

**Environment and
Sustainable Communities
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

28 March 2022

**Draft Physical Activity
Strategic Delivery
Framework**



**Report of Amy Harhoff – Corporate Director for Regeneration
Economy and Growth**

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of the report is to provide members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the draft Physical Activity Strategic Delivery Framework (PASDF) for Durham County Council's Culture Sport and Tourism Service and to seek input on its development.

Executive summary

- 2 Part of the Durham County Council Vision is to enable the people of County Durham to live long and independent lives. The evidence to support physical activity as a key component in achieving a good standard of health and wellbeing is overwhelming (Public Health England '*Everybody active, every day*', Sport England '*Uniting the Movement*').
- 3 The county is predominantly rural, with the Pennines in the west, a heritage coast in the east and one third of the county accessible green space. There are 14 council managed leisure facilities, 49 playing pitches, a large park and countryside estate and an extensive network of walking and cycling routes. Using these natural and purpose-built assets holistically and strategically to make positive physical activity lifestyle changes is the key purpose of the strategic delivery framework.
- 4 Durham County Council has a commitment to support everyone in the county to be active but, as inactivity levels in the county, and nationally,

have continued to increase post pandemic, there is a recognition that a new approach is needed to have a long-term impact on inactivity.

- 5 We have therefore reviewed our activity and strategic approach across sport, leisure and wellbeing delivery, and the strategies and drivers that inform it. This review has formed the basis of the draft PASDF.
- 6 The strategic delivery framework will support and provide delivery activity for the County Durham Physical Activity Strategy (PAS) currently in the development stage and scheduled for completion in June 2022. This is an overarching strategy led by Public Health with an alliance that includes the County Sports Partnership, Culture Sport and Tourism service and the Clinical Commissioning Groups. It will be developed in co-production with a number of community stakeholders to develop a whole systems approach to tackle inequalities in relation to physical activity and to develop effective and sustainable solutions.
- 7 The draft PASDF identifies the need to review and evaluate service priorities using Durham Insight and consultation to understand local needs, to look at gaps in provision, barriers to engagement and to ensure that everyone in the county can access quality and appropriate leisure services.
- 8 The benefit of physical activity supports the wider strategies within Durham County Council. The key strategies within the scope of the framework are:
 - County Durham Vision 2035 - to enable the priorities around More and Better jobs, People live long and independent lives, Connected communities.
 - Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy - ensuring all organisations and services within the county consider wellbeing as a common currency.
 - Inclusive Economic Strategy – influencing the commercial element of the service, the contribution towards employment, the saving to the county in relation to sickness absence and the long-term savings to the NHS.
 - Poverty Action Plan 2022-26 - to address the socio-economic factors associated with inequalities that prevent people from accessing our services.
 - Built Facilities Strategy – The County will make significant investment as part of a Leisure Transformation Programme. This will make our facilities fit for purpose, instilling a culture change around public perceptions of leisure facilities being a place to go when you are already fit and healthy, placing them at the centre

of a wellbeing community offer that is accessible, affordable and has an offer for everyone.

- Playing Pitch Strategy – setting out the priorities to improve playing pitch quality and access across the county

9 Nationally the framework also supports a number of cross cutting strategies and policy drivers to support people to get more active:

- DCMS Sporting Futures - The cross-government strategy to drive policy to contribute towards supporting people to get more active.
- UK Active more people more active more often - Campaign to improve the health of the nation through promoting active lifestyles.
- Sport England Uniting the Movement - A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.
- Public Health England '*Everybody active, every day*' - A framework to provide a *national*, evidence-based approach to support all sectors to embed physical activity into the fabric of every lives.

10 The service aim is to support everyone in County Durham to be active every day.

11 This will be underpinned by objectives to redefine our service priorities:

- Develop new approaches to tackling inequalities, removing barriers to engagement by adapting services and finding solutions for our different target groups
- Engage communities in key decision making on programmes and activities for their local area through co-production
- Develop and deliver a diverse range of physical activity opportunities using local ambassadors to act as advocates
- Provide positive experiences by ensuring that we have a suitable trained workforce to engage and support inactive communities
- Contribute towards a partnership approach to develop a whole systems evidence-based approach to raise the importance of physical activity as a tool to change lives
- Work with partners, clubs and sports governing bodies to maximise resources linked to grass root sport and physical

activity and ensure that everyone is supported to reach their potential

- Promote both formal and informal physical activity close to home; investing in facilities and green spaces to maximise the potential of our environment
- Develop a campaign to support behaviour change promoting all aspects of a healthy, happy, and active life
- Provide robust systems to evaluate schemes, using a test and learn approach and to ensure that we can follow the customers journey to provide ongoing support

12 The next stage will be to develop a number of action plans, involving our communities to support their development and empowerment and to ensure that we are designing and developing services and initiatives with the people who need them the most.

