

The future of sports & leisure

An e-publication compiled of papers written by members of the APSE national sports and leisure advisory group.



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Introduction

Sport and leisure has never been so high on the Government's agenda with its important contribution to healthy living, social inclusion, anti-social behaviour, crime, educational achievement, regeneration and liveability. The recognition of the value of sports and leisure in developing holistic responses to these agendas is welcomed by APSE and is long overdue.



Key developments have included:

- ♦ 'Choosing Activity' in England, 'Towards a Healthier Scotland,' 'Climbing Higher in Wales' and 'Fit Futures' in Northern Ireland establishing the important role of physical activity in the health agenda.
- ♦ The creation of the Scottish Physical Activity and Health Council.
- ♦ The appointment of a Minister for Fitness, Caroline Flint, to suppress incidence rates of obesity; by focusing on physical activity and looking at how different government departments contribute to this in a more co-ordinated fashion.
- ♦ CPA - The Harder Test has put leisure on a level playing-field with other council services through the inclusion of the Culture Block.
- ♦ Local Area Agreements are focusing councils and their partners on the health of their communities and the role that sports and leisure can play.
- ♦ The White Paper, 'Strong and prosperous communities' has a clear focus on 'health and well-being' and aims to make it easier for local authorities and NHS bodies to work together.

The Audit Commission report 'Public sports and recreation services' published in June 2006 highlights the importance of sports and recreation in securing the economic, social and environmental well-being of communities. The report argues that how councils choose the level and range of public sports and recreation provision and how well they work in partnership with others will be significant in determining how effectively councils are exercising the Local Government Act 2000. The report argues that public expenditure on sports and recreation has not kept pace with the deteriorating condition of facilities. Moreover, there are now fewer new public facilities being built as local government funds are focussed on education, social services and environmental services. The report recommends that councils should improve the strategic planning of sports and recreation provision and link the contribution of sport and recreation services to corporate priorities and community needs.

APSE would encourage the further recognition of the important role played by local authority leisure. This means creating a joined up policy framework to put councils at the heart of developing and delivering on healthy communities, channelling funding through local authorities and making leisure a statutory obligation. Local Government is uniquely placed to deliver on these agendas by co-ordinating strategy and provision with other departments and services such as parks and open spaces, healthy schools and services to older people and co-ordinating with other bodies such as the police and health sectors. Partnership working can result in not only efficiencies but also providing responsive, personalised, seamless services to the public.

This publication contains research from members of the APSE Sports and Leisure Advisory Group on some of the issues affecting local authorities in the next 2-5 years. The views expressed in these research papers may not necessarily be the views of APSE. We would like to thank those who have contributed to this publication.

Debbie Johns
Principal Advisor

Recruitment in the Sport and Leisure Industry

Author: Alison O'Neill, Assistant Head of Community Services (Sport & Leisure), Sunderland City Council

Recruitment to managerial posts in local government sport and leisure teams has presented a real challenge in recent years. The reasons for this are difficult to determine and could be numerous. But there is no doubt, that there is less interest in managerial vacancies in sport and leisure, fewer applications for posts and what appears to be, a lower calibre of applicant than ten years ago.



The question of competitive salaries is worthy of consideration and whether when advertising nationally, a salary of less than £40k is enough to attract a candidate from outside of a region. At this salary level, it is likely that candidates will be expected to have a number of years of managerial experience and will therefore, be of an age where they have the range of commitments which are often associated with someone who is beyond graduate status. Much is being done in Sunderland to ensure that the City Council realises its aspiration to become the regional 'employer of choice'. However, attracting high calibre employees is a difficult balancing act, weighing up whether employees are sufficiently motivated by the post, combined with the salary package on offer, to 'uproot' and potentially move to another part of the country.

Not insignificant sums of money have been spent on advertising managerial sport and leisure posts recently, for vacancies in the £30k - £50k bracket and yet the response from outside of the region has been limited for such posts.

Times in Sunderland are certainly changing and innovative strategies are being developed to recruit top talent. Sunderland's Local Strategic Partnership, through its Community Strategy, recognises and has published its commitment that, 'Sunderland will be a prosperous city and be a desirable, safe and healthy place to live, work, learn and visit'. Significant progress has already been made with regard to the City's infrastructure, housing and creating cultural opportunities. Sunderland is a City changing for the better, and it is 'this change' we are promoting to prospective employees. It is important, particularly when advertising nationally, to ensure that your town or city is reflected in a positive way, together with the performance of your local authority. In sport and leisure we have made

dramatic changes in infrastructure and developed projects of national significance, with the hope of exciting and enthusing dedicated professionals to 'take a leap'.

