Tyne & Wear).
- 4.16 In 2010, Sport England announced 'Places People Play', a legacy programme aimed to bring the inspiration and magic of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games into the heart of local communities. Sportivate is a key part of this initiative and provides opportunities for Sunderland's young people (aged 14-25) to receive 6 weeks of coaching in the sport of their choice, and guide them into regular participation within their community. The programme commenced in July 2011 and outputs will be available in July 2012.
- 4.17 Growing Sport is a new sports intervention programme for young people funded by the Home Office, which will focus on reducing anti social behaviour. The programme comprises of 12 weeks direct sport delivery (predominantly football), then at week 6, community partners will become involved in taking over the programme with the support of Council coaches. This will encourage the transition from young people causing problems to becoming engaged in a community project.
- 4.18 There are several fitness classes available within the city's Wellness and leisure centres for those children and young people under the age of 16.
- 4.19 The Lifestyle Activity and Food Programme has been developed with the aim of supporting children and families to adopt and maintain healthier lifestyle choices. This is achieved through fun and interactive group sessions, which provide healthy eating advice and the opportunity to be physically active. The programme supports up to 300 children and families each year.
- 4.20 Funding was secured from the Coalfield Regeneration Trust to develop a youth inclusion programme focused on football and to support up to 40 young coaches to gain a Level 1 - 2 coaching qualifications.

### ***Using the Olympic Legacy to increase participation***

- 4.21 The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will also serve as a catalyst to engage and inspire all residents to take part in sport and physical activity to increase participation levels. It is anticipated the London 2012 Games will also provide an opportunity to engage residents and reaffirm the importance of sport and physical activity to sustain local communities

## **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 The Committee is recommended to note and comment upon the report, asking questions of the representatives from Sunderland City Council, Barnes Boxing Club, Hendon Young People's Project and Pennywell Community Centre around the provision of sport and physical activity and overcoming the barriers to participation.

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee Minutes, 26 July 2011; 13 September 2011; Community Spirit Summer Survey 2009;

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