13 Local insight will also be used to look at the patterns of activity and inactivity at each life stage and to develop targeted interventions:

- Start Well: Developing a positive attitude to physical activity from an early age, codesigning activities and programmes to engage early years and their parents
- Develop Well: Assisting school age children to achieve their full activity potential and to meet their recommended 60 mins a day
- Live Well: Putting physical activity at the heart of everyone's agenda to support and promote positive behaviour change
- Age Well: Tailoring activities and services to support resilience, reduce social isolation and to meet the needs and abilities of the adult population

14 A place-based approach will be used in areas of social and health deprivation to recognise different community needs and to ensure that residents are key influencers on all key decisions. Tested national models including This Girl Can and We are Undefeatable will be used to target and engage the key target groups or women and girls and those with long term health conditions that are the most disproportionately impacted.

15 The final stage will be to develop a range of measures, tools and indicators to ascertain the budget and resources needed to deliver the framework and to develop the sequence of actions that will allow us to progress.

- 16 The strategic framework will be finalised in June alongside the County Durham Physical Activity Strategy.

Recommendation

- 17 That Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives the report, notes its content and comments accordingly.

Background

- 18 The county has a population of over 533,000 (ONS, 2020). It is predominantly rural, with the Pennines in the west, a heritage coast in the east and one third of the county accessible green space. It is a county of great contrast with a post-industrial legacy that has created a complex social and cultural heritage. The county suffers from significant social, economic and health-related challenges and there is a 19-year difference in the number of years residents can expect to live in good health, depending on where they live in the county (ONS, 2009-2013). Two in five people in County Durham have a limited income, and 24% of the population report a limiting illness or disability which affects their day-to-day activities (Census, 2011).
- 19 31.2 % of the adult population in County Durham fail to achieve the minimum physical activity threshold of 150 minutes of moderate activity per week (Active Lives May 2019-20 which includes period affected by covid-19). The choices people make in relation to their activity is not solely based on individual preferences; it is influenced by where they live, their life skills and opportunities, by organisations, employment, society, policy makers, education and inherent inequalities.

Baseline:

- County Durham is in the top 40% most deprived upper-tier local authorities in England, ranking as the 48th most deprived of 151 upper tier local authorities in England. Nearly half of our population live in the 30% most deprived areas nationally. For children this rises to 54%
- 60% of people with a long- term health condition are aged over 60 years
- 64.8% of adults are overweight or obese compared to 62.8% in England
- 1 in 10 (10.7%) reception children and 1 in 5 (22.7%) Year 6 children are obese. Levels are 1.5% higher in Year 6 age in our most deprived wards compared to the least deprived wards

Activity levels:

- 31.2% of adults are inactive (doing less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week which includes people doing some activity but not enough to benefit their health)
- 18% of adults are doing no physical activity at all which is higher than the national average at 17%
- Women with a limiting illness or disability are much more inactive than men with the same condition (47% compared to 38%).
- Activity levels in children and young people are almost 5% lower than the national average.

20 Regular physical activity provides a range of physical and mental health, and social benefits, many of which are increasing issues for individuals, communities and society. It can also contribute to a range of wider social, environmental and economic benefits for individuals, communities and the county, such as reducing air pollution and increasing social and community cohesion.

21 The Chief Medical Officers guidelines for physical activity, published in 2019, identified 3 elements of physical activity that people should incorporate into their lives:

- Strengthening activity - muscle strengthening or balance at least 2 days a week
- Cardiovascular activity - a combination of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity activities that can be done at different intensities like cycling. They can be differentiated by the 'talk test': being able to talk but not sing indicates moderate intensity activity, while having difficulty talking without pausing is a sign of vigorous activity physical activity is an activity that noticeably accelerates the heart and breathing rate
- Minimising inactive and sedentary behaviours such as sitting, reclining or lying posture during waking hours (e.g. sitting) and breaking up long periods of inactivity with at least light physical activity.

