



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee: 22 July 2024

Director Lead: Deborah Johnson, Director - Customer Services & Organisational Development

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Report Summary	
Report Title	Support for Active Lifestyles Working Group
Purpose of Report	To provide an update and the findings from the work of the Support for Active Lifestyles working group.
Recommendations	That the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee note the findings of the Working Group

1.0 Background

1.1 In August 2023 a topic request form was proposed by Cllr Paul Peacock and seconded by Cllr Lee Brazier, which was submitted to the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee. The proposed topic was Support for Active Lifestyles and subsequently a cross-party working group was formed.

The Working Group

1.2 The working group met on three occasions between December 2023 and April 2024, with input from the following working group elected councillors: -

- Cllr Brooks (Chair)
- Cllr Roberts
- Cllr Jackson
- Cllr Brazier
- Cllr Thompson
- Cllr Tift
- Cllr Shakeshaft
- Cllr Penny

1.3 The working group was supported by a team of officers who, considering the direction given by elected councillors, gathered information and data to inform the sessions.

- 1.4 The working group identified two key aims based on the aforementioned topic request form, which formed the basis of the review initiation document.
- Firstly, to establish the active lifestyles baseline for all residents, across the district.
 - Secondly, once the baseline is established, work to identify any areas in which the Council can make recommendations to add value to the active lifestyles offering. Whether that is by identifying a need that is not currently being met or looking at ways to remove barriers to accessing an active lifestyle for all.
- 1.5 The working group recognised early on that the topic of ‘Active Lifestyles’ is broad, with many different areas of potential focus. As a result, members agreed that an area of focus would need to be identified. The sessions set out to share as much information on relevant strategies, projects and business as usual activities, to inform the working group.
- 1.6 Members reviewed data from the Resident Survey during the sessions, which consisted of: Residents satisfaction levels with parks & open spaces by ward and residents’ satisfaction levels with leisure & sports facilities by ward. This data supported the information shared by members based on their own experiences from the wards they represent.
- 1.7 Key officers were invited to contribute, helping to inform the working group, which covered topics including: -
- Strategies, namely the Sports and Recreation Facilities Strategy, Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy and the Health & Wellbeing Strategy
 - Interlinking projects, including ongoing work around Active Travel and the Asset Based Community Development project.
 - The community groups, initiatives, sports clubs, green spaces and partnership working available.
 - An overview of Active4Today and its role in supporting healthy and active lifestyles
 - Consultation with residents
 - Communication with residents

2.0 Proposal/Options Considered

2.1 Benchmarking the cost of Council owned leisure services

Research was carried out to understand and compare the cost of different membership types offered by Active4Today in comparison to three other leisure centres. Two of the leisure centres are within a 25 mile radius of Newark Sports and Fitness Centre, with the third leisure centre sitting outside of this immediate vicinity.

- 2.2 This exercise demonstrated that there are a range of different membership options available, which are not always like for like. When comparing Active4Today against Active Nottingham we can see the cost of various membership types were very similar across the board, with the biggest price difference being evident in the concessionary membership. Active4Today's concessionary membership was £26.00 per month in comparison to Active Nottingham at £29.59 per month for a flexible membership. Of the three other leisure centres reviewed as part of this comparison, two advertised a joining fee online and of which Active4Today's joining fee was the lowest.

Membership Type	Active4Today	Fitness+ Nottingham	Active Retford Leisure Centre	Doncaster Dome Leisure Centre
Rolling/Flexi Adult Membership	£39.00		£36.99	
Contractual membership	£31.00		£31.63*	
			*Cost has been equated over 12 months for comparison purposes, membership is actually payable over 11 months	
Concessionary Membership	£26.00		£29.59 £27.60	£20.00
Student	£20.00		£19.99	£20.00
Joining fee	£20.00		£30.00	£25.00
Prices correct as of October 2023				

2.3 Identifying where the Working Group can add value.

Throughout the working group sessions members were looking at the topic of Active Lifestyles through the lens of where and how the Council could add value, both to strengthen its existing offering and by identifying any gaps. As described in section 1, officers were invited to attend the working group meetings to share information with the working group. It became clear through these sessions the Council currently directly delivers and indirectly supports through partnership working a wide range of support for residents, encouraging them to lead an active lifestyle across the district.

- Strategically: There are a number of interlinking strategies which ensure that the right activities and facilities are being concentrated in the right locations around the district, developing a strategic response to the unique needs of our communities. As well as planning and making the necessary provisions for the future of those communities.
- Innovatively: Several projects were ongoing at the time of the working group looking at the topic of Active Lifestyles, which had a direct link into the objectives of the working group. This demonstrated the fact that as an organisation our finger is on the pulse when it comes to encouraging and supporting residents to lead an active lifestyle and we are doing so in a holistic manner. The two projects that the working group heard about specifically were the Active Travel project and the Asset Based Community Development project.
- Consistently: Strategies and projects were offset against what the Council does day in day out to support residents and how we communicate what support is available to all of our residents. This included understanding more about tailored communication approaches which are used to reach specific demographics of residents, where a bespoke approach is evidenced by a need in the community.

2.4 Members of PPIC can expect an accompanying presentation to this report, to be delivered by the Chair of the Working Group, supported by key officers who will share more granular information about the relevant strategies, projects and approaches to communicating our offering to residents.

- 2.5 Based on the depth and breadth of support available now and the strategic work ongoing to secure the future support, the working group did not find any one key area whereby value could be added to supporting Active Lifestyles. Upon reflection of why that is, it is believed that due to the strength and quality of what we as a Council are already offering, we have reached capacity and without significant investment in resource in this area, there is not a clear recommendation for this working group to put forward. It is also not recommended that a significant investment is needed, the quality and range of support available is felt to be comprehensive and meeting the needs of the community.
- 2.6 The working group would like PPIC to note that the Council is dedicated to supporting all residents across the district to lead an active lifestyle.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.