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**Forward**

Sport is now recognised as a tool for tackling issues around Crime, anti-social behaviour and health. Therefore, all providers of traditional sports activities and facility providers can help to make a contribution to help alleviate such issues, whilst at the same time improving the quantity and quality of sports participation within the area.

The Government is seeking the support of Local Authorities in partnership with other agencies to assist in developing a healthier nation. Traditionally Local Authorities have been the most significant providers of facilities and activities for sports and physical activity. We must also recognise the role of voluntary clubs and local organisations in providing facilities and activities within local communities as well as non-traditional providers such as the Gr@nd.

The onset of the 2012 Olympics also plays a part in the need to encourage more people to take part in sport and to sustain participation rates for future perspective participants to take part at the highest level. The recommendations contained within this report work towards these very aims.

## Sports Development

### 1. Executive Summary:

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|---|--|
| <p>1.1 The Overview Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of 'Sports Development' in the borough. A Task Group consisting of five Members of the Scrutiny Committee carried out this review.</p>  | <p>throughout the borough and where these could be strategically placed to feed into the creation of a list of potential projects/ regeneration.</p>   |
| <p>1.2 The terms of reference for the review were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To examine the current provision, accessibility and availability of outside sports activities throughout Gravesham.</li> <li>• To consider whether the current provision offers opportunities to the young and old alike.</li> <li>• To understand the effect existing provision has had on healthy living, crime reduction and community cohesion in Gravesham.</li> <li>• To study existing partnership working and how this might be developed/ expanded in the future.</li> <li>• To make recommendations to Cabinet based on the committee's findings and conclusions.</li> </ul> | <p>1.3.3 To encourage increased community access to existing educational facilities and to secure and negotiate formal community use agreements for new establishments and those that receive relevant funding for enhanced sports facilities through the Building Schools for the Future Programme.</p> <p>1.3.4 To seek funding to improve existing Council facilities including ancillary provision and to provide support to external facility providers where appropriate.</p> <p>1.3.5 Concentrate on the community aspect of projects to maximise the multiple funding opportunities available.</p> <p>1.3.6 Promote a culture of co-operation and information sharing between the Sports Development Officer, External Funding Officer and Private Sports Clubs within Gravesham to ensure positive and beneficial partnership work.</p> |
| <p>1.3 Recommendations to Cabinet are:-</p> <p>1.3.1 A borough-wide strategy be developed to co-ordinate and ensure the continued support of sporting facilities through planning restriction on future developments and the support for those sites under pressure.</p> <p>1.3.2 Evaluate what sporting facilities are desired</p>   | <p>1.4 The context in which this review was undertaken was a Cabinet report in November 2004 which sought to set out a vision for Sports Development within Gravesham. Sports Development is an important area of activity for the Council. Nationally, activities in this field are increasingly</p>  |

being recognised for their value to the social and environmental well-being of the community. In particular, the contribution they make to healthy lifestyles, crime reduction, educational attainment and community cohesion is regarded by professionals in those areas as being of equal value to their worth as leisure and recreational pursuits.

## 1.5 Evidence Gathering

1.5.1 Three evidence gathering sessions were held with Gravesham Borough Council's Sport and Recreation Manager, Sports Development Officer and External Funding Officer. Evidence was also gathered from John Moxham representing the views of private clubs within the Gravesham Borough.

## 2. Background:

2.1 On 22 November 2004 a report was produced to Cabinet that considered Gravesham's current provision of outdoor facilities. It also sought to look at partnership working and to develop opportunities and good practice to promote healthy lifestyles, community cohesion and crime reduction.

2.2 The vision, needs and objectives for sports development contained within this report, reflect the current work undertaken by the Public Health and Community Wellbeing Department.

2.3 The report is a comprehensive account of both the national and local objectives for sport and recreation, but is still relevant to the current aspirations of Central Government. The Government is seeking the

support of local authorities, in partnership with other agencies, to assist in developing a healthier nation. Traditionally local authorities have been the most significant providers of facilities and activities for sports and physical activity. The role of voluntary clubs, local organisations and non-traditional providers such as The Grand must also be recognised.

2.4 Sports is now also being recognised as a tool for tackling issues around crime, anti-social behaviour and health.

**NB** - The Chair of this Review was Gravesham Borough Council's representative on Kent County Council's "Tackling Obesity", NHS Overview and Scrutiny Joint Select Committee. This Joint Select Committee gathered evidence from a wide range of sources on the nature and scope of obesity as a public-health issue and on measures that can be undertaken at the local level to address the problem. The report is scheduled for publication in January 2007.

2.5 The Government's aspirations for the nation in terms of physical activity and sport and highlighted through a number of recent strategy documents. The Government's strategy document for sport (The Game Plan) wants to see 70 per cent of the population sufficiently active by 2020, meaning at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week.

The groups that are least likely to take part are as follows:-

- participation falls dramatically after leaving school and continues to drop with age;

- women are 19 per cent less likely to take part in sport and physical activity than men;
- the impact of social group is significant, with levels of participation almost three times higher for professional than manual groups; and
- ethnic minority participation is 6 per cent lower overall than the national average.

2.6 In 2002 the Kent Partnership was formed as a result of the Local Government Act 2000. The Kent Partnership is made up of representatives from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors. The following targets have been identified relating to sports development within The Kent Partnership's vision for Kent.

Outcome 16 – Help Kent's residents stay healthy.

Indicators	Data Source	Lead Partner	Other Partners
<b>6.1</b> Increase the percentage of 5-16 year olds in schools who participate in an average of two hours' high-quality PE and School Sport per week within and beyond the National Curriculum during one complete school year, from 45 per cent (2004) to 87 per cent; Year 1 = 64 percent. <b>LPSA2 Target 10.1</b>	Physical Education School Sport and Club Links	KCC Children, Families	Children's
<b>6.2</b> Increase the percentage of 5-16 year olds in school who participate in an average of three hours' high-quality PE and School Sport per week within and beyond the National Curriculum during one complete school year, from 9 per cent (2004) to 19 per cent; Year 1 = 20 per cent. <b>LPSA2 Target 10.2</b>	Survey; Kent PE Conference Survey	and Education	consortia
<b>6.3</b> Increase the number of adults participating in at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity sport and physical activity on five or more days each week on average over a year, as measured by questions 44 and 45 of the Kent and Medway Health and Lifestyles Survey, from 23.9 per cent (2005) to 27.0 per cent (September 2008). <b>LPSA2 Target</b>	Kent and Medway Health and Lifestyles Survey	PCTs	Primary Care; LSPs

2.7 The Public Health and Community Wellbeing Department carries out a sports development role mainly in partnership with a wide range of partners, including national governing bodies of sport, Sport England, Kent Sports Development Unit, County Sports Partnership, plus local schools, clubs, organisations and individuals. This sports development role is based around targeting specific sports and groups within the local area such as young people, women, disabled people and the elderly.

2.8 There are four main needs regarding sport and recreation which have been identified:-

- Two thirds of the population are not regularly involved in physical activity.
- The absence of sufficient facilities and activities resulting in increased anti-social behaviour.
- Lack of involvement by people such as the elderly in activities leading to adverse affects on their physical and mental well-being.