22 Culture, Sport and Tourism offers the following services:

- Leisure Facilities. The County has invested £80m as part of a Leisure Transformation Programme which will refurbish facilities in existing facilities and build three new facilities at Bishop Auckland, Chester Le Street and Seaham. This will make our facilities fit for purpose and the aim is to instil a culture change around public perceptions of leisure facilities being a place to go when you are already fit and healthy, placing them at the centre

of a community offer that is accessible, affordable and has an offer for everyone. This will include a diverse digital physical activity offer, a wellbeing offer and a recreational offer targeted at families and children and young people.

- **Outdoor Spaces.** In line with the Playing Pitch Strategy, Durham County Council is investing in the 49 council owned pitches to improve the standards and the offer available to local sports clubs. This will help to grow field-based team sports across the county, promoting community cohesion and helping many children and young people to establish a fitness focus from an early age. The service also works closely with internal partners to promote active travel, parks and countryside, heritage coast and our Rights of Way and cycle paths.
- **At Home.** The My Wellness Technogym app is available to everyone in County Durham to access support to get active in the home. This includes On Demand, live and hybrid exercise classes at all levels all led by our wellbeing coaches. It also provides tips and programmes to exercise in your own time such as the Couch to 5k. The library books on wheels service to those who need extra support offers an exercise DVD and the service is currently piloting daily gentle exercise classes on Freeview TV.
- **Targeted Interventions.** In partnership with Public Health the service directly delivers, supports and facilitates a range of preventative and universal community-based programmes including walking, running, cycling and community exercise classes. County Durham is one of 10 national pilot sites for 'We are Undefeatable' to support people with long term health conditions to build physical activity into their everyday lives. The service has a comprehensive children's offer from babies to teens including Ready Set Go supporting physical literacy in nurseries and Splash Tots to start you on your swimming lesson journey, through to Young Lifestyles gym memberships and Rookie Lifeguards. The service is a partner in 'Fun and Food' to offer free activities such as swimming, theatre trips and sports camps with a meal or snack to children on free school meals and their families during the school holiday periods.
- **Supporting the voluntary sector.** Volunteer Durham is a service led scheme which has supported 3000 individuals to develop a diverse range of skills, experience, and knowledge and links them to volunteer opportunities in their local community. Club Durham

provides sport and physical activity voluntary organisations with access to advice, information and grant funding.

- Active Places, a place based, partnership approach to improving activity levels. This is currently being piloted as Active Shildon which benefits from strong local partnerships and Active Valleys supporting the rural former mining area of Esh Winning and Ushaw Moor West, Bearpark and Witton Gilbert and Langley Park Cornsley and Satley.

The council also manages a network of parks and open spaces and walking and cycling routes including 150 miles of railway paths. Many of the service activities use these assets.

23 The service aims will be achieved through the following outcomes:

- Active People: ensuring that everyone can access provision and is encouraged to be active
- Active Places: providing a physical environment that enables and encourages activity in our facilities and our green open spaces
- Active Society: promoting the importance of physical activity towards achieving health and wellbeing. Involving residents in developing local services to suit their needs.
- Active Systems: working together with physical activity networks and partners to embed physical activity into everyday lives.
- Active Enablers: developing a diverse and suitably trained workforce. Using local insight and intelligence to understand local needs. Providing a robust Marcoms plan to ensure that we reach people to engage them into positive activities.

Conclusion

24 Inactivity is a complex issue, there are no quick solutions to changing people's behaviour and in modern society people are battling priorities that often don't include keeping active. The inequalities gap associated with health deprivation is widening, and Durham County Council has set out a vision to support people to live long and independent lives.

25 Physical activity is a recognised contributing factor in achieving this vision and the County Durham Physical Activity Strategy will aim to provide a whole systems approach to have a long-term impact on inactivity and behaviour change. The PASDF has an important role to play in achieving this and will set a new direction that will ensure our readiness in contributing to the County Durham PAS and that we reach and engage local communities and break down the barriers to maximise our indoor and outdoor assets, making a positive contribution to

improving the lives of our residents at every stage, whatever their age, gender or background.

Background papers

None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Finance

Activity will be delivered within existing service budgets and through external fundraising.

Consultation

Not applicable to the framework but the next stage will involve conversation activity with communities and stakeholders.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality is at the heart of the framework. EIA screening will be undertaken as the framework is finalised.

Human Rights

Not applicable

Climate Change

The framework supports the active travel, green transport, climate emergency plan.

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable

Staffing

Not applicable

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable