



Meeting: Culture, Tourism and Sport Board

Date: 7 December 2022

The Chiles Webster Batson Commission on sport and low income neighbourhoods

Purpose of report

For direction

Summary

The [Chiles Webster Batson Commission](#) explored the importance of sport for young people and their communities, and the role that sport can play in supporting low-income neighbourhoods. It has made a number of recommendations relevant to local government.

The report will be presented by Jane Ashworth, Vice President of StreetGames, and Mark Lawrie, Chief Executive of StreetGames.

Is this report confidential?

No

Recommendation/s

Board members are to note the report and share their thoughts on how we can share the findings more widely and support councils to implement the recommendations.

Contact details

Contact officer: Samantha Ramanah

Position: Adviser – Sport, leisure, physical activity, parks and green spaces

Phone no: 07887 503 136

Email: Samantha.Ramanah@local.gov.uk

The Chiles Webster Batson Commission on sport and low income neighbourhoods

Background

1. The purpose of the [Chiles Webster Batson Commission](#) was to explore the importance of sport for young people and their communities, and the role that sport can play in supporting low-income neighbourhoods. Its key objective was to identify, highlight and amplify the voices of community-based sports organisations.
2. It was an independent and evidence led commission and has focused on listening to the lived and often unheard experiences of children and young people in low-income areas and the neighbourhood level organisations that work to support them.
3. The commission is chaired by:
 - 3.1. Adrian Chiles: a journalist, a radio and television presenter, and a lifelong Baggies fan. He is well known for his work with The One Show and Match of the Day, and is a regular contributor to The Guardian.
 - 3.2. Brendan Batson OBE: a successful football career as a player before serving as the deputy chief executive of the Professional Footballers Association.
 - 3.3. Charlie Webster: a broadcaster, writer and campaigner with a background in elite junior athletics. Born in Sheffield, she made history as the first female presenter of Boxing coverage, and has presented major events such as the Olympics and Wimbledon.
4. The inquiry process ran from January 2020 to mid-2021 and a summative report was published in January 2022. The Commission hosted five round-tables that focused on the following key questions:
 - 4.1. What role do neighbourhood organisations play in social change?
 - 4.2. Why does sport matter to children and young people in left behind neighbourhoods?
 - 4.3. How is sport used by these community organisations as a lever to deliver wider social change?
 - 4.4. What do neighbourhood organisations have to say about what works?

The Commission process and findings were overseen and developed by a team of academics from Leeds Beckett University, in collaboration with the Commission chairs.
5. The LGA was a member of the Expert Advisory Group to the Commission and Councillor Peter Golds presented at the launch of the report.

Commission findings and recommendations

Findings

6. The commission found that children and young people (CYP) from disadvantaged areas continue to be excluded from sport. This is evidenced by data on participation rates and by testimony heard from Roundtable participants.
7. It found that recent strategies to promote participation among this group have largely been unsuccessful because they have been too 'top down' in their development and delivery and have not taken account of the specific needs and preferences of CYP

across diverse communities. Exceptions, such as StreetGames' Doorstep Sport have been successful because they have proactively addressed the barriers that CYP in disadvantaged communities face to participation in sport and been delivered in ways that appeal to those CYP.

8. To enable CYP living in disadvantaged communities to take part in sport and physical activity how they would like, the Commission recommended that provision needs to be built around the needs and assets of individuals and neighbourhoods, using place-based and person-centred approaches. Locally trusted organisations (LTOs) are ideally placed to support this endeavour. They understand local places, have the reach into communities, are trusted by local people, and are connected into local networks. These findings support the emphasis of Sport England's current Uniting the Movement strategy.
9. Working with and supporting LTOs at a strategic level and in the delivery of provision is a practical action to support the aspirations of Uniting the Movement. However, just doing more with LTOs is not a panacea. CYP living in disadvantaged areas continue to be affected – disproportionately compared to their more well-off peers – by broader social issues (e.g. housing, employment, local authority budget cuts) that not only impact on their participation in sport but also their health and wellbeing in general, which need to be addressed. Inequalities in sports participation are a reflection of inequalities in society.

Recommendations

10. The commission made 24 recommendations aimed at policy makers, funders, LTOs and researchers. These focus on building provision around the needs and assets of individuals and neighbourhoods, using place-based and person-centred approaches.
11. A number of these are areas where local government can make a positive impact to this agenda. The top eight recommendations for local government can be found below (see points 11.1 - 11.8). The full list of recommendations can be found on page 28 in Appendix C.
 - 11.1 Work towards a model that provides long-term consistent funding for LTOs who are best able to reach and engage CYP.
 - 11.2 Ensure sport for CYP is included in post-Covid recovery strategies / programmes.
 - 11.3 Think ambitiously about how sport for CYP can have a positive impact on a wide range of government agendas (e.g. Obesity, Levelling Up, mental health) and departments (health, education, crime). Develop a business case for connecting these together.
 - 11.4 Understand the limitations of sport to mitigate the risks associated for CYP living in a disadvantaged neighbourhood. Work with others to take action to address the underlying causes of low participation i.e. income, housing / employment, and education.
 - 11.5 Have greater clarity of purpose re. what organisations are trying to achieve by involving CYP in sport. If this does not yield immediate benefits it will require courage from local leaders.
 - 11.6 Improve capabilities of LTOs via training and skills development e.g. bid writing, financial planning, public health.
 - 11.7 Establish connections between sport workforces in LTOs and statutory services such as public health so they can work together to improve effectiveness.

11.8 Judge success based on what is realistic for organisations to affect in the shorter term i.e. intermediary outcomes. These could include reach, engagement, participation.

Implications for Wales

12. The commission's work covers both England and Wales, with Roundtable participants drawn from both.

Implications for equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

13. EDI is an important priority for the Board and is incorporated throughout its programme of work, including through its publications such as the upcoming sport and leisure briefings.
14. The Commission's focus on the social outcomes that can be achieved through sport and physical activity directly addresses the Board's objective to advocate for sport and leisure services, and improve accessibility and inclusivity within communities.
15. Encouraging the adoption and implementation of some or all of Commission's recommendations would widen the accessibility of services and the enhance their impact.

Financial Implications

16. Work will be undertaken within the Board's budget.

Next steps

17. The Board is asked for its views on the recommendations, and to identify how it can best support councils to learn from and implement relevant recommendations locally.
18. Board members are asked to identify local examples of effective practice and partnerships that could be developed as case studies or presentations as part of the LGA's leadership development programmes.

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ANNEX C

Please see the document titled appendix c in the folder