We have recognised that to recruit to the highest calibre we need to compete with other organisations and sectors. Indeed, where we believe that poor response levels are linked to competition from other sectors, we know we need to raise our game.

Competing with other sectors and in particular the private sector on salaries, is often very difficult for a local authority, so we recognise that non-financial incentives may be a way in which it is possible to attract a potential employee. These non-financial incentives may include, promoting the recently reviewed flexible working conditions, generous annual leave packages or subsidised access to Fitness and Wellness Centres.

Notwithstanding the importance of non-financial incentives, we have made great strides to modernise pay structures, particularly in the area of health and wellness. Private sector fitness operators are able to offer financial incentives to staff to meet membership sales targets. In response to the challenge of tackling health and inequalities, the Council took the decision in 2004, to take back 'in house' a successful fitness operation. To some extent this bucked a national trend of outsourcing, however we had done our homework and were clear of the financial and wider social benefits of our actions. In the public sector, financial incentives at lower and middle management level are often very difficult to implement, however we knew we needed to change our approach if we were to continue with a successful fitness service. Therefore, we have reformed pay structures to maintain staff incentives and in the process, ensured that membership sales in our Wellness Centres are able to sustain a thriving operation.

We have learnt not only from the private sector, but also other in house service areas, and use their examples of good practice by maintaining a workforce strategy and planning for staff turnover. Some local authority services by their nature are used to a high staff turn over, such as building cleaning and catering. Over the past three years we have worked closely with cleaning and catering colleagues, to monitor their response to staff turnover and ensured we future proof our recruitment strategy.

We believe however we must invest in the future. If candidates have in the main, been recruited from either within the region, or have been internal appointments, then there needs to be a greater emphasis on the use of succession development programmes to develop internal talent. Through a well managed appraisal process we are able to track employees training requirements and develop a training plan that is both sustainable and realistic. In sport and leisure our approach towards developing talent from within the organisation has been very good, particularly in lower and middle management positions. The wide range of services we deliver enables healthy secondment opportunities to broaden employee's horizons.

As part of the succession development programme we have established more formal partnership arrangements, to work with other organisations to develop a network that identifies potential employees. These partner organisations include Skills Active and Sunderland University, to develop graduate programmes. Equally our links with UK Skills through representation on the Regional Panel for National Training Awards provides opportunities to learn from best practise across all sectors.

Our view is the only way to sustain the sport and leisure industry is to invest in not only graduates, but also young people who have drive and are passionate about the industry. With young people as our future target employees, we have worked closely with one of our sport colleges to develop apprenticeships at junior, modern and advance levels. We are in year two of the modern apprenticeship and year one at junior level. Vocational training and work place learning is at the heart of what we are trying to achieve. Three apprentices have already been accepted at Carnegie College and we hope to retain the best students as employees of the Council, if they consider moving straight into the employment market. It is hoped that this model will be expanded to our other two City sports colleges in the near future.

Working with colleagues in sports colleges, we have shared similar experiences, particularly in terms of the difficulties schools continue to face in terms of teacher recruitment and retention. Central Government are trying to make a difference by increasing teacher recruitment advertisements. Is this something we can learn from?

Whilst we can only comment on the northern recruitment market with any confidence, we would assume that some of the issues in this paper affect all local authorities throughout the country. Sport and leisure is intrinsically different to other employment markets and therefore it is important that we as an industry share our experiences. APSE have made great efforts to bring this issue to the table, however, it is for ourselves who work in local government to implement change.

The role of leisure in curbing anti-social behaviour

Author: John Pearse, Operational Manager, Cardiff Council

Cardiff Council's Parks Services are part of a Welsh Assembly Government scheme funding pilot projects to combat a variety of anti social behaviour problems across Wales. The Cardiff project, the Parks Community Safety Initiative is aimed at curtailing the anti social behaviour within our parks and across Cardiff's public open space.

