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Creating a sporting habit for life

Purpose of report

This report outlines Sport England's new strategy and suggests how it could help councils to exploit the opportunities and address the challenges that they face as leaders of community sport.

Summary

1. Councils are the biggest public investors in community sport and are key to increasing participation and creating a legacy from the 2012 Games. However, continued budget pressures mean that it is unlikely that councils can sustain this level of investment.
2. Jennie Price, Chief Executive of Sport England, will give a presentation to the CTS Board about Sport England's new strategy and working with councils to grow and sustain local participation in sport.

Recommendation

Members are asked to discuss the issues raised in points 14-15.

Action

To be taken forward by officers as directed by Members.

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Creating a sporting habit for life

Background

1. Councils are the biggest public spenders on community sport (spending around £1.8 billion per year including capital spend). However, it is unlikely that this level of investment can be maintained in the current financial climate. This reinforces the importance of a strong partnership between Sport England and local government, both at the strategic level and at the individual local authority level.
2. Councils are responding to the financial challenges by continuing to develop different approaches to maintaining a local sporting infrastructure – for example, transferring assets to community sports clubs, setting up trusts or equivalent structures, co-locating sports facilities with other public services, and encouraging the community use of school sports facilities.
3. With the 2012 Games torch relay already underway and the start of the Olympics just over two months away, many councils are working with local partners to encourage a local sporting legacy; something no previous host nation has achieved.
4. The latest participation figures highlight the scale of the challenge. In particular, the latest Active People Survey showed a decrease in sports participation amongst school leavers, since 2007/08: the proportion of 16-25 year olds playing sport once a week has fallen by 2 per cent, and the number of 16-19 year olds participating three times 30 minutes per week has fallen by over 100,000 since 2008. However, during the same period, adult participation in sport three times a week was 7 million, an increase of over 110,000 adults.
5. Wider changes to the public service landscape are also having a significant impact upon community sport. The public health reforms will transfer the responsibility for public health - including physical activity - to councils from 2013 onwards. This presents significant opportunities for councils to join up local delivery of public health improvement and physical activity provision, which could lead to new and more efficient ways of delivering sport and physical activity provision to communities. For example, building on the exercise/GP referral schemes by involving hospitals and other front line health providers making referrals.
6. The Localism Act seeks to give effect to the Government's ambitions to decentralise power away from Whitehall and back into the hands of local councils, communities and individuals to act on local priorities. Within the

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Act, the 'community right to bid' offers a range of alternative service providers the opportunity to submit an expression of interest to run a service, which could create more opportunities for communities to run sports facilities.

Sport England's Strategy 2012-17

7. Sport England is an NDPB (Non Departmental Public Body) and is a primary revenue and capital funder of sports provision through exchequer and lottery funding. Sport England also supports councils through its relationship managers, improvement tools and data on participation, and is a statutory consultee on planning applications that affect playing fields.
8. Since November 2011, Sport England and the LGA have undertaken a programme of joint activity to deliver a member leadership programme with the aim of strengthening political leadership amongst cabinet/portfolio holders with responsibility for sport, increasing awareness of Sport England's support to councils and supporting councils to deliver a lasting legacy from the 2012 Games. Two Leadership Academies and a one day workshop in 2011/12 were attended by over fifty councillors and feedback was extremely positive.
9. Sport England's new strategy: A Sporting Habit for Life 2012-17 (**Appendix A**), sets out the strategic direction for how Sport England will work with sports providers and councils in delivering increased participation in sport. It reflects extensive consultation with sectors, including local government.
10. The aims of the strategy are to:
 - 10.1 See more people taking on and keeping a sporting habit for life;
 - 10.2 Create more opportunities for young people;
 - 10.3 Nurture and develop talent;
 - 10.4 Provide the right facilities in the right places;
 - 10.5 Support local authorities and unlock local funding;
 - 10.6 Ensure real opportunities for communities.
11. The success measures are to:
 - 11.1 Achieve a year-on-year increase in the proportion of people who play sport once a week for at least 30 minutes; and
 - 11.2 Raise the percentage of 14-25 year olds playing sport once a week and reduce the proportion dropping out.