- High level of obesity and serious health risks contributed to by the lack of physical activity.
- 2.9 The mission for the development of sport and recreation in the Borough is contained in the Corporate Plan (Taking Pride in Gravesham). This is to work towards developing a thriving, attractive and successful community to working in partnership to secure the investment needed to achieve the Council's objectives and to work with local, regional and national agencies and the Government to ensure that key issues are addressed.
- 2.10 It was proposed that key objectives for the Council in line with the Cabinet report of 2004 regarding Sports Development, physical activity and healthy living in partnership with other organisations include the following:-
- To increase regular participation of people in sports and physical activities.
  - To encourage increased involvement in diversionary activities to foster improved social well-being.
  - To encourage increased participation by people such as the elderly in activities to improve physical and mental well-being.
  - To facilitate increased participation in physical activities to achieve positive health gain.
- 2.11 Strategic Leisure Limited was asked to update Gravesham's December 2003 'Assessment of Playing Pitches', using the original data to reflect the methodology within 'Towards a level Playing Field'. The results of the assessments and
- recommendations made should be considered alongside any wider Open Space Assessment and Strategy for Gravesham Borough Council. The rationale for undertaking the study is to identify current levels of provision in the area, across the public, education, voluntary and commercial sectors and to compare this with current and likely future levels of demand.
- 3. Outcome of Review:**
- 3.1 Interview with Adrian Hickmott, Sport and Recreation Manager.
- Mr Hickmott indicated to the Panel that the development of new residential areas, population growth and changing expectations of leisure activities and opportunities all have implications for future provision of playing pitches and other outdoor sports facilities. The plans of other providers will have an influence on the future location, mix and scale of playing pitch, green and court provision across the Gravesham Borough.
- Increasing concern at national government level over the loss of playing fields has prompted the need for the development of localised Playing Pitch Assessments and Strategies, which identify current and future requirements for playing fields.
- The Head of Public Health and Community Wellbeing wishes to implement a Health/Sports Strategy highlighting the many positive gains derived through sport and physical activity. This Strategy will attempt to consolidate the services we provide alongside those externally provided services.

**Conclusions:**

- Gravesham Borough Council should seek the attainment of local playing pitches and support those under threat from closure, such as the AEI Sports Ground, as a provider of outdoor playing pitches as well as a hub for local community activities. (Recommendation 1.3.1).
- To encourage a strategic spread of provision across the borough by ensuring that all future developments in Gravesham should be required by planning authorities to make provision for healthy lifestyles - including adequate footpaths and cycle paths and sports and leisure facilities. (Recommendation 1.3.1).
- Gravesham Borough Council encourages increased community access where possible to existing educational facilities and to secure and negotiate formal community use agreements for new establishments and those that receive relevant funding for enhanced sports facilities through the 'Building Schools for the Future Programme'. (Recommendation 1.3.3).
- To seek funding for improving existing council facilities - including ancillary provision and to provide support to external facility providers where appropriate. (Recommendation 1.3.4).

### 3.2 Interview with Thomas Munn, External Funding Officer

Mr Munn informed the Panel that there are various avenues for funding beside the National Lottery. Large amounts of National Lottery money is now being directed towards the core costs of the 2012 Olympics, improving facilities and putting into place the necessary infrastructure.

Kent County Council will be leading the funding process regarding available monies put aside for the 2012 Olympics. It is therefore necessary for departmental inter-action to take place to channel our energies into playing a part within Kent County Council's vision for the 2012 Olympics.

Since 1998, a total of £3.8m has been raised to support local sports clubs, charities and voluntary organisations located within Gravesham. Mr Munn explained that the details of each individual project dictates where you apply to for funding.

As of the end of July 2006, Gravesham Borough had received £11.5m from lottery based funds. This in terms of value, places us 10<sup>th</sup> out of 13 authorities within Kent.

**Conclusions:**

- The various avenues of funding (contained within Appendix one) should be noted for the consideration of moulding future sporting projects to fit the criteria for the relevant avenue of funding. (Recommendation 1.3.1 and 1.3.2).
- The creation of a list of potential sporting projects (ranging from small-scale to large-scale) should be undertaken to attract funding when appropriate avenues become available. (Recommendation 1.3.2).
- Emphasising the 'community aspect' of projects will maximise funding opportunities for sports orientated projects. (Recommendation 1.3.5).



3.3 Interview with Sarah Knight, Sports Development Officer and John Moxham, representing the views of private clubs and within Gravesham.