Probably in common with many other urban areas across the UK, parks based staff in Cardiff routinely report problems with gangs of youths, underage drinking, joyriding, illegal use of motorcycles, arson, vandalism, rough sleeping, litter, fly tipping and numerous other anti-social activities. This behaviour has increased the public's resistance to using parks, increased our costs, and giving a perception of parks having 'no go' areas and reducing public confidence in the service generally.

The Parks Community Safety Initiative has been created with the objective to reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB) in parks and open spaces and to give a lasting mechanism by which ASB can be actioned within the Parks Service. The funding primarily created and developed a team of three accredited parks-based Community Safety Officers (CSO's) to advise and support Park Rangers. The project targeted the following ASB:

- ♦ The illegal use of off-road motorcycles/quads directing the Council's off-road team and liaising with South Wales Police.
- ♦ To link with the Arson Reduction team in combating joyriding and burnt out cars.
- ♦ Tackle drug and alcohol abuse in Parks (over 800 needles were recovered in 04/05).
- ♦ To work with play service providers to identify and create primary diversionary schemes and develop alternative play strategies within the Council.

The whole project is co-ordinated by the Parks Services Chief Ranger and is now an integral part of Park's Ranger Service.



The project has had particular success in combating the illegal use of off-road motorcycles on Council land. Joint operations between Park Rangers, CSO's and South Wales Police have targeted particular problem areas of the city and about 25 operations are carried out per year, some of which involved use of the Police helicopter. To date, within Cardiff, over 1,000 1st stage cautions have been issued with many bikes impounded, seized and crushed. One recent operation, carried out over two days as a demonstration for a neighbouring authority with similar problems, produced the following results:-

- ♦ 24 motorbikes and quad bikes seized
- ♦ 17 Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 warnings issued (vehicles used in a manner causing alarm, distress or annoyance).
- ♦ 32 ASBO referrals
- ♦ 16 people summonsed for motoring offences
- ♦ 1 person arrested for driving whilst disqualified and under the influence of alcohol

The enforcement approach has led to a rapid decline in the use of illegal motorcycles; however at the same time the Project Co-ordinator has realised, through analysis of recorded data and interviews with perpetrators, that there is a latent demand for a dedicated motorcycling facility where bikes can be ridden in relative safety and in a controlled environment. The project has therefore identified a suitable site and has secured further grant funding from the Community Safety Partnership to develop a dedicated off-road motorcycling track. The funding, £188,000 over a 2 ½ year period, will construct and staff an old land fill site in a heavily industrialised part of Cardiff giving the project both an enforcement programme and a facility provision to combat motorcycle issues across the city.

The key partners in this project are the Council, the South Wales Police, the Autocycle Union as well as the commercial sector, who recognise the demand from legal riders wanting to develop riding skills and are willing to pay for such a facility. This commercial interest provides the future partnership needed to sustain the track after the initial grant has expired.

All partners have one goal, which is to provide a sustainable facility that will serve both the legal riders and the riders, who without this facility would probably ride across parks and open spaces endangering themselves and others.

Obesity: small change - big difference. Are you ready for the challenge?

Author: Ian R Redfern, Leisure Services and Sports Development Manager, Northampton BC

Media coverage relating to the rise in incidence of obesity in the UK, amongst children and adults, is now a frequent feature and normally highlights startling predictions and costs for the future, especially in the next three years to 2010. Obesity is one of the biggest health issues facing the UK, with astronomical costs looming. It is estimated that the current cost to the economy, of obesity related health issues, stands at £1.6 billion per annum, estimated to rise to £3.6 billion by 2010.



In the face of adversity there are real opportunities for the Leisure Service and Sports Development providers to make significant, lasting changes to people's lifestyles and ultimately quality of health. Thousands of people of all ages are fighting excess weight issues without:

- ♦ Support
- ♦ A plan

And perhaps more importantly:

- ♦ Without understanding

The whole situation is much more than willing oneself to eat less food. Obesity is a result of energy imbalance - an individual consumes more calories than they use.

Central Government in England has recently appointed a Minister for Fitness whose brief is to suppress incidence rates of obesity. However, is this a gimmick to shift attention away from the government's failure to tackle the problem?