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12. Sport England will invest £1 billion over the next five years and take forward a number of initiatives that are highly relevant to local government:
 - 12.1 Every one of the 4,000 secondary schools in England will be offered a **community sport club** on its site with a direct link to one or more National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs), depending on the local clubs in its area.
 - 12.2 **County Sports Partnerships** will be given new resources to create effective links locally between schools and sport in the community.
 - 12.3 All **secondary schools** who wish to do so will be supported to open up, or keep open, their sports facilities for local community use and at least a third of these will receive additional funding to make this happen.
 - 12.4 **At least 150 further education colleges** will benefit from a full-time sports professional who will act as a College Sport Maker and organise activities to increase participation amongst students.
 - 12.5 **Three-quarters of the student population** (aged 16-24) - over 900,000 young people - will get a chance to take up a new sport or continue playing a sport they enjoyed in school or college.
 - 12.6 A thousand of our most **disadvantaged** local communities will get a Door Step Club.
 - 12.7 Two thousand young people on the **margins of society** will be supported by the Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust into sport and to gain new life skills.
 - 12.8 Building on the early success of Places People Play, a further **£100m will be invested in new facilities** for the most popular sports, for example new artificial pitches and upgrading local swimming pools.
 - 12.9 **Around £450 million** will be available between 2013 and 2017 for NGB Whole Sport Plans (WSP). Around 60 per cent of that will benefit young people aged 14 – 25 and the remaining 40 per cent will be aimed at the rest of the adult population. There will be more emphasis on payment by results.
13. Councils and local political leadership will be central to the local implementation of all aspects of the strategy. The role of councils is reflected throughout the strategy and in particular councils have a direct role to support the implementation of the £40 million Community Sport

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Activation Fund, which will see Sport England working with councils and others to develop the fund and test their approach during 2012/13.

Key issues for councils

14. Members might like to explore how the initiatives and funding streams in Sport England's new strategy can support councils to address the key issues for local community sport:

14.1 **Supporting new delivery models / different ways of working** – given the financial situation our collective focus must be on identifying and sharing more cost effective ways of delivering sport and leisure services. We encourage Sport England to devolve as much funding as possible to local areas so that they can commission provision that meets local need and help to maintain access to a high quality local sporting offer.

14.2 **A more joined-up approach to community sport and strong local political leadership** – councillors are uniquely placed to work with County Sports Partnerships to bring together key players from all sectors to develop shared approaches to sport on issues such as asset management, commissioning, investment and reaching marginalised communities. This is especially important in terms of integrating public health and connecting school sport to the wider community offer.

14.3 **Encouraging stronger relationships between councils and NGBs** – whilst some NGBs are involving councils more, we want to see a higher proportion of NGB funding reaching the local level. As Whole Sport Plans evolve Sport England has a vital role to play encouraging NGBs to be ready to engage councils in meaningful discussions around joint commissioning and investment locally, understanding and appreciating the role of local authorities and the financial challenges they face.

14.4 **Making the most of the opportunities presented by the health reforms and the contribution of sport to wider community outcomes** – with the responsibility for public health moving to councils from 2013 onwards, sport portfolio holders have a significant opportunity to position sport and leisure as a key contributor towards better health and narrowing health inequalities, community safety, children's services, adult social care and community cohesion.

14.5 **Supporting sports clubs and communities to play a bigger role in managing assets** – The Localism Act will enable more

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communities and sports clubs to manage facilities, however, most will need capacity building and support from councils in order to be able to take on the new roles.

- 14.6 **Ensuring that local councils are at the heart of Sport England's strategy** – locally, we encourage Sport England to build upon its strong relationship with senior council officers to also engage councillors. Nationally, we encourage Sport England to continue to raise awareness amongst NGBs about councils' broader community leadership role, building on the success of recent events.

Next steps

15. In addition to any actions arising from the discussion at the Board, Members are invited to comment on the following next steps:
- 15.1 **Reflect the issues raised in this paper in the 2012/13 LGA / Sport England member leadership programme** – we would reach another 100 sport portfolio holders through academies, action learning sessions and peer reviews/challenges, building on the tremendous success of last year. Sport England is also speaking at a workshop on community sport at LGA Annual conference in June.
- 15.2 **Direct conversations between LGA and a small number of key NGBs** – it is vital that the NGBs understand the role and perspective of councillors. The more developed this relationship is the more we can help each other address any future difficulties either within a particular sport, CSP or local authority. A direct conversation would help us scale up successes quicker and get messages out to councils about where things are working well.
- 15.3 **Continue to identify and share new models of delivering sport and leisure and services** – CLOA is leading this for officers, and Members might want to consider a short publication aimed at councillors. This could also include how the 2012 Games have acted as a catalyst to increase participation in sport. There is also an opportunity to consider how Sport England might relate to our work with Arts Council England about a single cultural conversation – there are a growing number of examples of co-location and delivery between sport and culture, and learning that could be shared on issues such as asset transfer.
- 15.4 **Continue to support the sports and leisure sector to get ready for public health reform and the implications of the**

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Localism Act – through case studies, at appropriate events and dialogue with the Community Wellbeing Board.

Financial Implications

16. There are no financial implications arising from this report.