



Communities Scrutiny Group

Thursday, 21 July 2022

Sports Development in Rushcliffe

Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report is to inform Councillors about how the Council is delivering its Sports Development function.
- 1.2. The report will focus on the key lines of enquiry identified in the scrutiny matrix:
 - a) What measures are in place to track participation in sport/physical activity in the Borough?
 - b) What these measures tell us about trends?
 - c) How are we tackling under-representation within groups?
 - d) How we can further improve school/club links and increase competition in school sport?
 - e) How is the Borough delivering community sport and physical activity opportunities?
 - f) What are the barriers to increasing participation and what interventions /resources are needed to overcome them?
- 1.3. The Lead Specialist for Communities will provide a presentation for the Communities Scrutiny Group focusing on the outcomes of the Sport Development work programme.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Communities Scrutiny Group receive an overview presentation of the work that is undertaken in delivering the Sport Development function and provide their feedback on future activity undertaken in promoting sport and wellbeing to our residents.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that the Council delivers on our corporate priorities, specifically the commitment to maintain and enhance our resident's quality of life, it is appropriate that Councillors have an opportunity to scrutinise the sport function of the Council especially as we enter the recovery phase of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council has a responsibility to ensure that all

residents can take part in sports and physical activity to improve their mental and physical wellbeing.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. Rushcliffe Borough Council's sports development function sits within the Communities Service, alongside health development and community events. The service is supported by one Sports Development Officer (SDO) post. Aligning with Sport England and Active Notts' vision, the sports development function acts as an enabler and facilitator for sporting clubs, groups and individuals by delivering projects rather than as a direct deliverer of sports activities.
- 4.2. The Council tracks sport and physical activity levels using Sport England's annual Active Lives Survey. There is one for adults (16+) and a separate survey targeting children and young people (U16's). These surveys provide data at a local, county and national level, on types of activity and activity levels. Compared to other local authorities, Nottinghamshire County and nationally, Rushcliffe has higher than average activity levels and is monitored through the Active Rushcliffe Health Partnership, which is made up of representatives from sport and health partners.
- 4.3. In line with Sport England and Active Notts' strategies, the Council has taken a place-based approach to help tackle under-representation in sport and physical activity, using data to help understand and target where support is needed most. Geographically, this has led to focused working in Keyworth, Cotgrave and Bingham West. The Council actively targets underrepresented groups, in particular: women and girls, residents with disabilities and residents on low incomes. The Council works with partners to facilitate programmes and activity targeted at these groups.
- 4.4. The Rushcliffe School Sports Partnership is responsible for delivering sport and physical activity in schools across Rushcliffe, organising school sport competitions as part of the School Games programme, training for teachers and delivery of physical activity initiatives. The Council works closely with the partnership to support and facilitate where appropriate, for example, providing facilities and links to community sports clubs.
- 4.5. The Council community sport and physical activity work programme is underpinned by both the Rushcliffe Leisure Strategy and the Rushcliffe Playing Pitch Strategy.
- 4.6. The SDO supports the implementation and review of the Playing Pitch Strategy action plan every 2-3 years due to the changing nature of supply and demand for playing pitches. This ensures the strategy is monitored and ensures the priority sites are supported for investment of development and improvements.
- 4.7. The SDO works to support the development and implementation of the Council's Leisure Strategy. Recent work has included writing a successful

funding application to the Football Foundation bringing investment of £458,275 to install a second Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP), resurface the existing ATP and for grass improvements at Gresham Sports Park. Support has also been given to a number of sports clubs with regards to facility developments including: increasing the height of netting at Ellerslie Cricket Club and a new sports pavilion at East Leake Playing Field Charity (Costock Road).