Recent reports show alarming statistics and devastating forecast predictions:

- ♦ On average 20% of teenagers in the UK are overweight and 10% are obese.
- ♦ Boys and girls aged between 2 - 15yrs, who were classed as obese in 1995 has risen from 11.5% to 19% in 2004.
- ♦ One in four adults are now classed as obese.
- ♦ 23% of men and 25% of women are obese.
- ♦ As many as 12 million adults and 1 million children will be categorised as obese by 2010 unless steps to reverse the trend are successful.

In addition to the statistics, obesity has many other health consequences that include:

- ♦ Diabetes (Type 1 and 2)
- ♦ Fatigue
- ♦ Heart disease
- ♦ High cholesterol
- ♦ Kidney and liver disease
- ♦ Pregnancy complications

- ♦ Restricted mobility
- ♦ Sleep apnoea
- ♦ Stokes
- ♦ Surgical implications

A call to action is essential if there is to be an arrest to the escalating figures. There needs to be a realisation by Government that mainstream funding into Primary Care Trusts (P.C.T's) is not the answer as they do not have the skill sets or facilities to deliver. There needs to be primary funding channelled into Local Authorities (L.A.'s), Leisure Services and Sports Development at worst, or at best ensure that Leisure Provision becomes a statutory obligation by Government and appropriate funding to be made available to deliver initiatives, which would assist in reducing obesity levels across all ages. Local Authority Leisure Facilities are deemed as the norm and promote equality and ease of access for all social groups.

So why are L.A. Leisure Facilities the principle lever?

- ♦ Leisure facilities exist in almost every geographical part of the country.
- ♦ A large majority are open 7 days per week and 14 hours per day.
- ♦ They promote equality, social inclusion and access.
- ♦ Cater for all ages.
- ♦ Offer a wide range of facilities and activities.
- ♦ Many facilities already offer well-established and credible health schemes/initiatives.

It is essential that L.A.'s, specifically Leisure Services and Sports and Health Development have a strategic plan that identifies partners to assist the delivery of the plan and strive to reduce obesity levels. There is a strong claim that L.A.'s leisure facilities are the most appropriate venues to deliver a national campaign and should be the catalyst to foster partnerships with internal services, P.C.T.'s, schools and private enterprises. This equation is a real opportunity and challenge if only the government would truly recognise the power of L.A.'s Leisure Services and Sports Development in order to access and motivate those in greatest need.

It is essential that there is a model and co-ordinated approach at national level that is supported by a national marketing campaign that uses the media to promote such activities as:

- ♦ Swimming
- ♦ Walking
- ♦ Cycling
- ♦ Strength and cardio-vascular training

Employers should look at the benefits of supporting their employees in relation to health initiatives such gym memberships (full or part sponsorships) as there is credible evidence that employees become more productive, reduce their absenteeism and are more motivated through regular exercise.

Influencing children in relation to reducing obesity is far more complex, but essentially an extremely rewarding situation. The ultimate challenge to us leisure providers is how we influence young people to address their obesity issue and make permanent changes.

A young person may find it difficult to influence the family unit, so therefore the challenge is to influence the whole family unit to make changes and motivate each other together in our "time poor" current environment. It has been reported that if a child's parents are obese, then there is a 20% chance that the child will be obese. At Northampton Borough Council, the Leisure Services Division has devised a strategy that is a true partnership with Northampton P.C.T and their Schools Health Advisors, and is specifically designed for 8 - 13yr olds and their families.

The BODY4LIFE initiative is a 12-week course, each session lasting 2 hours. The first hour is a range of "fun" physical activity sessions, and the second hour is related to education, that is diet and nutrition, where the whole family is involved. Data and measurements are taken in week 1 and week 12 in order that results are collected to gain clinical credibility.

The measurements include:

- ♦ Height
- ♦ Weight
- ♦ Waist circumference
- ♦ Blood pressure
- ♦ Body Mass Index (B.M.I.)
- ♦ Basic fitness test
- ♦ Lifestyle family dietary questionnaire

Equally important within the educational section are sessions delivered by Mental Health Clinicians as it is recognised that many obese children have low self-esteem and eating disorders. The results have been extremely encouraging and there have been visual improvements in family cohesion and an eagerness to learn collectively.

Medicine and the pharmaceutical industry will play an influential role in relation to obesity and obesity-related health issues. However it would be ignorant to assume that new medicines will or should be the answer. We collectively need to drive initiatives that promote regular exercise and improve nutritional knowledge.

The next 3 years leading up to 2010 are going to be challenging for all concerned. It is essential that we are visionary and creative to ensure that we are recognised as professional, credible organisations. Partners (internal and external) are crucial to deliver comprehensive initiatives to the widest and most vulnerable sectors of our communities. It is essential that the family unit is targeted if there is to be significant positive change.

If you don't have a strategy - then you need to plan one - today. There will be funding opportunities available over the next 3-4 yrs; however organisations need to keep scanning the horizon to take advantage of any opportunities, and have an initiative to tackle obesity issues already in place.

There is no instant fix to obesity; it is about permanent lifestyle changes, exercise, diet and self-esteem. Collectively we can contribute in an extremely positive manner in reducing the cost of obesity-related health issues.

Ultimately small changes can make a BIG difference. Leisure and Sports Development Services should ensure that they are ready for the challenge!

Sports services working with hard to reach groups

Author: Harnek Kandola, Sports Services Manager, Leicester City Council

Leicester City Council - 4 star council, Beacon Council for Culture and Sport for Hard to Reach groups.

Leicester is Britain's most diverse city. Hard to reach groups make up the majority of its population. More than 80 different languages are spoken in the City, its black and minority ethnic population is over 36%, and its boundaries include some of the most deprived wards in the country. Against this backdrop, for the past 30 years the City Council has been using sport and culture to help build cohesive communities and break down the barriers of people's 'parallel lives'. The city's approach has moved beyond providing a number of 'special projects': providing quality services for hard to reach groups is now at the heart of the council's core business.



Today, the council's approach comprises three distinct strands:

- ♦ Bespoke Interventions, identifying those in priority need within hard to reach groups and responding with personalised services, the Leicester Racial Equality and Sport Project and the 'We Play Too' campaign promoting sport with women and girls; targeted services for Looked After Children including free swimming lessons - 385 Looked After Children currently have a leisure card.
- ♦ Building Stronger Communities, for example: specialist sports coaching courses to skill-up local people to coach disabled and special needs groups. On the job training to skill-up local people, 30 Braunstone residents have been employed in the new leisure centre.
- ♦ Increasing Inter-cultural understanding, for example: the Fun-Da-Mental project, run by local basketball hero Karl Brown and the Leicester Warriors, which uses sport as a tool for dynamic work with young people in the city's most deprived estates.

By working closely with its partners and the local communities it serves, the City Council is demonstrating how sport and culture can provide a strong foundation for social cohesion and a truly integrated city. The following examples provide evidence of our success, but it is important to stress that they are just the tip of the iceberg;

Braunstone Leisure Centre

In 2004 we opened a new Leisure Centre in Braunstone, the 27th most deprived ward in the country (IMD 2000) and a New Deal for Communities area. Braunstone has a predominantly white population (91% in the New Deal area) isolated by the distance of the estate from the city centre. In partnership with Braunstone Community Association and Sport Action Zone we carried out a participatory analysis of residents' sporting needs, and importantly, barriers to participation. We built a strong partnership with these two organisations and Sport England invested £2.5 million in the leisure centre and complementary projects in Braunstone in support of our strategic focus on hard to reach groups.

In the 9 months since it opened, 200,000 people have used Braunstone Leisure Centre and 48% of these have been Braunstone residents. Activities on offer include Fit and Active Braunstone (FAB), a sports mentoring scheme

nominated for an NHS leadership and innovation award, the Home Office funded Score 4 Sport project which targets isolated young people, and a fitness suite with stations for disabled and able-bodied people. Our innovative approach includes discounted admission for Braunstone residents, a crèche and a Sure Start nursery run by a residents' co-operative, job training to skill-up local people and sustainable transport links by the new Braunstone bus.

Greater Humberstone

Our Sports Development service ran a 3 year project in Greater Humberstone in partnership with the Police. When the project started this was one of the most deprived areas in the city with more than 50% of annual household incomes below £9,000. The project has increased participation in sport, health and fitness with over 3,000 young people coached in various sports, including football and hockey sessions targeted at girls. The project established new community partnerships with schools, community centres, a young people's inclusion project and sports clubs. Over 30 local people have taken up sports qualification courses and 8 have gone on to be employed by the City Council to work as community sports leaders.

