

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

Cabinet
18 April 2023

Report Title: Active Lifestyles Strategy 2023-2028

Submitted by: Deputy Chief Executive

Portfolios: Leisure, Culture & Heritage

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To outline to Cabinet the proposed Active Lifestyles Strategy.

Recommendation

That Cabinet approves the Active Lifestyles Strategy 2023-2028 for consultation, and authorises the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture & Heritage to finalise and adopt the strategy following the consultation process.

Reasons

The Council has an adopted Sport and Active Lifestyle Strategy 2016-26, whilst this strategy is not out of date; there have been a number of changes in the leisure sector, not least the significant impact that Covid has had on individuals' choice of leisure activity. It is therefore considered appropriate that the Cabinet considers consulting on and adopting an updated strategy.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 The Council's Sport and Active Lifestyle Strategy 2016-26 sets out five strategic aims to increase participation, develop sporting pathways, communicate opportunities, support those working and volunteering in sport and maintaining facilities. Whilst these remain important aspects, the Council in partnership with key sporting governing bodies and local delivery companies (many of which are grass roots organisations), should seek to maintain an up to date strategy and actions.
- 1.2 A new Active Lifestyles Strategy is proposed for 2023-2028. This has been drafted to take into account the new Council Plan, changes to the leisure sector post Covid and the current pressures facing all providers with increased cost of living. The benefits of an active lifestyle on health is also increasingly important and the new strategy seeks to recognise this and highlights potential actions to specific target health problems.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The strategy will provide the opportunity for the Council, partners, and stakeholders to establish priorities for the next five years. The need for a robust strategy is vital with public sector resources reducing, the need to ensure the commercial operation of services, the Council's aspirations to become carbon neutral by 2030, whilst the needs and expectations of customers and partners remain high. The strategy will also set out how leisure services contribute to the wider picture in terms of the social value of services, the contribution to safer and stronger communities, the environment, and reducing health inequalities in the Borough.
- 2.2 The Leisure Strategy is aligned to other local and national strategies such as, Public Health England "Everybody Active Every Day", Department of Culture Media and Sport "Sporting Future, A new Strategy for and Active Nation", Sport England "Uniting The Movement", together Active (county Sports Partnership) "Step Up, Staffordshire County Councils "Health and Wellbeing Strategy", And the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-26. In accordance with our commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant, it also pledges to explore opportunities to improve access to leisure opportunities for our Armed Forces community and veterans.
- 2.3 The attached Active Lifestyles Strategy sets out the vision 'to provide a range of opportunities for residents to enjoy a more active lifestyle'. This is to reflect that for many people regular competitive sport is an important part of their life but equally there are many residents who live sedentary lifestyles (perhaps as a result of Covid) or with health concerns and that they need encouragement and support to increase their activity.
- 2.4 Over the last few years there have been many notable successes which the Strategy recognises and seeks to build on:
- Delivered the refurbishment and reopening of Kidsgrove Sports Centre. The centre has been transferred to a local trust and is now once again serving the community.
 - Delivered a new BMX Pump Track and new 3G football pitches in Kidsgrove for community use.
 - Delivered improvement to Jubilee 2, including the renewal of all gym equipment and addressing legacy issues concerning build quality, ready to support more residents in achieving their fitness goals. Development of the Wellness Hub with assisted exercise machines to support a range of customers with health needs.
 - Worked in partnership to deliver the Queens Baton Relay events as part of the Commonwealth Games celebrations.
 - Established a robust school swimming service, after the cancellation of the County service.
 - The first Local authority to be Water Wellbeing accredited leading to being a finalist in the Swim England Awards and awards for the Health Impacts of the Good Boost programme.
 - Exercise and mindful movement programme accessible to all set up for the Covid pandemic and now available to local residents and beyond.
 - Installation of the Poolview drowning detection system increasing safety and resulting in revenue savings of circa £60,000 per year.
 - Successful pilot of the long covid programme to deliver health outcomes.
 - GP referral scheme established for the NHS Cardiac Team.
 - Successful delivery of the SPACE programme in partnership with the Police to deliver outcomes relating to anti-social behaviour and youth engagement.
 - Secured funding from the Lawn tennis Association to enhance tennis facilities at Westland's Tennis Centre and Wolstanton Park.

- Improved insight concerning the delivery of services through Sport England's Moving communities platform.

2.5 The proposed Strategy sets out three Aims:

- To enable residents to participate in regular activity, including sports centres, informal sports settings and outdoor space.
- To provide opportunities and targeted support for those with health needs.
- To work in partnership to provide a wide range of quality sustainable leisure and sporting opportunities.

2.6 The document outlines a range of actions to deliver these aims, with the new strategy more specific on the areas the Council is seeking to support improvements with more detailed actions. Some of them are direct services and improvements to the offer at Jubilee 2 and other wider Council assets such as our sporting facilities and parks. Others are the opportunities for active leisure provided by other companies or groups. The borough has a good range of sporting providers from the Community Interest Company running Kidsgrove Leisure Centre, significant groups such as Newcastle Football Club, down to grass roots sport clubs such as Kidsgrove Ski Club and individual run exercise classes like Yoga ran in community centres.

2.7 Wherever possible the strategy is to support sporting clubs to maintain and grow their offer. Working alongside the national sporting bodies is key to ensuring the offer matches local need and the quality expected within the sector.

3. **Proposal**

3.1. That Cabinet approves the Active Lifestyles Strategy 2023-2028 for consultation, and authorises the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture & Heritage to finalise and adopt the strategy following the consultation process.

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 The Council has an adopted Sport and Active Lifestyle Strategy 2016-26, whilst this strategy is not out of date; there has been a number of changes in the leisure sector, not least the significant impact that Covid has had on individual's choice of leisure activity. It is therefore considered appropriate that the Cabinet considers consulting and adopting an up to date strategy.

5. **Options Considered**

Option 1 – Do nothing

5.1 If the Council did not have an up to date Strategy there is a risk that officers / members / partner organisations / residents would not be clear on the Council's priorities and plans.

Option 2 – Members accept this report / Strategy

5.2 This provides clear priorities and actions for the forthcoming years.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 It is not a statutory requirement for the Council to prepare an Active Lifestyles Strategy though it is good practice to do so.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 The Active Lifestyles Strategy is intended to promote the active lifestyles for everyone living and working in the Borough, the provision of the opportunity to exercise on targeted programmes such as Good Boost enable residents to make sustained health benefits when recovering from illnesses. The Council is continuing to work with health professionals to raise the profile of the benefits of exercise and will wherever possible seek health commissioned projects.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 This report sets out the strategic direction and actions intended to deliver the objectives of the Council. Where there are new programmes considered or changes to the resources required to deliver action these will be subject to further Cabinet reports for specific consideration of the financial implications. The strategy identifies a number of sporting developments or refurbishments, where these include grant funding from sporting bodies or if the Council awards direct Council funding then the project has or will be considered by Cabinet as appropriate.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 By having a clear up to date Active Lifestyles Strategy the Council aims to minimise the risk that there is objection to the priorities and that when these are subject to separate reports Members can see that they contribute to the overall strategy delivery.

9.2 Individual projects and operation of J2 are subject to their own risk assessments.

10. **UN Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Change Implications**

10.1 This Strategy is intended to ensure that Council seeks to invest and work in partnership to deliver projects that support the wider active lifestyles of residents of the borough. In that respect, the strategy supports the realisation of the following UNSDG objectives:-



11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 The Strategy affects more than 2 wards.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 Cabinet 19th October 2016

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Active Lifestyles Strategy

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 None