

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

This Plan should be considered alongside the Ribble Valley Sports and Physical Activity Alliance (SPAA) Vision Strategy, and aims to identify how Ribble Valley Borough Council will contribute towards the delivery target of a 1% increase in active participation. The Ribble Valley SPAA Strategy recognises the many influences that national and regional organisations have in providing the legislation, guidance and funding which shape the way sport is available at local community level. These include:

- DCMS objectives
- Delivery system for sport
- Government Educational Policy
- Government Health Policy
- Every Child Matters Policy
- North West Regional Sports Board
- County Sports Partnerships

It is the role of the SPAA to align the various strategic influences into a local context and enable local bodies and networks to improve and add value to existing activity and investment.

Ribble Valley Borough Council is, perhaps, the pivotal partner through coordination of the partnership working and in facilitating the delivery mechanism. The SPAA Strategy serves as the overarching strategic planning document for the Sport and Recreation and the Health and Physical Activity Plans. The SPAA aims to;

- identify local needs and potential interventions in a locally shared vision;
- secure resources from a broad range of partners to deliver the identified interventions and outcomes;
- focus upon building the capacity to increase participation and widen opportunities.

There is recognition of Local Area Agreements and the Ribble Valley Locality Plan identifies specific reference to how the Sport and Recreation service will deliver programmes to improve the health and wellbeing of residents, improve access to services and support the development of initiatives targeting children and young people.

In a regional context, the North West Plan for Sport and Physical Activity identifies five themes which are either in most need of intervention or have significant contribution to meeting participation targets and the action plan outcomes included in this plan are linked specifically to these themes which are:

- Promoting a healthy environment and lifestyle
- Enhancing sporting and leisure opportunities
- Improving our ability to consult with people, especially hard to reach groups
- Preserving and improving accessibility for people in rural areas

The strategic objectives have been produced with an appreciation of the Ribble Valley Sustainable Community Strategy and the major issues identified which have arisen from consultation include:

- Facilities; with particular emphasis on rural isolation and the provision of facilities and activities for young and elderly people.
- Health improvement; the priority refers to the population as a whole but again young people are identified as a target group for action.

il provides a range of indoor and outdoor sport and that are believed to be consistent with its ambitions and core values,

- Council ambitions - To help make people's lives safer and healthier- The provision of leisure facilities for use by the local community is integral to the improvement of people's health by enabling physical activity to take place in a way which raises the participation rates.
- Core Values
 - * Ensure that access to services is available to all- The range of sporting and physical activities programmed according to the needs of all people and issues of inclusivity and geographic inequality are taken into account.
 - * Lead the Community- The voluntary and private sectors also contribute to leisure provision in Ribblesdale Valley but we recognise that there is an expectation by members of the community that opportunities/ facilities are provided directly by the Borough council and that we serve to provide important support through information, advice and funding awareness.
 - * Respect all individuals and their views- when introducing new activity programmes and developing provision, every attempt is made to ensure that community engagement takes place.

3 CURRENT ACTIVITY AND ISSUES

The Borough's involvement in the provision of Sport and Recreation is in the form of Indoor Sports facilities - Ribblesdale Swimming Pool and Longridge Gym. These facilities represent the only direct provision and both are facing particular challenges;

The Swimming Pool is well used by the community and there is a demand for increased access to water space; by learn to swim programmes and the Clitheroe Dolphins Swimming Club. Swimming is available free of charge to those aged 16 years and under and those aged 60 years and over at present and this will come to an end in March 2011. Whilst swimming attendances have been bolstered by the government initiated free swimming programme, there is an expectation that a return to paying for visits to the pool by these groups may have an adverse effect on participation levels.

The availability of artificial multi-use outdoor sports surfaces has enabled participation in Football, Tennis and Netball to be available on the same site and has contributed to this being a very popular complex as demonstrated with the very high user satisfaction levels collected over a number of years.

The Gym was relocated to the Civic Hall in Longridge, from its previous location attached to the High School in November 2008 and has formed part of what has become a centre of community activity experiences. The Fitness Room has generated increased membership over the past year and a range of keep fit, dance, martial arts, tai-chi, Pilates activities are now available from the adjoining Main Civic Hall.

Whilst the Gym, Children Centre and Civic Hall activity programmes are currently operated in partnership the continued existence of each is reliant on the future success of partnership working and the effectiveness with which the service delivery and respective resources deployed can be operationally interwoven.

An essential contribution to enabling equal access to leisure activity programmes is through the role of outreach to disadvantaged sections of the community. Sports

itionally comprised of the delivery of instruction, and in a way that enables everyone to take part. This is the development of activity programmes from Civic Hall and other groups which was initiated through SPAA funding. The council is obtaining future external funding to support these programmes are uncertain and it seems unlikely that it will be possible to provide an outreach function in the form of direct provision.

4 **KEY PRIORITIES FOR SPORTS AND RECREATION IN RIBBLE VALLEY**

4.1 Health Improvement

The core service delivery is entrenched in the aims and objectives of the East Lancashire Primary Care Trust. Understanding the various health needs and making sure services are available and accessible to meet those needs is achieved through a commissioning process and the Ribble Valley Healthy Lifestyles section delivers specific client referral based programmes around Exercise on Prescription, Phase 4 cardiac rehabilitation and Weight Management. (The Health action plan identifies the objectives of our involvement with these programmes).

