

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles)

Joint Report of Director of City Development and Director of Public Health

Date 18th September 2018

Title: Scrutiny Board Statement: Enabling Active Lifestyles - Response

Summary

In April 2018, following a number of presentations and discussions, the Scrutiny Board (Inclusive Growth, Culture and Sport) published a positive supporting statement on physical activity and enabling active lifestyles.

The Scrutiny Board supported the view that enabling the population of Leeds to be physically active is vital to the health and wellbeing of the city; and would make a significant contribution across all council priorities set out in the Best Council Plan.

As part of its deliberations, the Scrutiny Board received a presentation of a new approach to a Physical Activity and Sport strategy in early 2018. However, working with numerous stakeholders, thinking has now evolved, resulting in a more considered approach being required, which seeks to bring about greater step change in outcomes. This new approach will lead to the development and implementation of a new “Ambition” for Physical Activity and Sport.

This new approach requires cross-service and cross-agency collaboration and will be driven by the needs of the most deprived communities in Leeds – where health inequalities are highest and participation levels in physical activity the lowest. There is a need to influence the behaviour of the most inactive to evoke a cultural change where being physically active becomes the norm. This approach is not a short-term fix, it has to be a long-term systemic response to physical inactivity that results in significant change.

The City Council has a vital role in the development of a new city Physical Activity and Sport “ambition” which is being led by the Active Leeds Service (formerly Sport and Active Lifestyles Service) together with Public Health and the existing city sports partnership, SportLeeds. .

In responding to the Scrutiny Board statement on Enabling Active Lifestyles, this report outlines progress to date and sets out the proposed next steps for the development of the new “Ambition”.

Main Issues

The case for physical activity and sport is very strong and is supported by the council. In summary the benefits of being active can have significant impacts on:

- A) Health and wellbeing e.g. Reduction in heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, falls, air quality, social isolation

- B) Other wider outcomes e.g. positive impact on the local economy, educational attainment, social inclusion and engagement, a great place to live and work.

As reported to the previous Scrutiny Board, the new Physical Activity and Sport ambition has to be built upon a systems approach. The issue is complex but doing nothing is not an option.

Evidence tells us that getting Leeds active will only happen if we involve all sectors. Despite a raft of schemes and interventions already in place, getting people moving 'at scale' requires bigger system changes. Physical inactivity is not just a public health problem; it is a challenge for all of society. We need to embed physical activity into the fabric of everyday life, making it easy, cost effective and the normal choice in every community in Leeds. Therein rests a major challenge.

Since the establishment of SportLeeds (over 15 years ago) it has overseen the development of sports strategies for the city. SportLeeds has focussed on creating shared aims and objectives, focussing mostly on sport and active lifestyles. However, more recently SportLeeds recognised and supported plans that incorporate wider elements of physical activity (e.g. walking and active travel). The current sport and active lifestyles strategy finishes at the end of 2018 and therefore SportLeeds have initiated a review of the existing strategy with the aim of broadening the remit still further, to fully embrace physical activity and sport. This work is ongoing and included an initial discussion with the previous Scrutiny Board and other stakeholders, which highlighted the need for step change that included the widened scope beyond simply sport and active lifestyles.

More recently a strong desire has been expressed that the new Physical Activity and Sport Ambition should not simply be an evolution of the last strategy. There is also the recognition that whilst the new ambition needs to fully address the physical inactivity challenge, it should also set the framework for the development of sport as well. The decision to produce an ambition, rather than a strategy has come from the stakeholder consultation to date, as has the need to develop a more comprehensive and imaginative approach that looks and feels different and is developed with both stakeholders and our residents.

As referenced, consultation has already started with key stakeholders around the development of the new ambition for Physical Activity and Sport in the knowledge that, given the wider scope of a physical activity, new governance arrangements may be needed that help to increase the gravitas of senior stakeholder engagement. Therefore in parallel to the development of a new Ambition there will be ongoing discussions about the most appropriate governance arrangements.

Early stakeholder discussions have helped evolve a view on what the Ambition might be. The vision statement will be subject to further discussion and consultation but, for illustrative purposes, this could for example build on the "Best City" principle e.g. "Leeds to be the best city in which to be active".

To provide further illustration the following four primary outcomes have also been expressed:

DRAFT Ambition and Outcomes

Ambition: “Leeds to be the best city in which to be active”

Primary outcomes

- A long term commitment to increasing physical activity levels in the city, especially where levels of inactivity of persistently high.
- Building, creating and enabling an environment that supports systems/collaborative working
- Building our national and international reputation for World Class Sport
- Delivering wider community and personal benefit through physical activity and sport

As referenced, the previous Scrutiny Board considered the likely challenges to be faced while seeking to make the city more active. Their concluding statement included the following;

“In light of the significant health and socio-economic benefits to be gained through enabling more active lifestyles, it is vital that we continue to work proactively towards embedding physical activity into the fabric of everyday life, making it easy, cost effective and the normal choice in every community in Leeds”. (Inclusive Growth Culture and Sport Scrutiny Board 2018)

This update illustrates the work that is ongoing in driving forward work on physical activity, building upon the Scrutiny Board statement. Further work is still required and whilst Physical Activity and Sport does have prominence in current Council strategic documents, it was a request of the previous Scrutiny Board that the next iteration of the Best Council Plan should consider further, more explicit references to the Physical Activity and Sport agenda.

The Active Leeds Service

Attention is drawn to the role of the Active Leeds service (formerly the Sport and Active Lifestyles service). Working alongside colleagues in Public Health this change is designed to reinforce the seriousness of driving the physical activity and sport agenda. While it is not the sole responsibility of the service to increase levels of physical activity, it does have a specific role to play in both helping to drive and influence the overall strategic direction, as well as directly providing some key services. In summary the Active Leeds service has:

- Provided the strategic leadership for Physical Activity and Sport, including supporting the development of the new Ambition.
- Renamed the service to further underline its core purpose and to reinvigorate engagement with staff and stakeholders.
- Focussed development work around reducing inactivity; increasing levels of physical activity; reducing health inequalities; working in our most deprived communities and with under-represented groups.

- Worked extensively with key services such as Public Health, Communities, Parks and Countryside, Highways and Transportation, Children's and Families, and Planning.
- Strengthened our work in key areas. e.g. . For example, digital channels of communication, whereby the service is now ready to fully launch the new "Active Leeds App" which provides better access to Active Leeds Services, including bookings, memberships, and community information. The app has huge future potential to reach out to residents and partners.
- The service is also making connections locally through the localities team. A Sport England funded piece of research is underway that will help better understand pre-systems thinking. The work is being led by Social marketing gateway (SMG) and the outcomes will help inform the development of the new Ambition
- The service is also currently exploring how we can work better locally in priority communities, connecting with other key service areas e.g. Employment and Skills and Housing.

Next steps

A summary of the key next steps on the preparation of the Physical Activity and Sport Ambition are outlined below;

- The production of an animation to help in having conversations about what 'the Best City to be active in' could look like.
- Design an extensive consultation process that engages stakeholders, residents and community experts to ensure the ambition is co-produced and meaningful to the City.
- Consider and implement an appropriate governance model, in line with the overall timescales for developing the ambition.
- Learn from locality based research into systems approaches.

It is anticipated that in order to be conducted effectively, these next steps could take up to 12 months to be concluded. .