



**REPORT TO: EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S AND LEISURE SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON 2 NOVEMBER 2022**

SUBJECT: ACTIVE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SPORT UPDATE

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the progress made by the Active Schools and Community Sport team in Moray during the last academic year and to seek approval for the extension of this Service for a further four years.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (D) (13) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to exercise the Council's statutory functions to provide facilities and support activities related to the development of recreation, sport, culture and social activities.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (i) **scrutinise and note the progress of Active Schools and Community Sport during the 2021-22 academic year; and**
- (ii) **approve the extension of the Active Schools and Community Sport Hub programmes from existing budget for a further four year period from 1 April 2023 in partnership with sportscotland at a total cost of £979,077 for the four year period (year 1 £224,154, year 2 £237,626, year 3 £251,502 and year 4 £265,795) to secure an investment of £1,185,928 from sportscotland over the same period.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At the meeting of Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee on 24 November 2021, the Committee approved the extension of the Active Schools and Community Sports Hub programmes from existing budget for a further one year period from 1 April 2022 in partnership with sportscotland at a cost of £177,000 (para 15 of the minute refers).

- 3.2 The current partnership agreement with sportscotland, which includes investment for the Active Schools and Community Sport Hub programmes ends on 31 March 2023. Although a partnership agreement for a 4 year period from 2019 – 2023 was available between sportscotland and Moray Council, the decision was taken by Moray Council to establish an annual agreement over this 4 year period due to the Council's annual budget setting position.
- 3.3 Sportscotland is committed to continuing to work in partnership with Moray Council and has agreed to an in-principle commitment to future investment in Active Schools and Community Sport hubs for a four year period from 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2027. This would see an investment into Moray, of a minimum of £1,185,928 over the 4 year period, which would support the continued employment of the Principal Active Schools and Community Sport Officer, all the Active Schools Co-ordinators and the Community Sports Hub Officer within Moray Council.
- 3.4 This agreement in principle is subject to the Council committing their financial contribution towards these programmes, which for 2023/24 equates to approximately 43% of the annual investment required. Any reduction in the Council's investment would result in a reduction of the sportscotland contribution which would result in a reduction of staffing within the team. Sportscotland and Moray Council have closely aligned priorities including continued recovery from the pandemic, ensuring inclusion for all and supporting the most vulnerable in communities.
- 3.5 All 32 local authorities in Scotland currently have partnership agreements in place with sportscotland. Moray is one of only two areas that have been approving the financial agreement on an annual basis, with all other areas confirming the financial investment in alignment with their 2019-2023 partnership agreements. A longer term partnership agreement is beneficial for retaining existing team members, strengthening the position when recruiting new members of staff and reducing the workload required developing annual partnership agreements.
- 3.6 Despite 2021/22 being a challenging year due to continuing Covid-19 restrictions, the Active Schools and Community Sport team have continued to deliver an excellent service to our local community – both in terms of supporting young people to be active and also supporting volunteers and community clubs to develop. A summary of the team achievements across the 2021/22 academic year is contained in **Appendix I** of this report.
- 3.7 One element of the report describes the impact of the summer holiday programme delivered in 2022. The priority of the Active Schools team as per the sportscotland criteria is to develop activity during the school term time with planning being the focus for holiday periods. Therefore none of the data reporting to sportscotland includes holiday activities. However after the cessation of the Sports Development team due to budget savings in 2018, the Active Schools team have taken on an additional responsibility to co-ordinate holiday programmes across the area.

- 3.8 The current Active Schools and Community Sport Team comprises of 1 full time equivalent (FTE) Principal Active Schools and Community Sport Officer, 7.8 FTE Active Schools Co-ordinators, 1 FTE Community Sport Hub Officer and a pool of 20 sport coaches and assistants on zero hour contracts. Our sports coaches and assistants are on zero hour contracts due to the fact they are utilised on a flexible basis by the Active School Co-ordinators to meet Service needs. The sports coaching staff are often used in areas where the Active School Co-ordinators are unable to recruit volunteers or community sports club coaches (because all their sessions have to be free). This flexible approach and contract is preferable to the current coaching team as they have the flexibility to arrange work round their lifestyle.
- 3.9 The Active Schools and Community Sport team contribute to the implementation of the Moray Council Sport and Leisure Business Plan as well as sportscotland's Corporate Plan and also the Scottish Government's Active Scotland outcomes. The programmes also contribute towards priorities in the Local Outcome Improvement, Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People Services Plan.
- 3.10 Sportscotland have received additional funding from the Scottish Government in line with their Programme for Government and this funding will be utilised to upscale Active Schools and Community Sport Hub programmes with a focus on inclusion. This funding is in addition to core funding with project plans currently being developed in Moray which will focus on children and young people living in poverty and individuals with additional support needs.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

In relation to the LOIP, this report supports three of the four main priority areas which are:

- Building a better future for our children and young people
- Empowering and connecting communities
- Improving the wellbeing of our population

In relation to the Corporate Plan, this report contributes to three of the four main priority areas which are:

- Providing opportunities for people to be the best they can be throughout their lives with a strong and sustained focus on those individuals and groups in our society who experience the most disadvantage and discrimination
- Empower and support communities to build capacity
- Creating a sustainable council that provides valued services to our communities

(b) Policy and Legal

Improving the health and wellbeing of the Moray community through sport, leisure and recreation is not only an integral part of the local vision, but it is also a national priority. In particular, the report aims to contribute towards the aspiration of an active Scotland where everyone benefits from sport, identified in sportscotland's corporate plan 'Sport For Life'. The corporate plan also emphasises the importance of ensuring that inclusion underpins everything we do. The report links to the Scottish Government's Active Scotland Outcomes Framework, which aims to improve our active infrastructure – people and places.