Health improvement is also addressed through specific initiatives which contribute to the overall health of the community through consideration of health issues and enabling activity access which satisfies needs at a localised level. The activities will be based on demand identified from an auditing process and ongoing consultation through established networks.

The Ribble Valley Locality Health Profile identifies that this area has a relatively lower health need than the rest of Lancashire. However, certain issues do have an impact upon rolling out the programmes:

The above average number of older residents;
Pockets of deprivation do exist in an overall picture of affluence;
There needs to be more opportunity for equitable access to services and facilities;
There are high levels of obesity, especially amongst young people, (primary school ages).

The Healthy Valley Initiative provides a framework in which to roll out co-ordinated health support and activity provision and will cater for needs in the form of:

- Community Gyms
- Various kinds of dance
- Activities specific to parent and children
- Informal walking / cycling events

4.2 Improving Access to Facilities and Opportunities

Ongoing consultation with members of the community points to a need for more facilities which facilitate participation in sport and physical activity. The Council's Leisure Facilities; Ribblesdale Pool and Longridge Gym, are representative of how the council seeks to ensure that there are quality facilities accessible to local communities. There is direct facility provision at one main site; (Ribblesdale Pool), and since the handing over Community use of sports facilities to the High School in Longridge the Council operates a Fitness Room facility attached to Longridge Civic Hall. Apart from these current forms of facility provision Sport and Recreation opportunities are supported indirectly through an enabling role with Roefield and Longridge charitable trusts.

People in Ribble Valley are amongst the most active sports participants in Lancashire; (Active People 2 Survey), and this is largely attributable to the role of

sports clubs in the area. It is appreciated that these clubs are able to contribute to the development of the area in providing opportunities and we aim to support their efforts by assisting with facility improvements, achieving the co-ordination of training/ coaching courses and generally increasing club membership.

To increase the capacity and range of opportunities available from community venues the most affective improvements proposed are:

- Development of activity programmes from civic/village halls;
- Building of a network of activity instructors and volunteers that are able to contribute to activity provision;
- Establish outreach development of certain outdoor orientated pursuits (skateboarding, cycling, walking and climbing), and enable sustainable participation at recognised venues across the Borough;
- Raising awareness about the opportunities that exist and inviting community participation in developing new opportunities.
- Community focused approach which seeks to encourage locally conceived initiatives be realised by financial and organisational support through the Healthy Valley initiative.
- Specific support to clubs and particularly those working towards Clubmark and assistance in all aspects of club development.

4.3 Partnerships in enhancing sporting and physical activity opportunities

The delivery of services across sport and recreation is reliant on effective partnership working and there are some good examples;

- the Ribble Valley Sports and Physical Activity Alliance (SPAA);
- LSEC Trust and LCC children's centre provision;
- Longridge High School . community use;
- Hyndburn and Ribble Valley School's Sports Partnership.
- Roefield Leisure Centre

The value of partnership working is becoming increasingly important at a time when cost effectiveness in service delivery is crucial and establishing a clear partnership evaluation process with specific criteria on which to judge their success is essential to effective partnership working. This process will be applied to certain partnerships which have been in operation for some time but which do not always contribute to the expected outcomes and objectives of the Borough service, and in some cases this will necessitate the forging of Service Level Agreements.

Future partnership working must be based upon sustainable delivery of activity programmes, which can demonstrate effectiveness in terms of resource input compared with outcome achievement.

4.4 Customer Service

There is a high level of customer satisfaction with respect to the leisure facilities and sports development programmes delivered from Ribblesdale Pool/Edisford facility complex and Longridge. Whilst service standards are maintained at a consistently high standard, there is a need to focus attention further on customer care issues through:

- The production of and commitment to a customer care policy, enabling more customer feedback from user groups and non user surveys/questionnaires.

of quality accreditation in the form of QUEST at will continue to demonstrate a commitment to delivery of improvement culture within facility provision and delivery of services to the community.

- Identification of target group service needs through increased awareness generated from various mapping and information support available from Sports Development functions including Civic Hall activity development, Inclusion programmes, Leisurecard data, and effective use of this data to provide opportunities whilst enabling business continuity at facilities.

4.5 Performance Management

A review of Performance indicators has been undertaken across the Leisure Cultural section and a realisation that a more performance minded culture is necessary for more effective service delivery.

The Covalent system has been adopted by the organisation to support performance management and a process of continuous monitoring of the achievement of targets. This cuts across all service areas and will especially contribute towards

- Participation across target groups
- Effectiveness of the partnership working
- Satisfaction with service delivery
- Voluntary sector activity

The section remains committed to a process of continuous improvement and has undertaken a self assessment exercise in accordance to that advocated by the Culture and Sport Improvement Strategy. This involves the setting up of a Local Improvement network to provide a basis for sustainable, cyclical self assessment and improvement planning, best practice benchmarking and joint improvement projects, and incorporates the Culture and Sport Improvement Toolkit (CSIT).

An Improvement plan has been identified, and particular focus will be given to these areas along with the respective specific success criteria in each case.

4.6 Equality and Diversity

A new Equality framework for Local Government has been designed to assist us in meeting our legal equality obligations. The challenge is our service to develop better outcomes for individuals, families and communities. The five areas of change management that will be focused on are:

- Knowing your community
- Place shaping, leadership and organisational commitment
- Community engagement and satisfaction
- Responsive services and customer care
- A modern diverse workforce

The equality framework will be applied to our services to help identify if we are satisfying the criteria and to make changes in the way that we organise and deliver our activity programmes where necessary.