Sporting Crowns

Our experience of the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) has focused us on developing more effective ways to demonstrate the impact of culture and sport on shared priorities like health, education community safety and cohesion. For example Leicester Sporting Crowns offers young people sporting incentives to encourage them to work harder at school. Vouchers for free activities at local leisure centres are awarded by teachers to children for good behaviour, timely homework, attendance and teamwork. 6,700 rewards have been redeemed at leisure facilities in the last 3 years. The largest number have been used at Leicester Leys Leisure Centre which has a catchment area with significant social tension, poverty and deprivation.

Street Sport

Leicester's political leadership is effectively engaged on sport and cultural issues and has for many years championed diversity and the needs of hard to reach groups. For example, councillors set up a community cohesion funding stream used this summer for a programme of inter-cultural sporting activities, partly in response to emerging community tensions between Somali and African Caribbean young people. More than 200 young people took part in the Street Sports finale bringing together young people from 5 deprived communities.

Disability Sports

We employ a specialist Disability Sports Officer and work with disabled groups and build capacity; in the last 2 years we have helped 12 groups to gain grants and we are collaborating to set up academies in the city. Leicester was the first local authority in the country to install Fitness Inclusive equipment in a fitness studio.

Our sports service provides sessions in all 9 of the special needs schools in the city and 3 after school clubs, with over 870 young people taking part. We have had over 5,000 visits by day centre users to our leisure centres as part of a programme to integrate provision into the mainstream.

All our 9 leisure centres have timetabling for disabled people and those with special needs, with over 40 sessions available each week. Some of these sessions are exclusive and others operate within general public sessions. Some members attending these sessions have gone on to join the Special Olympics team and win medals on behalf of England and Great Britain.



Factors that underpin your success

- ♦ Mainstreaming culture and sport for hard to reach groups: placing it at the heart of what we do.
- ♦ Developing strong community leadership to drive forward our shared vision.
- ♦ Extensive consultation and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders, across sectors and communities.
- ♦ Investing in partnership work and people, recognising and utilising the wealth of skills and expertise, pooling our

resources to deliver better quality services.

- ♦ Being responsive and flexible, able to respond to emerging issues.
- ♦ Keeping focused on action: creating bespoke solutions tailored to individual needs, building stronger communities, and increasing inter-cultural understanding.

Our work in the community is further supported by our other Culture sector partners in our department and detailed below are just some of their fantastic community based projects;

Arts

Festivals range from the biggest Diwali celebrations outside India to neighbourhood fun days, and last year over 41% of the 462,000 participants were from BME communities. In 2005 the festivals team will provide support and expertise to 700 events.

Supporting nationally renowned festivals like Leicester Comedy Festival, the Caribbean Carnival and Diwali that bring thousands of people together.

De Montfort Hall, our concert venue, worked with over 7,000 young people last year to deliver unique events targeted at hard to reach groups, many of whom had never visited the Hall before.

Libraries

This year over 51% of active members of our library services are from BME groups, a figure that has increased in recent years to the point where it considerably exceeds the BME proportion of the City's population.

Series of service innovations aimed at traditionally hard to reach groups, including predominately white outer council estates. These have included: an ambitious programme of community development with children, young people and New Communities; the installation of 160 people's network computers; and making library practices more 'user friendly' for example free reservations for residents, free internet access and removing the 'proof of identity' requirement for new users. All of this represents an incredible achievement for a service which 5 years ago was little used by city residents.

Parks

Empowering users of Spinney Hill park to put their ideas into action and transform a derelict tennis court into a state of the art multi-use games area.

Museums

Providing technical and practical support to the Sikh Community Museum at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara, providing display cases and helping them gain funding and museum registration.

Providing quality services for hard to reach groups has been at the heart of the council's core business for decades and long may it continue.



Challenges of the Extended Schools Initiative

Author: Graham Herstell, Data and ICT Development Officer, Manchester Leisure Sports Development Centre

In June 2005 Ruth Kelly (then Education Secretary) unveiled the prospectus - Extended Schools: Access to Opportunities and Services for all. This stated:

"By 2010, all children should have access to a variety of activities beyond the school day. Well-organised, safe and stimulating activities before and after school provide children and young people with a wider range of experiences and make a real difference to their chances at school. It gives them the opportunity to keep fit and healthy, to acquire new skills, to build on what they learn during the school day or simply to have fun and relax."



What is an extended school?

