
SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Nick Wallis
Leisure and Local Environment Portfolio**

Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Director of Economic Growth

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the Darlington Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2014-2019 and seek Members' endorsement of the Strategy. A copy of the document is attached at **Appendix 1.**

Summary

2. The current Strategy expired in 2011 and we, therefore, need to prepare a new Strategy. For the purpose of this Strategy, sport and physical activity is defined as:

“...all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels.”
(Council of Europe, European Sports Charter, 2001).
3. The new Strategy is deliberately succinct, reflects on past achievements and identifies the challenges and opportunities ahead, which are made more difficult by the economic climate and the pressure on public sector finances.
4. This new Strategy sets out our fifteen year Ambitions and five year Outcomes and is supported by an Action Plan which identifies twelve Priority Actions to be implemented over the next two years. The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Delivery of the Strategy's objectives will require contributions from a range of agencies and organisations across all sectors.
5. The overall aim of the Strategy is to enable more Darlington residents to be more active, more often. It is focussed around three Ambitions:
 - (a) To contribute to the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents by increasing participation in sport and physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour.

- (b) To achieve a sustainable framework for the provision of sport and physical activity across public, private and voluntary sector partners and,
 - (c) To contribute to the social and economic life of the Borough through a broad and diverse sport and physical activity offer.
6. The Draft Strategy was endorsed for public consultation by Members of Place Scrutiny on 17 October 2013. Various clubs, groups, organisations and stakeholders were consulted between 26 November and 13 December 2013. As a result of comments received, minor amendments have been made to the Strategy. No consultees suggested any new Priority Actions. Therefore, the final Strategy and Priority Action Plan is largely the same as the consultation draft.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that Council adopt the Darlington Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2014 – 2019 and to agree it as part of the Policy Framework.

Reasons

8. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons :-
- (a) A revised Sport and Physical Activity Strategy is required to replace the existing Strategy which expired in 2011.
 - (b) The revised Strategy reflects the recent changes in the national and local government finances, including the need to maximise the contribution from the voluntary and community sectors.
 - (c) The Strategy provides a clear set of objectives and actions to enable more Darlington residents to be more active, more often.

Richard Alty
Director of Economic Growth

Background Papers

Technical Workstream Reports on:

- (i) Community Value of Sport:
- (ii) Economic Value of Sport and Physical Activity:
- (iii) Play:
- (iv) Public Health:
- (v) Sport and Physical Activity

Bryan Huntley: Extension 2623

S17 Crime and Disorder	Providing opportunities for sport and physical activity should have a positive impact on crime and disorder by offering an alternative to anti-social behaviour
Health and Well Being	There is strong evidence that sport and physical activity help us to live longer and healthier lives and promote wellbeing by reducing stress, anxiety and depression
Carbon Impact	The provision and access to local facilities should reduce the need to travel by car.
Diversity	The Strategy has been the subject of an Equalities Impact Assessment
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	The plan is part of the Policy Framework.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy supports the vision and outcomes of the Darlington Partnership by seeking to make sure that everyone has access to sport and physical activity, irrespective of social, economic and environmental constraints.
Efficiency	Those who deliver sport and physical activity must demonstrate efficiency in delivery and planning.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