(c) Financial implications

To retain the existing Active Schools and Community Sports team, the Council would be required to commit £979,077 across the four year period which would secure the current level of sportscotland funding. This figure reflects the current budget for this service area and includes an estimated 3% pay award annually. The budget caution below is given because this was not a permanent commitment for the council to fund the service and so a funding decision is required. Should the council not continue with the current level of funding for the service, this would represent reduced revenue commitment but would require a reduction in service beyond the value of the council funding as the sportscotland funding would also be lost.

Sportscotland have contributed £296,482 towards Active Schools this financial year and have agreed in principle to continue this annual investment for the next four years. If the council were to reduce or remove its contribution sportscotland would also review their level of funding commitment and may withdraw from the arrangement.

If Moray Council determined that they were not to commit funding towards the Active Schools and Community Sports team then Moray Council would be unable to apply for the additional government funding mentioned in 3.10 of this report.

Corporate Management Team Additional Expenditure Warning When the Council approved the budget for 2022/23 on 22 February 2022 (paragraph 3 of the Minute refers) it balanced only by using reserves and one-off financial flexibilities. The indicative 3 year budget showed a likely requirement to continue to make savings in the order of £20 million in the next two years. All financial decisions must be made in this context and only essential additional expenditure should be agreed in the course of the year. In making this determination the committee should consider whether the financial risk to the Council of incurring additional expenditure outweighs the risk to the Council of not incurring that expenditure, as set out in the risk section below and whether a decision on funding could reasonably be deferred until the budget for future years is approved.

(d) Risk Implications

If the Council does not contribute financially to the programme then the risks would include sportscotland withdrawing all their financial contribution to the service, which would result in the cessation of the Active Schools and Community Sport Hub programmes in Moray. The provision provided by the Sport & Leisure Facilities (swimming pools, fitness rooms etc.) would then be the only sport and physical activity provision offered by the Council.

If the Council does not contribute 100% of the financial figure identified in this report then sportscotland will review and reduce their contribution. This would result in all staff within the Active Schools team reducing to part time hours which would have employment implications. It would also result in the team having to cease any organisation of holiday activity programmes and there would be a reduced volume of activity in each of their individual schools across their ASG area.

Sportscotland also provide additional support locally through investment in facilities and direct to community sport clubs. Without an Active Schools and Community Sports Hub Service in place the continuation of these services would reduce. The reason for this is that there would be minimal Local Authority resource to support these investments.

Removal of the Active Schools programme would also have a negative impact on the Fit Life Scheme memberships, and income to the Council. A number of families subscribing to Fit Life participate in the holiday and term time programmes that are co-ordinated by the Active Schools team. The reduction in opportunities available through Fit Life would lead to a decrease in memberships purchased.

Local volunteer community sport clubs and physical activity groups in Moray would also be negatively impacted. There would no longer be a Moray Council team to support the development and long term sustainability of these community clubs, reducing the potential for high quality opportunities for our community.

If the Council commits to a 4 year funding arrangement, there is a risk that the annual cost becomes unaffordable in future years given the predicted budget position facing the council. However, this is similar to other services where there may be a need for future review to make savings. A four year commitment to the annual cost of the service as outlined in the report would not prevent the council from reviewing the position in light of future circumstances if required. However, this would impact upon the sportscotland funding at that time.

(e) Staffing Implications

If the Council do not contribute financially to the Active Schools and Community Sports Hub programmes then this would result in the loss of 1 FTE Principal Active Schools and Community Sport Officer post, all 7.8FTE Active Schools Co-ordinators posts, the 1 FTE Community Sport Hub Officer post and all Sport Coaches and Assistants.

Cessation of these programmes would also result in redundancy costs due to a large percentage of the staff within this team being permanent members of staff.

Any workforce implications would be managed through the Council's Transform process which includes looking for suitable alternative redeployment opportunities.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

A number of Active Schools and Community Sport Hub projects target protected characteristic groups such as the disabled, individuals with poor mental health and also families residing in socially deprived areas to ensure they receive opportunities to be physically active. The ceasing of these programmes would result in reduced opportunities for these protected groups, negatively impacting the ability to reduce health inequalities locally.

(h) Climate Change and Biodiversity Impacts

This proposal would help contribute to the climate emergency as the Active Schools and Community Sport Team are in the process of launching a 'Sports Kit For All' project, encouraging the recycling of sports clothing and equipment to be re-distributed to disadvantaged families. The Council Climate Change team have been involved in the project discussions and this initiative will contribute towards action 13 of the Climate Change Strategy.

(i) Consultations

In preparing this report, consultations have been undertaken with the Sport & Culture Service Manager, Head of Education Resources and Communities, Chief Financial Officer, Principal Climate Change Strategy Officer, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer and sportscotland whose comments have been incorporated in the report.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Committee is asked to note the progress made in regards to the Active Schools and Community Sports Hub programmes and to agree to commit £979,077 (year 1 £224,154, year 2 £237,626, year 3 £251,502 and year 4 £265,795) to secure funding of £1.85m from sportscotland and extend the programmes in partnership with sportscotland for a further four year period from 1 April 2023 from existing budget.

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Background Papers:

Ref: SPMAN-9425411-71 / SPMAN-9425411-72