

Sport England: 'Towards an Active Nation Strategy 2016-2021' progress and work with councils

Purpose

As background to the Sport England presentation and subsequent discussion.

Summary

Sport England's 'Towards an Active Nation' strategy 2016-2021 was launched in May 2016 and will triple investment in tackling physical inactivity to over £250 million and potentially open up more funding opportunities to councils and local partners.

The Board will be joined by Jennie Price, Chief Executive, Sport England (see biography at Annex A), who will talk about progress on the strategy and how Sport England will continue their work with, and support to, councils.

This report also updates Board Members on the work being undertaken by the LGA to ensure that councils figure prominently in the implementation of the Sport England strategy.

Recommendation

Culture, Tourism and Sport Board members are invited to note the report and raise any issues/questions from a local government perspective on how Sport England can work more closely with councils and the LGA.

Action

Officers will take forward actions identified.

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Background

Sport England strategy

1. The Sport England strategy, 'Towards an Active Nation', launched in May 2016 and highlighted:
 - 1.1. A much stronger focus on tackling inactivity so that everyone feels able to engage in sport or physical activity, whatever their ability.
 - 1.2. A focus on customer engagement and a customer-focused approach that draws on principles of behaviour change.
 - 1.3. Seven investment programmes: Tackling inactivity, Children and young people, volunteering, Sport into mass market, Sports core market, Local delivery and Facilities (replacing the 30 plus in the previous strategy) amounting to some £1 billion of investment between 2017-2021 with a much more outcomes-focused approach and with councils and local partners potentially able to access more funding.
2. The LGA has been actively working with Sport England to ensure that councils have greater opportunities to apply for funding across the seven investment programmes, as well as ensuring that councils and their partners remain at the heart of the successful implementation of the strategy.
3. The LGA has developed an excellent working relationship with Sport England and this has resulted in the joint delivery of sixteen Leadership Essentials programmes since 2011, involving almost 200 councillors. The LGA would wish to continue this partnership during the current Sport England strategy.

Opportunities for councils within the strategy

4. In July 2016, LGA officers undertook consultations with officer representatives of London Councils, District and County Councils Networks and the Chief Culture and Leisure Officers Association (cCLOA) in order to gauge their views on the Sport England strategy. All respondents welcomed the direction of the new strategy which mirrors a lot of the work that local government undertakes towards achieving social outcomes. Some respondents felt that councils who have lost officer resources would need additional support from the LGA and Sport England to become more aware of and be able to apply to the opportunities the strategy offered.
5. At the CTS Board meeting in October 2016, Members agreed a set of 'local government asks' (Annex B) that the LGA would discuss with Sport England during the lifetime of the

strategy. Initial discussions have taken place covering some of the 'asks', with further discussions planned.

6. One of these 'asks' is for councils to have the opportunity to apply for funding across the seven investment programmes. To date, councils have been eligible to apply to the majority of the investment programme opportunities announced.
7. The following outlines some of the opportunities for councils within the seven investment programmes (the figures in brackets represents the percentage of the potential £1 billion allocated to the investment programme during the lifetime of the strategy):

Investment programme: Tackling inactivity (funding allocated 13 per cent)

- 7.1. £120 million dedicated fund building on insight gained from 'Get Health, Get Active pilots'.
- 7.2. Sport England working with Public Health England to develop clear messages on Chief Medical Officer (CMO) guidelines to physical activity.
- 7.3. Collaborative programme of work with leading health charities to get more people active.

Children and young people (funding allocated 17 per cent)

- 7.4. Major new investment of £40 million into projects which offer new opportunities for families with children to get active and play together.
- 7.5. Specialist training to at least two teachers in all secondary schools.
- 7.6. Improve experience of children through the effective use of Sport and PE Premium and School Games funding.
- 7.7. Ensuring good pre and post curriculum sports/physical activity provision through supporting satellite clubs.

Volunteering (funding allocated 3 per cent)

- 7.8. £30 million strategy for volunteering, enabling councils to encourage volunteering for its own sake as well as an enabler for others to engage. The LGA recently helped promote to local authorities the two Sport England volunteering funds, in order for them to share with their networks.

Mass markets (funding allocated 6 per cent)

- 7.9. Identify and back innovations that offer clear potential for growth at scale, especially in under-represented groups, including digital solutions.

Core Market (funding allocated 29 per cent)

7.10. Providing insight, advice and funding to those who deliver to regular players, focusing on customer needs and delivering excellent experiences.

