

Sport England Implementation Plan (2022-25)

Purpose of report

For discussion.

Summary

This paper outlines key points of Sport England's implementation plan, 'Uniting the Movement'. Chris Perks, Executive Director for Local Delivery at Sport England, will present on the key implications for local government, including how Sport England intends to work with councils to deliver place-based investment in sport and physical activity.

Is this report confidential? Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation/s

That the Board welcomes the direction of the new strategy and implementation plan, and explores the changes that it will bring for Sport England's engagement with local government.

Action/s

Officers to hold a follow up meeting with Sport England to discuss our continuing collaboration to support communities to be active.

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Background

1. [Uniting the Movement](#) is Sport England's 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. The LGA and member councils were involved in a number of formal and informal consultation exercises as part of its development, and the strategy includes a number of elements that reflect this input.
2. The vision identified five key issues and objectives for Sport England over the next ten years:
 - 2.1.1. Recover and reinvent - recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
 - 2.1.2. Connecting communities - Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
 - 2.1.3. Positive experiences for children and young people – unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
 - 2.1.4. Connecting with health and wellbeing - Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
 - 2.1.5. Active environments – Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.
3. The [LGA's response to the announcement of the strategy](#) welcomed its emphasis on partnership working and collaboration, and particularly highlighted the emphasis on BAME communities and those with disabilities who have been more severely impacted by the pandemic.
4. The strategy was accompanied by a [one year implementation plan](#), which included transitional elements of funding to help move from the previous strategy towards the new strategy's objectives.
5. The implementation plan included commitments to:
 - 5.1. Local leisure recovery – Build on the rollout of the £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund, and ensure all the teams across our organisation that engage with the public sector work together to encourage local authorities and the local leisure sector to prioritise active wellbeing as part of local Covid-19 recovery efforts.
 - 5.2. Invest into football and multi-sport community facilities - aim to deliver a new multi-sport approach, acknowledging that football is the most popular team sport, but

facilities have more impact in a community where several sports and activities can be played.

5.3. Health and wellbeing - lay the foundations to further strengthen the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing by continuing to develop important relationships with decision-makers, experts and influential parties, and will work with partners and colleagues to understand the challenges and opportunities in more detail.

6. The [LGA response to the implementation plan](#) agreed that it lays the foundations for the provision of sustainable, inclusive opportunities in sport and activity. It said the LGA looks forward to working collaboratively with Sport England and are pleased to see the first year of the plan emphasizes further investment and collaborative working across all sectors and partners.

Implementation Plan for years 2-4

7. On 2nd December 2021, the [longer term implementation plan](#) was published, setting out Sport England's spending plans for 2022-25.
8. The plan details:
- 8.1. Their ambitions for 2025, showing the biggest opportunities for progress that they can collectively work on to increase activity and level the playing field.
 - 8.2. What they'll do as an organisation to help realise these opportunities, acknowledging they can only do this by working collaboratively.
 - 8.3. Their investment approach until April 2025
 - 8.4. How they'll know if they're successful in their ambitions.
9. The plan makes a significant commitment to tackle inequalities of experience and access, covering: Gender; young adults; older adults; socio-economic deprivation; ethnicity; disability and long-term health inequalities; prejudice and discrimination.
10. The plan also sets out that:
- 10.1. The communities that need the most support to be active will be receiving significantly more investment and resource.
 - 10.2. Local networks of partners will be supported to develop skills and capacity in order to create high quality spaces and places for sport and physical activity, and activate them with great experiences that are designed with communities.
 - 10.3. This collective effort will see the public, private and third sectors and services working better together at a local level to help people be active through a wide range of lenses such as sport, leisure, health, social care, transport and education.
 - 10.4. Using health as an example, physical activity advice and support will be becoming a more routine part of the health and care system offer.
 - 10.5. We'll be better at demonstrating the return on investment for sport and physical activity and other sectors, resulting in further collaborations.

- 10.6. We'll all be acting on our contribution to net zero in our everyday operations, whether that's through the sustainable planning and design of the nation's sport and leisure facilities, or optimising environments for walking and cycling so they're convenient, safe and cost effective.

Implications for local government

11. The plan recognises the significant importance of public sector facilities to this vision, acknowledging that they accounted for [184 million visits during 2019-20 \(P28\)](#). It also identifies local authorities as critical partners in targeting the government's multi-million pound investment into community football, tennis, and multi-sport facilities.
12. There are continuing commitments to invest in leadership development for the workforce and councillors, and to invest in a strategic, place-based way, building on learning from the local delivery pilots.
13. Overall reaction from councils has been positive, with a particular welcome for the focus on tackling inequalities and meeting people where they are. It is understood that this will mean a change of relationship and ways of working/investing for some areas, but the benefits of the commitment to a place-based approach is felt to offset this challenge.
14. The [LGA's response](#) highlighted these points, and welcomed the commitment to work closely with the new Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and to work towards net zero objectives. Calls for work on both these areas were included in 'Securing the future of public sport and leisure'.

Implications for Wales

15. Sport and physical activity is a devolved matter. Sport England's remit is for England only. [Sport Wales has its own strategy](#), and engages with WLGA and Culture and Leisure Officers Wales (CLOW).

Implications for inclusion, diversity and equality

16. Improving equality of access and participation, alongside more inclusive opportunities, is a key goal of the strategy and a major driver of investment plans. We will work with Sport England to ensure councils can fully apply learning and insight gathered at the national level, as well as share their own expertise and insight into engaging with their communities.

Financial Implications

17. None.

Next steps

18. Members are invited to explore the future working relationship between Sport England and councils, including on:
 - 18.1. Place-based investment
 - 18.2. Collaboration on leadership development
 - 18.3. Tackling inequalities
 - 18.4. Strengthening connections with public health and integrated care systems
 - 18.5. Net zero and climate change objectives.
19. Members may also wish to explore the challenges to delivering on this agenda as a result Covid-19, including the reduction in footfall as a result of the latest measures.
20. Officers will continue discussions with Sport England, in line with the steer from members.