Extended schools provide a range of services and activities, often beyond the school day, to help meet the needs of children, their families and the wider community. The Government wants all schools and children and families to be able to access a core offer of extended services, which are developed in partnership with others.

Core Offer

The core offer comprises;

- ♦ High quality wraparound childcare available from 8.00am to 6.00pm all year round.
- ♦ A varied menu of study support activities such as homework clubs, sport or special interest clubs.
- ♦ Parenting and family support.
- ♦ Swift and easy referral to a wide range of specialist support services.
- ♦ Provision of wider community access to ICT, sports and arts facilities, including adult learning.

For primary schools, this will mean working with a range of local providers to enable children and families to have access to extended services. There is no expectation that all primary schools should offer all extended services on their own sites, however, for secondary schools, the expectations are different: it is envisaged that all secondary schools will open from 8am-6pm all year around, offering a core offer of activities for young people.

Time Frame

The Government's vision for schools in its prospectus is to ensure that all schools provide access to a 'core offer' of extended services by 2010. To achieve this Manchester has implemented the following timeframes:

- ♦ 2010 all schools delivering full core offer.
- ♦ 2008 half of primary schools and a third of high schools delivering full core offer.
- ♦ Sept 06 15% of Manchester schools delivering full core offer.

Challenges

It is fair to say that the initiative has been met with a mixed response particularly from the schools themselves. Questions around cost, teacher's roles and responsibilities and the quality of external delivery are all posed frequently. With this in mind, any external service must be of sufficient quality to be utilised effectively.

The Manchester Model

In Manchester the approach has been to develop a co-ordinated response to ensure that the delivery of the core offer is done in partnership with a wide range of service providers, including the schools. This is being achieved through the newly established central extended schools team who link effectively with the various service providers. Manchester Leisure Sports Development (MLSD) is a key service provider in this model.

Sport is a very effective delivery method that will address many of the core criteria of the prospectus. For this reason many schools will look to sport to give an extended service. MLSD has various initiatives that fit well with this such as the Community Access To High Schools programme and the Passport "2" Sport scheme.

Two Case Studies:

Community Access to High Schools

Utilising Manchester City Council's Service Improvement Fund, MLSD works proactively to develop opportunities to ensure that a number of Manchester high school sports facilities are more accessible at evenings, week-ends and during school holiday periods to children, local communities and locally based sports and physical activity groups. Five high schools are currently involved in the programme. Currently each high school has a number of well attended activities taking place after school hours which include badminton, cricket, hockey, netball, disability multi sports, belly dancing and aerobics with the long-term aim of forming self-sustaining constituted clubs. Steps are currently taking place to formally constitute a number of these clubs to enable them to eventually become sustainable.

Passport "2" Sport

Passport "2" Sport is an out of school hours sports scheme designed to introduce Manchester's primary school children to six different sports per academic year. The service encourages physical activity amongst children and is focused on increasing participation levels outside of school by delivering to the The P.E., School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy. The scheme is targeted at all Manchester's primary schools (mainstream and special) with the emphasis on full inclusive participation.

All sessions are delivered on school premises, in out of school hours and in a safe environment, by fully qualified coaching staff. A different sport is delivered each half term. This includes six sports per year from a selection of eleven listed below;

- ♦ Badminton
- ♦ Basketball
- ♦ Cricket
- ♦ Football
- ♦ Hockey
- ♦ Netball
- ♦ Rugby
- ♦ Tennis
- ♦ Athletics
- ♦ Cycling
- ♦ Squash

In academic year 05/06 the scheme delivered to 112 schools with 10,356-registered attendance and 56,784 visits.

The scheme is now approaching its fifth year of existence, the first three years funded directly by a Big Lottery Fund (BLF) grant with the fourth and fifth years being sustained by a unique partnership between the School Sport Partnerships (SSP), Manchester Education Partnership (MEP) the Schools and Manchester Leisure Sports Development (MLSD). Without this partnership the scheme would not be sustainable.

Conclusion

By working in partnership, both strategically and operationally, MLSD has been successful in meeting the challenges presented by national initiatives such as Extended Schools. Accordingly, MLSD has been able to tailor its existing schemes; and develop new bespoke schemes, to offer a range of quality extended services that will contribute positively to the Out of School Hours agenda.



GB 11409



GB 11132



GB 14074



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