9. The current Strategy expired in 2011 and we, therefore, need to prepare a new Strategy. The Strategy reflects on past achievements and identifies various key challenges moving forward. These are:
 - (a) How do we and our partners increase participation rates with fewer resources and continue to develop excellence in sport?
 - (b) How can we use sport and physical activity to prevent disease and improve health?
 - (c) How can we reduce the gap in participation rates between the most and the least active communities?
 - (d) How do we empower citizens to provide and operate services for themselves?
10. These challenges sit within economic landscapes which are substantially different from those of the previous Strategy. Disposable incomes have contracted as unemployment has increased and as wages are either frozen or increased below inflation rates. Local Authorities' grant settlements from Central Government have been reduced and further cuts are expected in the future. At the same time, Authorities are facing rising costs in social care, child protection and waste management. This combination of reduced funding and rising costs in statutory services has prompted the Council to scrutinise all leisure services which fail to cover their costs through charges and investigate alternative sources of funding and partnership working.
11. Delivery of the Strategy's objectives will require contributions from a range of agencies and organisations across all sectors. We will therefore need to build on strong relationships and develop new ones with these organisations to make best use of resources. In recognition of the pressures on public sector funding, the Strategy seeks to achieve a model of provision which is self-financing. This model, called Commissioning for Resilience is aimed at encouraging individuals and communities to play a greater role in meeting their own needs and providing their own solutions, initially with support from public funds. The success of the model relies on the gradual reduction of public funding until the services are self-financing.
12. In order to move forward, we first need to have a clear idea of where we want to get to. This new Strategy sets out our fifteen year Ambitions and our five year Outcomes and is supported by an Action Plan which explains how we will deliver and make progress. The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated annually.
13. The overall aim of the Strategy is to enable more Darlington residents to be more active, more often. It is focussed around three Ambitions:
 - (a) To contribute to the health, wellbeing and quality of life of residents by increasing participation in sport and physical activity and reducing sedentary

behaviour.

- (b) To achieve a sustainable framework for the provision of sport and physical activity across public, private and voluntary sector partners and,
- (c) To contribute to the social and economic life of the Borough through a broad and diverse sport and physical activity offer.

14. The Strategy identifies twelve Priority Actions, grouped under eight Outcomes. The Outcomes, which will be implemented over the next five years, are as follows:

Outcome 1: Participation in sport and physical activity has increased across the population as a whole.

Outcome 2: Gaps in the extent of participation between different communities are narrowed.

Outcome 3: Clear pathways enable individuals to reach their full potential within their chosen sport.

Outcome 4: A high quality community sport and physical activity infrastructure is in place across the Borough.

Outcome 5: Access to quality provision of recreational facilities for sport and physical activity has improved.

Outcome 6: Partners work together to achieve wider social outcomes through sport and physical activity.

Outcome 7: Sport and physical activity offer across the Borough is sustainable.

Outcome 8: Partners understand how to support and influence sport and physical activity behaviour.

15. The twelve Priority Actions, which will be implemented over the next two years, include a rationale to justify each Action and milestones to track progress on implementing the Action Plan. The Action Plan includes projects to increase participation in targeted groups; such as children and young people, girls, those who are disabled, those from ethnic minority groups and those who require additional help to participate. There are Actions to help local sports clubs and community groups; to increase the public availability of sports facilities in education establishments and, to encourage the sharing of resources and improve efficiencies in delivery. The Strategy also includes key performance indicators identifying what will be measured, how and by whom.

16. The Strategy therefore reflects well the priorities in One Darlington : Perfectly Placed and also the three conditions set out in the Council's Draft MTFP (Stronger Communities, Every Public Pound spent wisely and Economic Growth).

Equalities Impact Assessment

17. An initial Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken on an early draft of the Strategy. The self-assessment concluded that the Strategy would probably have a medium positive impact on most vulnerable groups, as it will provide them with the opportunity to take part in sport and physical activities more easily, and a nil impact on the rest.
18. A further Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken on the consultation draft Strategy. This Assessment concluded that the consultation Strategy would probably ensure support for the groups within society who require it the most. Representatives of vulnerable groups (including new mothers, those with disabilities, those from BME groups and faith groups) were then contacted and, as a result of the feedback, the following suggestions were considered:
 - (a) The strategy has the potential to be very positive for Darlington, ensuring that priority groups within society receive the most support to be active.
 - (b) Partners and community groups welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the strategy, and appreciated being consulted in terms of ensuring equality of impact.

Outcome of Consultation

19. The Draft Strategy has been prepared by a multi-disciplinary Project Team comprising Council officers and representatives from external agencies such as; Sport England and Tees Valley Sport. The Draft Strategy was sent to other partners and organisations such as; sports clubs and community organisations for their comments and suggestions. The public consultation period for the Draft Strategy ran between 26 November and 13 December 2013 with details available on the Council's website.
20. Only a few responses were received which, it is felt, reflects general support for the document, the realistic view taken on what can be achieved and the succinct, clear format that has been used. Where suggested amendments were felt to be appropriate, changes to the Draft Strategy have been incorporated.