

Report To: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: Monday, 7 March 2022

Report Title: Leisure Services Externally Funded Projects update 2022-23

Report By: Victoria Conheady, Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture

Key Decision: Y

Classification: Open

Purpose of Report

To update regarding the Active Hastings externally funded programme.
To update regarding the additional external funding applications for leisure related revenue and capital proposals. And to seek approval to progress if application is successful.

Recommendation(s)

- 1. To be advised of the Active Hastings team's current externally funded programme**
 - 2. Delegate authority to Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture, or her nominee, in consultation with the Lead Member for Regeneration to enter into contract and utilise approx. £220,000 of funding to deliver the activity outlined in paragraphs 13-18**
 - 3. To be advised of the capital funding application for the enhancement of Alexandra Park tennis courts and to delegate authority to Assistant Director Regeneration and Culture, or her nominee, in consultation with the Lead Member for Regeneration, to enter into contract and progress the project if the grant is successfully awarded.**
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Reasons for Recommendations

1. The size of Council's Active Hastings team and the level of service is dependent upon the amount of external funding raised each year. This report outlines the current position.
 2. Alexandra Park hosts the only public tennis courts in the town. A funding application has been submitted to enhance these facilities. We are seeking approval to progress if the application is successful.
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Introduction

1. The 2021 Chief medical officers report, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2021-health-in-coastal-communities>) which focused on coastal deprivation highlighted Hastings as a case study. The case study shone a light on the need to work strategically across partners and sectors of the economy, to combat our town's health inequalities. It is understood that health inequalities, long lasting covid impacts and the animation of leisure services, are key interrelated areas. The initiative outlined below involves cross stakeholder engagement, commissioning and delivery.
2. The contribution of physical activity towards the health and wellbeing of the nation is well documented. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us that being active, healthy, maintaining a healthy weight and reducing your chance of other lifestyle related illnesses is even more important than before. Obesity and poor health have been directly linked to the mortality rate of those who have contracted Covid-19. Local authority leisure services and the facilities that serve the communities must be now considered a serious contributor to the health and economic recovery of our country.¹
3. The Active Hastings programme is managed by Hastings Borough Council, in partnership with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Public Health.
4. Places to play sport and be physically active play a vital role to the health and wellbeing of our communities. This report includes an outline of a proposal to enhance our public tennis courts in Alexandra Park, with the key objective of increasing participation whilst introducing a sustainable operating model.

Active Hastings revenue programme

5. The principle aims of the Active Hastings programme are to:
 - improve health and wellbeing, and to reduce health inequalities in Hastings by increasing access to, and participation in, physical activity interventions
 - utilise physical activity as a driver for community development and building social capital in Hastings
 - develop the physical activity sector in Hastings through effective communication, networking, and capacity building
 - build the physical activity evidence base at a local level
6. The Active Hastings team primarily focus on the areas of the town with the worst health and wellbeing outcomes. Levels of inactivity, alongside other risk factors, are important drivers of health outcomes and have a strong correlation with deprivation. Our ability to be active is impacted by several socio-economic factors, such as income, housing, education and access to space, therefore the Active Hastings service has a significant focus on the most deprived areas of Hastings, although not exclusively so.

¹ Continuum Sport and Leisure April 2021

7. The Active Hastings programme commenced in 2006 and continues to rely on significant partnership funding and support. ESCC Public Health are our principal partner, supporting both the strategic direction of the programme and contributing towards the cost.
8. £142k of external funding has been committed to Active Hastings for this current year 2021/22.
9. Recent discussions with ESCC Public Health indicate that their financial contribution, including the Healthy Weight Management grant, will continue into 2022/23.
10. A breakdown of the external funding for Active Hastings 2021/22 is shown here:
 - £50k ESCC Public Health
 - £25k ESSC Public Health, Adult Weight Management
 - £25k ESSC for youth activities
 - £6k Active Sussex for youth activities
 - £3k Orbit Housing covid recovery fund
 - £3k Sport England – This Girl Can Hastings initiative
 - £30k Small grants and income generated from delivering on behalf of other organisations.
11. Since April 2021, over 500 residents have attended an activity delivered by the Active Hastings team, with over 3100 visits to sessions. 40% of these participants live within the 5% most deprived areas nationally². The project has impacted on the lives of many additional residents, through upskilling external instructors to enable them to deliver targeted activities, and through promotion of physical activity messages and opportunities through the Active Hastings social media pages (Active Hastings currently has 9700 followers on social media).
12. The 2021/22 Active Hastings programme, is summarised in greater detail in the mid-year report, available here:
https://www.hastings.gov.uk/content/sport_play_recreation/pdfs/Active_Hastings_Mid_Year_Highlights_21-22.pdf
13. A Primary Care Network funding application for a total of £220k has been submitted.