- 4.8. The Council facilitates community sport and physical activity through working with a range of external partners. We work closely with the professional sporting clubs based in the Borough, namely Nottingham Rugby Club Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club, Nottingham Forest Community Trust, Notts County Foundation, Trent Bridge Community Trust, and the National Water Sports Centre and have delivered a wide range of programmes and initiatives enabling residents to become more active.
- 4.9. The Council also supports participation programmes organised directly in the community. Rushcliffe parkrun has been running at Rushcliffe Country Park for 10 years and was facilitated and funded by the Council. To date it has been one of the most successful participation initiatives with an average of 310 participants each week and a database of over 1,000 volunteers. Junior parkrun has been running on the same site for 8 years with an average of 92 children and young people taking part each week. Due to the success and demand, a second parkrun is due to start at Cotgrave Country Park later this year.
- 4.10. Local sports clubs and athletes are supported through specific sports grants:
 - Rushcliffe Coach Scholarship Scheme – volunteer coaches delivering in Rushcliffe sports clubs can apply for funding to support level 1, 2 and 3 National Governing Bodies of Sport coaching courses. On average 18 grants are awarded each year.
 - Rushcliffe Elite Sports Grant – this funding is to support elite athletes who are performing at international level within their sport. This is to help alleviate some of the financial burden which is often a barrier to achievement. 25 athletes were supported in 2022.
 - Rushcliffe FANS (Free Access for National Sportspeople) – this grant supports National level athletes by providing a free gym membership at one of the Council owned leisure centres. There are currently 73 active members of the FANS scheme.
- 4.11. We are fortunate to have several world class facilities in Rushcliffe, which often bring major events and tournaments to the Borough. These are supported by the SDO who assists with promotion and has provided ancillary events to engage with local communities at the Cricket World Cup at Trent Bridge in 2019, the World Mixed Relay Triathlon in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and more recently the Canoe Freestyle World Championships at Holme Pierrepont.

4.12. **Barriers to Increasing Participation**

We know from data, experience and new ways of working, that there are many barriers to residents taking part in sport and physical activity, which can be defined as the following:

- **Personal** – insufficient time or motivation, lack of social support, fear of injury or feelings of self-consciousness.
- **Environmental** – access to safe and convenient sports facilities, green/blue spaces, walking and cycling networks etc.
- **Socio-economic** – access to disposable household income, with many residents having to prioritise paying energy bills and feeding their families, particularly with the current cost of living crisis.

4.13. The Council has helped overcome some of these barriers through providing support for people to be more active:

- Since its implementation in 2020, the Reach Rushcliffe Fund has supported seven physical activity projects
- The Holiday Activities and Food Fund (HAF) has supported 591 children and young people by providing free access to school holiday programmes that provide physical activity, nutritional activities, and a meal.
- To proactively influence behaviour, change the Council is working with communities to understand the barriers, need and demand
- Promotion of National campaigns such as This Girl Can, Join the Movement and We Are Undefeatable.

4.14. In 2020, the pandemic created one of the biggest barriers to sport and physical activity, with sports clubs, leisure centres and independent gyms and classes having to cease. However, we did see an increase of people walking, running, and cycling as these were the only opportunities for residents to get outside. There was also a shift to online activities and classes, which provided an alternative way to be active. The challenge now is to support sports clubs, organisations, and individuals through the recovery of COVID-19.

5. **Implications**

5.1. **Financial Implications**

The sports development function is delivered within existing resources, with the SDO being a permanent post costing £42k per annum including on-costs.

5.2. **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

5.3. Equalities Implications

The delivery of the sports development function prioritises the delivery of sports and physical activity opportunities to those with disabilities and from under-represented groups.

5.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

The sports development function works with partners to deliver diversionary activity and project to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

6. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Access to sport and physical activity contributes to resident's health and wellbeing
Efficient Services	Sports Development provides a strategic overview of leisure facilities to ensure they provide efficient service to meet the needs of the community
Sustainable Growth	Through the Playing Pitch Strategy and Leisure Strategy, consideration is made for the need, demand and supply for leisure and sports facilities within large scale development sites and growth areas
The Environment	Sports Development strategy encourages the provision of green and blue infrastructure including walking trails, cycling networks and amenity open spaces

7. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Communities Scrutiny Group receive an overview presentation of the work that is undertaken in delivering the Sport Development function and provide their feedback on future activity undertaken in promoting sport and wellbeing to our residents.

For more information contact:	Dave Banks Director of Neighbourhoods Tel: 0115 9148438 dbanks@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	None