



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18TH FEBRUARY 2014

SUBJECT: GWENT COLLABORATION FUNDING

REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of progress with the Gwent Sport and Leisure Collaboration Project. Members are also asked to support the proposed approach for further collaboration.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report outlines to Members the guiding principles of collaboration, a summary of progress to date and sets out proposals for further collaboration.
- 2.2 There is recognition from each of the Senior Leisure Officers in the 5 Local Authorities (Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Newport) that if we are to get more people in our communities to lead active lifestyles we need to work far more collaboratively.
- 2.3 Priority areas have been identified and the early signs of progress are evident and recognised with the offer of additional grant aid to develop the project to the next stage. This further funding has been offered by SportWales and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent to expand the 'Positive Futures' programme across Gwent.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Gwent Collaborative Project aims to respond to the drivers for change in sport and physical activity. In addition to the Simpson Compact, these are Climbing Higher, Creating an Active Wales and the Vision for Sport in Wales.
- 3.2 The Welsh Audit Office Report of 2010 on the progress of local authority physical activity plans (LAPA's) stated that further regional collaboration is required if we are to improve current delivery mechanisms.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 There were no formal collaborative arrangements between Gwent Local Authorities for developing and delivering Sport and Leisure Services. Each of the Local Authority Chief Officers across Gwent nominated a Senior Officer to establish a Task and Finish Group, with clear reference to drive change across Gwent (This Group is Chaired by David Phenis).
- 4.2 The first task was to agree some key principles for collaboration and identify priority areas for improvement and action.

4.3 The following highlights some of the progress made within the key principles for collaboration:

- Valid accurate data is now shared and used to underpin decisions that lead to new ways of working to increase participation in sport and physical activity.
- Benchmarking is far more effective and used to formally share excellence across the region and to encourage more consistent service improvement.
- The development of our workforce has improved the capacity and quality of staff and enhanced service delivery.
- Access to services for residents across the region providing joined up and consistency in service delivery.
- The creation of a fit for purpose regional scrutiny board providing a quarterly environment of challenge and support on the regional priority area scorecards. Targets have been set to monitor progress against key performance indicators.

4.4 The group has a collective energy to enhance collaboration to ultimately improve outcomes for the people of Gwent. The group has a headline scorecard that provides the focus with the following priorities for improvement in service delivery:-

- Aquatics
- Systems and data
- Workforce
- Physical Literacy
- Positive Futures

4.5 A summary of progress and planned future actions within each priority:-

Aquatics

- 9% increase in club membership and 20% increase on over 60's free swims
- However school swimming lesson results are getting worse and need to be a priority focus.
- Improved quality of swim teachers needs to be a priority with any future funding.
- Aqua passport is being rolled out consistently with the same framework in each local authority.
- Implications of reduction in free swim grant requires further clarification.

Systems and data

- Data collection is far more accurate, consistent and meaningful and is used to manage performance and to inform decisions. This data is also being used to influence policy at Welsh Government, SportWales, Welsh Local Government Association etc.
- There is an aspiration to explore the potential of a Gwent wide Smart Card, the benefits of a package for Corporate Membership, a regional facilities audit and review and a data cloud for sharing information.
- Funding has been secured to adopt a Gwent wide approach to market segmentation.

Workforce

- Excellent progress has been made in this area with significant additional investment from SportWales to support improved quality of our workforce.
- Success is particularly evident in the mentoring scheme which is now supporting our Community Clubs with a target of a 30% increase in club membership.
- This has been a real test case for collaboration with the pooling of funding, the sharing of resources and expertise.
- The priority is to work with our "thriving clubs" to assist in the building of volunteers and club infrastructure.

Physical Literacy

- Much progress has been made to improve the competency levels of children in Gwent.
- However, data from the 2013 School Sport Survey shows there is a drop in frequent participation as pupils get older. Evidence also shows that if children are physical literate (competent) they are more likely to stay hooked on sport.
- Evidence also shows that there is a need to start earlier with a focus now planned for

pupils aged 3-7 years and also to improve provision in community settings (currently only 3% of 3 – 7 years olds are involved in community settings).

Positive Futures

- This is a new and exciting opportunity proposed for 2014. Positive Future aims to engage with challenging and at risk young people in deprived communities using sport as an engagement tool. This programme is only currently being delivered in Newport.
- Positive Futures has been recognised by Estyn as “Excellent” and achieved ‘Gold Status’ (1 of only 8 in the UK) and has significantly improved the outcomes of many young people in Newport.
- The group have been approached by the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner with the offer of initially £100,000 in funding to roll-out this programme across Gwent. The PCC recognises the successful outcomes of the programme. This is also recognised by the offer to match fund from SportWales.
- The future success of Positive Futures will rely on effective partnership working with a range of partners including: the Police, Social Services, Youth Offending Service, alternative education providers, Community First etc.
- Discussions are still at an early stage but these are encouraging signs of significant investment being made available to improve the outcomes of our most at risk young people in our communities.

4.6 There is a visible excitement across all officers in “Team Gwent” that this collaborative approach is already making an impact regionally without effecting local delivery. The aim is to become the number one Welsh Region for the number of people regularly participating in Sport and leading active lifestyles.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no equality implications associated with this report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are significant positive financial implications with this project with no risk to Caerphilly County Borough Council budgets.

6.2 SportWales has already allocated approximately £72,000 towards this project with a proposal for a further £350,000 for 2013/14.

6.3 The Gwent PCC has initially offered £100,000 towards the roll out of Positive Futures with a view to further support depending on successful outcomes.

6.4 Discussions are still ongoing regarding the lead local authority for hosting and managing the budgets.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There is no risk to any current staff through this project, however, there should be employment opportunities following the securing of additional grant funding. Indeed the core principle of this approach is to up-skill staff to improve the quality of service delivery.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The report reflects the views of the listed consultees.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the progress of this collaborative approach and the potential benefits.
- 9.2 Officers prepare a further report to be presented to Scrutiny with a more detailed analysis of Caerphilly's performance against the other Local Authorities.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The health profiles of the population across Gwent are amongst the worst in Europe, there is a need to share expertise and work in partnership if we are to address the health inequalities across our communities and encourage all people to lead active lifestyles.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government and Housing Acts.

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Councillor David Poole, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services
Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Mike Eedy, Finance Manager
Jared Lougher, Sport and Leisure Development Manager
Councillor Tudor Davies, Chairman of Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Gwent Regional Scorecard 2014-15
Appendix 2 Gwent Regional LAPA Plan