The aim of this proposal is to increase the physical activity levels of young people and adults who are not achieving the recommended level of physical activity, in particular those who are considered inactive. The service will also have a focus on people with long term health conditions.
14. The service has been designed to:
 - Increase the range of suitable, accessible, affordable physical activity opportunities and reduce the barriers to accessing these

² 49% of participants live within the 10% most deprived
55% of participants live within the 20% most deprived

- Provide support for patients around behaviour change and motivation with regards to increasing physical activity levels
 - Improve the connectivity between local health organisations, general practitioners (GPs), practice staff and physical activity providers
 - Improve the connectivity between schools, youth organisations and physical activity providers
 - Increase awareness amongst residents and referral organisations of the physical activity opportunities available locally, through a number of measures such as: delivery of effective social marketing campaigns; development of the Active Hastings website as a one-stop shop for physical activity; creation of new networks and the development of existing networks
 - Create clear referral pathways for GPs and other organisations to appropriately trained physical activity professionals
 - Provide robust evaluation of the effectiveness of the service delivery
15. This project will impact on our own priorities and those of the emerging Sussex Health and Care System priorities. The project will also contribute to the ambitions of the East Sussex Healthy Weight Action Plan and local plans to improve population health and reducing health inequalities. If successful, this income will be received during 2021/22 for expenditure in 2022/23 and 2023/24.
16. If successful the award will resource a fulltime GP link worker and a full-time youth link worker, responsible for developing strategic links between a range of practitioners, partners and providers to ensure that resources and activity are directed to where it is most needed. The project will also include a part time social marketing and communications officer responsible for using marketing techniques to design and implement programmes to promote behaviour change, specifically increasing physical activity levels.
17. This programme will endeavour to link with other funded activity both within the Active Hastings service area, but also funded programmes delivered by other HBC service areas, and other stakeholders within the town (for example Hastings Opportunity Area, Museum and Schools Programme, Towns Fund Schemes etc).

Lawn Tennis Association funding application

18. A funding application has been submitted to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) to enhance the 5 tennis courts at Alexandra Park and to bring an adjacent sixth court area back into operation. If successful, the LTA's grant of £92.5k will cover 100% of the costs (at no cost to HBC).
19. The aim of the proposal is to get more people playing tennis, more often, whilst introducing a sustainable operating model. The enhanced facilities will have a broader appeal and greater potential to attract new users.
20. The tennis courts at Alexandra Park are the only publicly accessible courts in Hastings. The 8 courts previously at White Rock Gardens were decommissioned in 2010.

21. HBC officers have been liaising with the LTA to develop a model which increases participation. The proposal includes new court surfaces, new access gates and repairs to the fencing.
22. The model aims to ensure genuine accessibility of the courts by pro-actively programming community initiatives and tailoring the pricing concessions.
23. Aligned to this initiative, we have recently embarked on a new joint Playing Pitch Strategy and Leisure Facilities Strategy with Rother Council and in partnership with all relevant sporting national governing bodies. The approach is in line with Sport England methodology. The strategies assess local leisure facility 'supply and demand' and give a basis of information and recommendations which will help to inform future decisions regarding leisure facility development.
24. HBC has also been successful with a recent application to the Football Foundation's Local Authority Grass Pitch Programme Pilot. This work will strengthen the case for external investment into our local pitches. <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/Grass%20Pitch%20Webinars.pdf>

Options

25. If the bid to the Primary Care Network is successful, then officers recommend entering into contract to utilise £220,000 of funding to deliver the activity outlined in paragraphs 13-18.
26. This funding will help to bolster and sustain the existing Active Hastings team, enhancing the team's overall impact and potentially enabling further opportunities to be explored. A do-nothing scenario will not achieve this impact.
27. The application to enhance the courts has been submitted to the Lawn Tennis Association and will be assessed during March with the aim of a 2022/23 delivery.
28. Alternatively, if we do not decide to go ahead with the tennis courts proposal (do-nothing scenario) then the Council will eventually be tasked with resurfacing the ageing courts as they deteriorate within the next 5 years (estimated).
29. Enhanced courts and improved customer journey will be a driver for increased use. Leaving the courts in their current uninspiring and below satisfactory condition coupled with a poor customer journey is not conducive to encouraging participation. The LTA have advised that a typical tennis court surface last for 10 years, however, three of the Alexandra Park courts were last resurfaced in 1990 and two in 2006.
30. The do-nothing scenario does not offer the same potential to generate income.
31. If the application to the LTA is successful, then this report seeks approval to progress the project. Our preferred operating model (in-house or outsourced), has yet to be decided.

Timetable of Next Steps

Action	Key milestone	Due date (provisional)	Responsible
PCN Application	If successful, the income will be	March 2022	Cath Donovan

	transferred during 2021/22 for expenditure in 2022/23 and 2023/24		
LTA Application	Funding award decision by LTA Investment Board	March 2022	Keith Duly

Wards Affected

(All Wards)

Policy Implications

Reading Ease Score: 26.8

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Y
Increase the range of suitable, accessible, affordable physical activity opportunities and reduce the barriers to accessing these.	
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	Y
The enhancement of the courts will help bring additional positive activities to the location	
Risk Management	Y
Increase in physical activity rates will help reduce impact of unhealthy lifestyles	
Environmental Issues & Climate Change	Y
Promoting physical activity will encourage active lifestyles and travel	
Economic/Financial Implications	Y
Improving the sustainability of the tennis courts and preventing cost being a barrier to participants	
Human Rights Act	Y
Aim to help impact on all local communities, with greatest impact on the most vulnerable	
Organisational Consequences	Y
The operating model is yet to be decided	
Local People's Views	Y
Local stakeholders, including community groups have been engaged, with further engagement to follow	
Anti-Poverty	Y
Initiatives will benefit people on low income	
Legal	Y
Funding contracts	

Additional Information

Officer to Contact

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