

**BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE AND LASTING LEGACY IN SPORT
AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY REVIEW 2011/12: USE OF
SCHOOLS IN THE PROVISION OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
CITY SERVICES**

Strategic Priority: Healthy City

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: 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 use of schools beyond the school day in the provision of sport and physical activity. 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 colleagues from City Services, Sport, Leisure and Community Development and Children's Services. The Committee will also have the opportunity to seek evidence from representatives from two of the city's schools.

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 evidence in regard to the use of schools as community facilities.
- 2.2 This report contributes principally to the following draft 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

- (f) To understand the opportunities that exist in the city for an 'equitable offer' for sport and physical activity and the barriers to achieving this.

2.3 Community access can be defined as;

"Where a school has facilities for use by the wider community [e.g. playing fields, sports facilities, IT facilities, halls] it should look to open these up to meet the needs in response to local demand. If there are existing facilities which meet local need, there is no need for the school to open up and where consultation reveals no demand, there is no need to set up services. Extended services should not be developed in competition with local private, public and voluntary providers but should complement existing provision."

- 2.4 Schools have facilities that can be used by local communities, particularly in a sport and physical activity context as some contain swimming pools, MUGAs and other sporting facilities.
- 2.5 Community access to school facilities contributes to neighbourhood renewal, increasing educational attainment and increasing community spirit and cohesion.
- 2.6 The 2002 Education Act provided school governing bodies the powers to develop extended services from school sites, but placed a duty on them to consult with the Headteacher and school staff, the Local Education Authority, parents and pupils in doing so. It was also recommended that consultation took place with the local community.
- 2.7 School governing bodies were not allowed to use core school budgets to subsidise lettings and had to maintain separate community budgets. The need to implement full cost recovery for school lettings meant that charges were prohibitive for some community providers.
- 2.8 This financial guidance remained in place until 2010 when legislation has given the freedom to schools to use budgets flexibly. However, with the potential of reduced funding, the duty of governors is to prioritise funding for the delivery of the school's core business.
- 2.9 In 2004, Central Government provided funding to local authorities to support schools to develop and deliver extended services. By 2005, a 'core offer' of extended services was defined in the DfE Extended Schools Prospectus. This set out a minimum 'core offer' which it was expected that all schools would provide access to for children, young people, parents and the local community by September 2010. This included community access to school facilities particularly specialist sports, arts and ICT facilities.
- 2.10 Guidance stated that schools did not have to provide each of the extended services individually, but through working in partnership with others. Furthermore, services were only deemed necessary where

there was demand and where delivery was feasible. Schools had to demonstrate that there was no demand through consultation. Suitability of premises and safeguarding of pupils were another consideration in developing community access.

- 2.11 Within the context of this report, the most significant elements of the core offer are community access to specialist facilities on school sites.
- 2.12 The Sunderland Extended Schools Strategy 'Open for Everyone' 2005-10, stated that Sunderland was building their extended schools programme on a strong foundation, as there was already a high level of extended services across all elements of the core offer being delivered through schools.

3. CURRENT POSITION

Local Authority Influence and Responsibility

- 3.1 Sunderland City Council's Children's Services Directorate and City Services Directorate previously provided support to schools to access external funding to develop community facilities on schools sites. Children's Services provided ongoing support to develop community activity programmes; from 2008-11 funding was provided through the Standards Fund: Extended Schools Sustainability Grant for the purpose of supporting the co-ordination of extended services in and around schools. However, in April 2011, Government simplified the funding system by mainstreaming relevant grants into the Direct Schools Grant.
- 3.2 As of April 2011, the Council no longer has any responsibility with regard to developing community access in schools and now has very little influence in this area. A School Lettings Policy (<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=10981&p=0>) has been developed by Children's Services which is available to schools, should they wish to utilise it. The standard policy provides information on the schools charges (room hire, lighting, heating, staffing, etc), safeguarding and insurances.

Benefits to Opening Facilities for Community Use

- 3.3 Opening schools to the community for use outside of the school day, not only benefits the communities within which they are located, but it also benefits the schools themselves. The key advantages include;
 - Maximising the use of facilities;
 - Improved sense of community;
 - Improved relationships between schools and the families they serve;
 - Greater involvement of the local community within schools;

- Greater opportunities to engage with children and young people and their parents; and
- Greater involvement of parents and the benefit this brings to the development of a school.