Local delivery (funding allocated 16 per cent)

7.11. Investing time, expertise and money (£130 million) in ten places across England to develop and deliver local pilot schemes.

Facilities

7.12. Work with industry to develop a single customer facing quality standard for all sports facilities.

7.13. Create a new Community Asset Fund offering small grants of up to £150,000 for facilities.

7.14. Increase investment in a Strategic Facilities Fund prioritising co-located facilities integrated with other community services. Multi-sport solutions will be favoured unless they offer poor value for money or there is no demand.

7.15. Invest £72 million in accordance with the football facility investment strategy, which will include the Parklife project and create football hubs in more than 20 major cities.

8. Within the last six months, Sport England has announced a number of funding opportunities, in particular, councils have been engaged in the workshops and application process for the 'Local Delivery Pilots', which will invest at least £130 million in ten localities. The LGA is providing advice and guidance, including: the need for councils to be involved in all ten pilots, flexibility on the requirement for any match funding and increasing the number of pilots, so that more areas and innovative practice can be explored.
9. The biggest investment to date has been £189 million, which has been allocated to 51 National Governing Bodies (NGBs). This funding is from April 2017. Ensuring that these NGBs work closely with councils and their partners will be a key to the successful implementation of the strategy.

Leadership of sport and physical activity within localities

Count Sports Partnership (CSP) appraisal

10. One of the recommendations in the Government's 'Sporting Future' strategy (2015) was the undertaking of an independent appraisal of County Sports Partnerships and during the summer of 2016, Andy Reed (an independent consultant) was appointed to undertake the appraisal of CSPs.

11. The LGA's response to the CSP appraisal highlighted that:

11.1. The CSP appraisal offers an opportunity to ensure that CSPs are reflective of and responsive to local priorities, in line with the localised approach set out in the

Government's sport strategy. Accountability would be strengthened by reflecting local priorities in CSPs' core specification, which is currently set nationally.

- 11.2. Whether hosted within councils or independent, CSPs that work closely with councils deliver effective sports initiatives at a local level. They are increasing participation and improving connectivity between sport providers. However, the extent of partnership working varies across the country. This appraisal is an opportunity to strengthen how CSPs work with councils and partners to encourage greater focus on local priorities.
 - 11.3. With councils facing further budget reductions, CSPs could play an important role supporting those councils that have reduced or no sport development staff. With more Sport England funding expected to be directed towards local partnerships, it is essential that CSPs consistently engage with councils and partners to agree local priorities and how best they can support them. CSPs must complement local activity, rather than duplicating or acting in isolation.
12. In August 2016, the report <https://www.sportengland.org/media/10911/csp-appraisal-aug-2016.pdf> of the CSP appraisal was published. A key recommendation within the report relating to councils was:
- 12.1. All CSPs should have a clear understanding of what the support needs are of local authorities in their area and have a rationale for how they are working with them. They should develop and agree plans in partnership with strategic local bodies including all local authorities in their areas and should not be in competition where there is no consensus amongst the partnership. It is expected that genuine collaboration and partnership with local authorities will be the norm alongside their Trust and other Leisure providers. Local authorities, despite increasing financial pressures will have a massive impact on sport, leisure and active lifestyles through all of their services.
13. The LGA is in dialogue with Sport England to ensure that future Sport England funding of CSPs incorporates the recommendation above.

Sport England presentation and next steps

14. Members are invited to raise any issues/questions from a local government perspective on how Sport England can work more closely with and support councils. Members may wish to consider the following issues/questions during the Sport England presentation:
- 14.1. How are Sport England involving councils in the implementation of the Sport England strategy and what further actions to Sport England think that councils/the LGA can do to support the strategy implementation?
 - 14.2. There has been significant investment in larger urban areas. While welcome, what is being done to ensure that rural communities are also helped to be more active? How is Sport England engaging with rural councils?

- 14.3. How will Sport England ensure that the investment to NGBs results in better partnership working with councils?
- 14.4. Whilst welcoming more opportunities for a diverse range of organisations to receive funding, how will Sport England ensure that there is better 'sport and physical activity' connectivity, so that the different organisations receiving funding are not duplicating effort?
- 14.5. What plans to Sport England have to ensure that CSPs work with councils, as recommended by the CSP appraisal report?
15. Subject to Members' steer, the LGA will continue working with Sport England to ensure councils are fully involved in the delivery of the various investment programmes, in particular the local delivery pilots as well as developing effective partnership working with CSPs and NGBs.