Many private sports clubs are aware that full-time coaching for children and representation of the sport is vital for the promotion of the game throughout the Borough. John Moxham described his intention to search for funding to cover the implementation of borough-wide coaches as well as general repairs and upgrades to the club's facilities.

It appeared crucial that more information could be shared between the private sports clubs within Gravesham and the Council's Sports Development Officer. Much is carried out by Gravesham Borough Council's Sports Development Officer that is of a huge benefit to many of the private clubs within Gravesham.

Ms Knight outlined the partnership working she carries out with local schools, groups, organisations and other agencies to promote the uptake of sport and physical activity.

**Conclusions:**

- Promote the attainment of Club Mark by all private sports club within Gravesham in partnership with the Kent Sports Development Unit. (Recommendation 1.3.6).
- Gravesham Borough Council needs to actively publicise the work of Sarah Knight and Thomas Munn more widely throughout the Borough, in the hope of helping private clubs to attain funding, coaches, increased activity

and membership and aid. (Recommendation 1.3.6).

- Increased co-operation and sharing of information between Gravesham's Sports Development Officer, workers and officers at the Gr@nd, Gravesham Community Leisure Ltd, the External Funding Officer, and the private clubs and organisations within Gravesham would benefit all parties. (Recommendation 1.3.6).

3.4 The Chair of this 'Sports Development' review was Gravesham Borough Council's representative on Kent County Council's 'Tackling Obesity', NHS Overview and Scrutiny Joint Select Committee. The report is due to be published in January 2007 and will contain recommendations relating to the positive influence of sport on health.

**Conclusion:**

- When The Kent County Council report is published, it should be considered in any proposed strategic overview of 'Sports Development' within Gravesham due to its in-depth analysis of the problem of obesity and its relationship with sport.

### Overview Scrutiny

**Review: Sports Development**

**Venue: Civic Centre, Committee Room 3 - 12 July 2006**

**Present:**

**Cllrs. Valerie Ashenden (Chair)  
Jean Christie  
Lyn Milner  
David Turner**

**Also in Attendance:**

**Adrian Hickmott  
Sarah Knight  
James Deamer**

### Summary of Evidence

#### 1. Background

Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) was asked to update the Gravesham December 2003 assessment of Playing Pitches using the original data to reflect the methodology within 'Towards a Level Playing Field'. Although undertaken as a discrete assessment exercise, the results of the assessments and recommendations made should be considered alongside any wider Open Space Assessment and Strategy for Gravesham Borough Council. The Gravesham Borough Assessment and Strategy covers the overall Borough area. The rationale for undertaking the study is to identify current levels of provision in the area, across the public, education, voluntary and commercial sectors, and to compare this with current, and likely future levels of demand. The supply and demand analysis helps identify the need for new facilities, and also suggest where there are too many facilities, perhaps in the wrong location. The analysis also helps to underpin future

planning policy and allocation, and help to support bids for external funding.

The development of new residential areas, population growth and changing expectations of leisure activities and opportunities all have implications for future provision of playing pitches and other outdoor sports facilities. Equally, the plans of other providers will have an influence on the future location, mix and scale of playing pitch, green and court provision across Gravesham Borough.

Increasing concern at national government level over the loss of playing fields has prompted the need for the development of localised Playing Pitch Assessments and Strategies, which identify current and future requirements for playing fields. Developing a strategic approach to the analysis of playing pitch, greens and court supply and demand is necessary to:

- protect facilities against development pressures, and specifically residential proposals on land in, and around, urban areas
- identify facility supply and demand issues in relation to predicted population changes
- address 'demand' pressures created as a result of specific sports development pressures, for example, mini soccer, move to use of artificial pitches by hockey

A major driving factor for this assessment and strategy is the need to identify a hierarchy of investment priorities for facility improvements and development, which can inform the continued development of effective Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in conjunction with the new Local Development Framework.

The Panel were informed that despite the Playing Pitch Assessment indicating we have a surplus of football pitches this is not in fact

an accurate reflection. This is due to the fact, accessibility to certain pitches is limited and we are running at our maximum now. The Playing Field Assessment argues for the preservation of our current provision whilst maintaining our support for private providers alongside community access to these sites.

