

EXTRACT FROM HEALTH AND WELLBEING OSC MINUTES, 4 JUNE 2019

REPORT OF THE VICE-CHAIR, HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Recommendations from Themed Scrutiny Review: Improving Health and Fitness in Northumberland

Members were advised that a review had been organised as a themed scrutiny review into how Active Northumberland was benefitting the health and wellbeing of Northumberland residents. The subgroup had met on 16 January, 27 February and 15 May 2019. Members were to consider the recommendations in the report (filed with the official minutes as Appendix D); if supported, the committee should recommend that Cabinet agree it at their meeting on 9 July 2019.

Members of the subgroup welcomed the review; members were pleased that Active Northumberland was not just focussing on purely fitness and swimming pool/gym membership numbers and income generated from that but instead wider health and wellbeing, inequalities and social exclusion considerations. This was a welcome return to how some leisure organisations had previously operated. It was also important that this scrutiny work remained with a health and wellbeing focus within this committee's remit; retaining an oversight of how Active Northumberland's activities was very important. Praise was also expressed for work undertaken on the Exercise on Referral scheme and to Mark Tweedie, the new chief executive of Active Northumberland for his excellent work and approach; he had been a very positive appointment and was determined to deliver for Active Northumberland.

Reference was also made to the report's request to continue monitoring actions detailed in the review and support was expressed for the continuation of the subgroup to look at this. Members were advised that any feedback from Cabinet's consideration of the recommendations from the review would be reported back to this committee's meeting on 4 September, at which point the committee could confirm any revisions to the subgroup's terms of reference going forward.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be welcomed and forwarded to Cabinet to consider on 9 July 2019 and consider adopting the recommendations of the review; and
- (2) the subgroup continue with a monitoring role and its membership remain as Councillors Dungworth, Moore, Rickerby and Watson.

EXTRACT FROM CABINET MINUTES, 9 JULY 2019

REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - IMPROVING HEALTH AND FITNESS TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The report presented the findings of the Task and Finish Group to Cabinet for consideration. The Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed at their meeting on 4 June 2019 to recommend the findings to Cabinet for agreement (copy attached to the signed minutes as Appendix E).

This was presented by the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing OSC, Councillor Watson. He highlighted that this work had taken some time to complete, and as a result, he acknowledged that some of the report's recommended changes had already been introduced. No major issues of concern had been identified, but the working group would continue to meet a couple of times a year to maintain a watching brief.

Councillor Homer commented positively on this example of well organised and constructive scrutiny. She felt it was a testament to how far Active Northumberland (AN) had come as an organisation, and demonstrated how open and transparent they were. She welcomed the points in support of AN but felt there was some misunderstanding of the functions and remit of AN and the County Council, and also Northumberland Sport in terms of where responsibility lay. Regarding request 1(f) and the provision of community activities, she advised that a lot of work was done here but it needed to be on a targeted, area by area basis. Regarding request 1(g) and coordination with AN to support and promote leisure and fitness activities, Councillor Homer advised that the County Council and AN had already recorded active referrals in the last two years. She suggested that the Task and Finish Group report be passed on to the AN Board, Northumberland Sport and the Sports Development Team for their comments.

With regard to the Exercise Referral Scheme, Councillor Jones paid tribute to AN about their willingness to deliver better outcomes in this area which was really refreshing.

Councillor Sanderson agreed with Councillor Homer's comments on the work of Scrutiny, which he felt had been very thorough, and the Administration were responding in a positive way. It was a careful and considered report and he supported the proposal for the Task Group to continue review.

The Leader commented that AN had been reviewing their activities and he felt this could usefully be presented to Scrutiny.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) Cabinet support the following requests to Active Northumberland:

- (a) whilst acknowledging that a reduced membership price offer has also been introduced for NCC employees, school staff, NHS and uniformed services employees, consideration be given, in principle, to reduced cost memberships where appropriate within the ongoing fees and charges review to enable the greatest level of concessions to focus on the impact on the people who need them most, especially children, to assist a balance between fair pricing and optimising participation;
 - (b) continue to ensure that teaching children to swim is a priority and work to better utilise smaller pools within communities and ensure access to all;
 - (c) whilst the Exercise Referral Scheme is under review and anticipated improvements will be implemented later in 2019, for which members welcome a new pricing model and concessionary scheme for people with low incomes, plus an increased focus on a weight management element, work should take place with Northumberland CCG to explore the drop in referrals and promote the uptake where appropriate;
 - (d) Active Northumberland be asked to increase publicity about what particular activities are available locally in centres, what activities were funded by their expenditure and stories about what service users have achieved through Active Northumberland activities/facilities;
 - (e) although firstly acknowledging that the demand for the service is being met and it has a small waiting list, further support the Pegasus Centre through looking at options for improved signage, work with the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) to promote volunteering, work experience opportunities for maintenance and repair work for some Kirkley Hall students, raising its profile perhaps at Local Area Council meetings;
 - (f) the provision of community activities for young people, including school holiday provision, be considered during the strategic review of the Sports Development Service;
 - (g) support consideration being given to how different elements of the Council could coordinate with Active Northumberland to support and promote leisure and fitness activities supporting health, social care, school improvement, resilient communities, local economy, tourism, environment, employment and workforce issues; and
- (2) Cabinet express support for the following work/initiatives undertaken/being considered by Active Northumberland:
- (h) Active Northumberland's charitable status, ethos, commitment, confidence placed in current staff, demonstration of a good organisational culture, focus on improving health outcomes and provision of apprenticeships and part time roles for young people;
 - (i) Active Northumberland's work to improve their understanding of user needs, attract people who currently did not use their services, and measures being undertaken with schools and adult social care to

de-medicalise interventions and use leisure services to tackle loneliness and isolation;

- (j) support for the new countywide Physical Activity Strategy and the role that Active Northumberland will play in implementing it;
- (k) the developing managerial solution to enable school facilities to be open for use on evenings;
- (l) rolling out the model used at Wentworth Leisure Centre to ensure a balance between the differing needs of swimming clubs and public swims;
- (m) the continuation of concessionary rates for students during summer months;
- (n) health coaching work;
- (o) explore the possible use of community venues for leisure activities such as church centres and village halls where appropriate, in acknowledgement of some people's reluctance to attend leisure centres;
- (p) the new branding, including its key focus on supporting people to become active;
- (q) the outputs and deliverables presented;
- (r) the £700,000 investment into refurbishing the Wentworth gym and reception experience; and
- (s) the £5m investment into Blyth Sports Centre; and

(3) Cabinet note that the Health and Wellbeing OSC will receive a progress update on all the above recommendations later in 2019/20 and the Task and Finish Group's views on the next steps for continuing any further scrutiny of this topic.