

21 March 2019

Sport England

Purpose of report

For discussion

Summary

Sport England are presenting on the role of sport on promoting a sense of inclusion and cohesion, and how Sport England are supporting work towards this. The presenters will be Chris Perks, Executive Director Local Delivery, and Ruth Alleyne, Strategic Lead Local Learning and Improvement Hub.

This paper also sets out other points related to physical activity, and our relationship with Sport England, that the Board may wish to consider as part of the discussion.

Recommendations

For discussion, and consideration of how the Board can contribute to, or challenge on, this agenda.

Board members are invited to contribute local examples of good practice in sport and physical activity, where these exist.

Actions

Officers to follow up with Sport England as directed.

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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 24 Leadership Essentials programmes since 2011, involving over 200 councillors.
4. In 2018, we piloted an officer equivalent of the leadership essentials, equipping officers with insight into their own leadership style and how to achieve systems change. A regular programme was rolled out as part of our new 2018-2020 contract and has proven very popular. We are hoping to continue this work with Sport England.
5. Four regional training events and one day events are also planned as part of the contract, but have been delayed in development due to a lack of officer capacity. The new Improvement Adviser will be taking this work forward.

Issues

Local delivery pilots

6. Sport England are undertaking pilots in 12 places to try and better understand their different identities and help people to be active in communities across the country. £30 million is being invested into areas with low rates of physical activity.
7. The LGA assisted with the shortlisting process, and the programme was announced at the LGA Sport Conference 2017.

8. The aim of the pilots is to explore highly local ways of removing barriers to activity, with approaches focusing as widely as housing, transport and public health interventions, as well as more practical steps such as the provision of sports bras to encourage more women to participate.
9. The Birmingham and Solihull pilot is specifically focusing on the role of sport in promoting cohesion, and how this can be measured. The work has been informed by a steering group, with a representative from the LGA's research team to advise. Birmingham's work featured at the Sport Conference 2018 and, as part of a wider presentation, at the regular leadership essentials events held for portfolio holders.

Encouraging more women and girls to be active

10. There are two million fewer women than men regularly playing sport, at every age group. When asked 13 million women say they would like to participate more in sport and physical activity, but just over 6 million of those women are not currently active.
11. Sport England conducted an extensive survey on the views of women on sport, which can be found [here](#), and identified seven principles to inform design of a physical activity offer:
 - 11.1. Change the offer to suit the women you are targeting – don't expect women to change to fit sport and exercise
 - 11.2. Don't just talk about 'sport' – for many women, sport has baggage
 - 11.3. Differentiate sport and exercise from other interests by promoting (not preaching) the additional benefits – sell what your audience is asking for, whether that is socialising, developing skills or spending time with the family
 - 11.4. Seeing is believing. Making sport the 'norm' for women relies on local women of all ages, sizes and faiths not only becoming active but celebrating it and encouraging others to join in
 - 11.5. Use positivity and encouragement to drive action – stimulating action through fear of consequences will have little traction
 - 11.6. Make it easy for women to act: right time, right place, right welcome, right company, right gear
 - 11.7. People make or break the experience – ensure your audience are appropriately supported along the way
12. A number of councils have had success with initiatives aimed at women and girls, as well as BAME groups. Birmingham is a good example of a council reaching both: Their [Big Birmingham](#)

[Bikes](#) project saw 4000 bikes given free to residents in the most deprived wards of the City, reaching an audience of 70% BAME, 60% women, and 50% of whom had never ridden a bike before. They have a similarly positive story to tell about inspiring BAME women to participate in the Birmingham Marathon for the first time.

13. [‘This Girl Can – Fit Got Real’](#) is Sport England’s public campaign to encourage more women to participate in regular physical activity. Information on this campaign is circulated to delegates attending the Sport and Physical Activity Leadership Essentials courses.

Implications for Wales

14. Sport is a devolved matter and Sport England’s work is for England only. We do not have connections with Sport Wales.

Financial Implications

15. None.

Next steps

16. The Board is invited to consider the points raised in the presentation and the paper above, and identify areas where it feels the LGA can add value, support or influence members, or lobby government for action.