It was noted that any future provision should be located strategically in order to maintain a balance of provision across the Borough and/or where demand dictates. The Playing Pitch Assessment does give an indication of relevant surpluses/deficits within the Borough.

## **2. Update on AEI Sportsground**

The Panel requested an update on the AEI Sportsground situation. Mr Hickmott explained that "T T Electronics" own the AEI Sportsground and the associated Club on this site has no contractual lease with "T T Electronics" for the long term use of this sports ground, hindering the ability to make plans for the future. Gravesham Borough Council is concerned about the long term future as it provides a local provision for outdoor playing pitches and as an indoor venue for community use.

## **3. Sports/Health Strategy**

Regarding the four bowls clubs within Gravesham, the Panel's fears about accessibility for members of the public as opposed to private club members were relayed to Mr Hickmott. It was explained that the private bowls clubs have to have facilities ready for pay and play use yet in reality this is not always the case. Patricia Jefford, Head of Public Health and Community Wellbeing wishes to implement a health/sports strategy highlighting the many positive health gains derived through sport. This strategy will attempt to consolidate the services we provide alongside those externally provided services. It is anticipated that local Council bowls facilities will play an integral part to the overall aims of the

strategy in increasing levels of participation for all, including those with disabilities.

From examining the results of the questionnaires circulated amongst the Residents Panel and local secondary schools, it was highlighted that athletics was the fourth most popular sport yet the Playing Pitch Assessment suggests we do not need to provide such provision. Mr Hickmott explained that firstly, there are no athletics clubs in Gravesham with adequate resources to support such facilities and secondly we are served by the facilities in Dartford and at Deangate. Thirdly, the Kent Athletics Association has not highlighted the need for a facility within the area as part of the annual Sports facility deficiency document published by the Kent Sports Development Unit.

The Panel established those areas for further consideration and subject to recommendation for the final report as follows:-

The Gravesham Playing Pitch Assessment recommends that in general terms the quantity of playing pitches within the borough should be maintained for the foreseeable future. Although there is a general surplus of provision for adult football, there is a deficiency in mini soccer and youth football. If the surplus was to be re-designated it would not be sufficient to meet identified deficiencies, including an uneven spread of supply across the borough as a whole. There are a number of school sites that currently do not accommodate community use, which if made available would help to eradicate the borough's deficiencies. However, this would only represent a theoretical surplus, as most school sites are already heavily used through school sport and in some cases do not have adequate changing facilities available to serve the pitches. The assessment also recommended the need to improve the quality of council owned facilities within the borough as well as the

quality of other facility providers,  
especially in relation to grounds  
maintenance, drainage and changing  
facilities.

### Overview Scrutiny

**Review:** Sports Development

**Venue:** Civic Centre, Committee Room 3 - 13 July 2006

**Present:**

**Cllrs.** Valerie Ashenden  
David Turner

**Also in Attendance:**

Thomas Munn  
James Deamer

'wish-list' of potential projects, ranging from small restoration projects to larger original projects. Therefore when the criteria for funding is announced some of these projects that meet the criteria might attract the subsequent funds.

Most realistic chance of Gravesham Borough Council channelling into Kent County Council's aspirations for the 2012 Olympics is to promote MEPA as a national centre of excellence due to its gymnastics facilities and its proximity to London.

Mr Munn explained to the panel that Chris Hesp is the Head of Kent's Sports Development unit at Kings hill and is co-ordinating Kent's potential 2012 Olympics money.

### Summary of Evidence

#### 1. Background

The Panel were informed that there are various avenues for funding besides the National Lottery. Sport England have over-committed themselves and therefore had to stop awarding money for a number of years and have only just started awarding grants again. The problem about such grants is that 65 per cent of the final value must be raised by the Council/body itself. Not one club in the Gravesham Borough area has enough funds to apply for one of these grants. It was also explained that a large part of National Lottery money is now being directed towards the core costs of the 2012 Olympics, improving facilities and putting into place the necessary infrastructure.