Challenges in Managing Facilities for Community Use

- 3.4 Conversely, there are also potential barriers to schools opening up to the community and Members may be aware of ongoing issues around community access to schools.
- 3.5 Whilst many communities have positive comments around the use of schools, some less positive experiences, nationally, have included limited availability at weekends and out of the school term, high costs, overly complicated booking systems and variations in pricing.
- 3.6 In opening up school facilities beyond the school day, governors need to give consideration to:
- Safeguarding - it is their responsibility to ensure that any provider delivering activities has robust safeguarding and safer recruitment policies and procedures in place;
 - Public liability - to ensure that this is not the responsibility of the Governing Body and that all schools must have Transfer of Control agreements in place with external providers delivering from the site, and must ensure that there is adequate risk management for any activity delivered by the school; and
 - Finance - there should be a charging policy in place with external providers to ensure that the school budget does not subsidise community access. However, schools may choose to use their budget to deliver out of school activities for the benefit of their own pupils as this supports attainment and achievement.
- 3.7 The most common reasons for schools not opening up facilities beyond 5pm and at weekends in Sunderland are:
- Adequate provision for young people in the local area run by voluntary youth providers;
 - The cost of employing site management staff to cover the extended hours and conditions of employment for site management staff;
 - Safeguarding; and
 - Site security.

Community Access Linked to Funded Developments

- 3.8 As a starting point in understanding which schools open their doors to the community in the city, an audit undertaken on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee has identified those schools that have received funding since 2002, where there has been an element of community access contained within the agreement. The funding taken into consideration

includes Spaces for Sport and Art (Sport England); Local Public Service Agreement Pump Fund; PE and Sport Programme (New Opportunities Fund); SIB/SIP Area Committee Awards and Football Foundation grants. The information obtained is not exhaustive and does not take into account all funded developments.

- 3.9 Since 2002, a total of 28 awards and grants have been made to 23 schools to support the development of/improvements to sport and art facilities and equipment, an element of which included access for the community. This information begins to give a picture of community access to schools across the city;

Area	Schools
Coalfields	Dubmire Primary Houghton Kepier Hetton School Newbottle Primary Monument Consortium
East	Mill Hill Primary School Thornhill School Business & Enterprise College
North	Town End Academy Castle View Enterprise Academy Seaburn Dene Primary Red House Academy Hylton Castle Primary School
West	Farringdon Primary Quarry View Primary Farringdon Community School Sports College Plains Farm Primary East Herrington Primary Castlegreen Primary Academy 360 (was Pennywell)
Washington	George Washington Primary Biddick School Sports College Blackfell Primary Biddick Primary

A more detailed list can be found at **Appendix 1**.

East Area Committee

- 3.10 This municipal year, East Area Committee agreed to continue with the Task and Finish Group for its priority for youth provision from 2010 into 2011/12 and aligned and combined £50,000 of SIB with £25,000 from Children Services Area budget. One of the identified actions for the

Task and Finish Group established to take this forward was the need to review opening school facilities to the wider community.

3.11 As a way forward, the Task and Finish Group will hold a general meeting with Headteachers from primary and secondary schools across the East to;

- Find out what facilities schools have;
- Highlight the advantages of opening up facilities on an evening and weekend; and to
- Discuss ways extended school arrangements can work collaboratively to deliver planned activities for members of the community.

As this work closely ties with this element of the Scrutiny Committee Committee's Policy Review, it is suggested Members could be updated on the development of this work as progresses.

North Area Committee

3.12 North Area Committee has identified youth provision as a key issue for improvement in the area and has worked with Children's Services to develop and deliver a programme of activities for young people through school holidays, including sporting and physical activity sessions.

3.13 The Committee has identified good practice from schools within the area, for example;

- A clear 'hub' of the community;
- Strong links with community groups and associations in the local area;
- Opening schools out of hours and during the holidays;
- Good promotion and advertising of activities; and
- Being a community base for commissioned activities.

It will aim to facilitate learning to encourage those schools that currently don't provide access to the community to adopt best practice from those schools (or academies) that do with a view to providing a more equitable offer of community access across the North area going forward.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Committee is recommended to note and comment upon the report, asking questions of representatives from Redhouse Academy and Southwick Primary School where appropriate.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee Minutes, 26 July 2011; 13 September 2011; East Area Committee Agenda and Papers, 14 November 2011

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