

11 November 2009

Physical Activity Alliance

Summary

This paper updates members on the development of the Physical Activity Alliance. It also asks members to comment on the Alliance's suggested likely direction and its interaction with local authorities.

The paper accompanies a presentation from Dr William Bird (Strategic Health Advisor, Natural England and Chair, Physical Activity Alliance Interim Steering Group). Following this presentation, members will have the opportunity to discuss the issues and put questions to Dr Bird.

Recommendations

That members note the report and provide a steer with regard to the Alliance's suggested likely direction and its interaction with local authorities.

Action

Subject to members' comments, officers to take forward appropriate actions.

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Physical Activity Alliance

Background

1. The Physical Activity Alliance (PAA) brings together partners from the public, private and third sector that have an interest increasing levels of physical activity in England. *Be Active, Be Healthy*, the Department of Health's physical activity strategy launched in February 2009, publicised the establishment of an Interim Steering Group (ISG) of key partners to develop a business plan for the Alliance. The full list of ISG members is enclosed at **Annex A**. LGA officers and John Sinnott, Chief Executive of Leicestershire County Council, have represented the Association on the ISG.
2. Councils are the key delivery agency for sport and physical activity. As part of their Local Area Agreements (LAA), around two-thirds of councils have prioritised National Indicator 8 (adult participation in sport and physical activity) as an improvement target. It is estimated by Sport England that, if all NI8 improvement targets are met by councils over the LAA period, there will be 1.3 million people more physically active, with 950,000 people playing more sport, and around 350,000 people becoming more physically active.

Progress

3. The principal task of the Interim Steering Group (ISG) was to consult with interested parties on what the future form and function of the Physical Activity Alliance should be. A series of online questionnaires and "focus group" style consultations were conducted over the summer and these fed into a consultation report, released on 15 September 2009.
4. The DH provided a small amount of funding to support this consultation process, and a small number of ISG members were co-opted to form a working group to push the process forward. Consultants from *Trio Plus Online* were employed to undertake aspects of the consultation and report writing.
5. The LGA, with CLOA, took part in a focus group session on 29 July. The group argued strongly that the Alliance needs to add value to local delivery and should not move in the direction of establishing a new physical activity quango or quango-lite. Other representatives of local government, such as the National Culture Forum, were also consulted. It was hoped that the members of the Board would have an opportunity to input into the consultation themselves but timescales did not allow for this to happen.
6. The recommendations from the consultation on the future of the Alliance were twice discussed and refined by the ISG. Following this, further discussions took place with Department of Health (DH) officials.



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7. The Alliance has also overseen the creation of an initial brand and a website - <http://www.activityalliance.org/> where further details of the Alliance's proposed work can be found. The most substantial task undertaken so far, at the request of the DH, has been to support the creation of the Dance Champions group, brought together by DH to add value to existing initiatives aimed at promoting participation in Dance. The Group is chaired by Rod Aldridge and has the support of celebrity dance enthusiasts such as Arlene Philips.

Next steps

8. A draft business plan for the Alliance is to be discussed at the Physical Activity Programme Board on 5 November. This board is jointly chaired by the DCMS and DH and brings together all those partners that are contributing to achieving the Olympic and Paralympic Games legacy plan target of getting two million people more active. Officers will provide an oral report of this meeting to the Board.
9. Following the Programme Board, the Alliance business plan will go back to the ISG for further discussion and to reach agreement with DH officials. It will then be put to Ministers for their sign-off. It is hoped that the Alliance will become fully operational by the New Year.

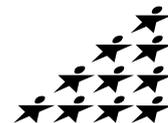
Financial Implications

10. The financial implications of this work can be managed from existing resources.

Implications for Wales

11. Health policy, including physical activity, is a devolved issue.

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Annex A

Membership of the Physical Activity Alliance Interim Steering Group

Sarah Gaventa	CABE Space
Brigid Simmonds	CCPR
Christine Double	County Sport Partnerships Network
Geoff Dessent	Deputy Director, Health Wellbeing, DH (Observer)
Prof. Alan Maryon-Davies	Faculty of Public Health
Andrée Deane	Fitness Industry Association
Tony Armstrong	Living Streets
John Sinnott / Steve Skelton	Local Government Association
Paul Lincoln	National Heart Forum
William Bird (Chair)	Outdoor Health Forum
Paul Jarvis	Regional Physical Activity Leads
Ruth Alleyne	Sport England (Observer)
Philip Insall	Sustrans
Rosi Prescott	YMCA
David Teasdale	Amateur Swimming Association*
Daran Bennett	Exercise, Movement and Dance Partnership*

*Project Working Group members co-opted onto the Interim Steering Group