The Kent County Council will be leading the funding process regarding available monies put aside for the 2012 Olympics. It is therefore necessary for departmental inter-action to take place to channel our energies into playing a part within Kent County Council's vision for the 2012 Olympics.

Regarding 2012 Olympics derived funding, it is necessary for the Council to create a

#### 2. What alternative Paths of funding are there?

- 'Awards for All' – National lottery derived funding of a value up to £10,000 per annum, aimed at smaller organisations to assist with purchasing equipment and training facilities etc.
- 'KCC Sports Development Unit' – promotes sporting facilities within the County, identifying brand new projects and assisting clubs already established. Pot of money to distribute to applicants, i.e. applications have been forwarded from Luddesdown Cricket club and Cobham Bowling club, both to assist with club-house improvements.
- 'Community Support Fund' – Gravesham Borough Council's own funding vehicle to support local organisations.
- 'European funds' – 'URBAN' – Expires 2008, applications are lodged at old rectory but most of the funds have already been committed.

- 'Central Government funding streams' – Continually change, Gravesham Borough Council's 'grant finder' software package highlights all new and existing schemes and these are subsequently advised to the appropriate Council heads of departments.
- 'Charitable Trusts' – Local Voluntary organisations raise funds via numerous charitable trusts – these range from new computers to new customised vehicles for age concern.
- 'Governing bodies of Sport' – Every sport has a central control organisation – many of these have funding opportunities to promote the individual sport for instance providing loans at very low interest rates, repayable over a long period of time. An application by Vigo Rugby club may be lodged with the rugby and football foundation in the near future.

### Summary

Since 1998 from all funding sources a total of £3.8 million has been raised to support local sports clubs, charities and voluntary organisations located within Gravesham. The reality of the situation is that the details of each individual project, dictates where you apply for funding.

### 3. What areas are attractive to funding bodies?

Mr Munn indicated that more success can be achieved by moving the emphasis of the application away from a 'sporting' one to a 'community asset' one. For a particular site or project the community aspect should take precedence to attract maximum funding.

Similarly projects that attempt to input into aspects of healthy living, community cohesion and crime reduction associated

through sport also appear attractive for potential funding.

John Britt (Gr@nd project) actively pursues identified funding opportunities and is at present heading up a partnership bid covering health, crime and parenting skills for a total in excess of £16 million. Gravesham Borough Council's share of this if successful will be £1.8 million which will fund this particular project for 5 years.

### 4. Are there any current awards?

With regard to children's play funds, Gravesham Borough Council has been granted £238,000 but a play strategy needs to be developed first. Leisure, Housing and Community Safety are all involved in this project and will decide upon the necessary details that will feed into Cabinet.

Until the play strategy document has been completed and agreed, no projects will be identified. A wish-list of projects will be drawn up and at the time of Cabinet approval of the strategy, the decision will be made as to the allocation of funding. The lottery have indicated that they would expect no more than 50% of money to be spent on a new facility with the balance going to support/refurbish existing sites. However, there is no provision to stop us recommending projects other than the traditional playground sites, such as a new child-sensory room or a number of educational/training projects. In a number of ways the identification of projects will prove harder to agree than the play strategy.

### 5. Manpower -vs- attraction of funds?

As of the end of July 2006, Gravesham Borough had received £11.5 million from lottery based funds. This in terms of value, places us 10th out of 13 authorities within Kent. 1st place was Medway with a total of £35 million and 13th placed Dartford only accrued £8.2 million. In respect of successful applications, Gravesham made

183, Medway made 504 (again first place) and Dartford made 168. One of the main reasons for Medway attracting so much money from the lottery is that they have a funding team of 5 people, specifically targeting any form of funding, especially European and lottery based funds. All other local authorities only have a single, funding individual chasing funds for projects within their individual Boroughs.

- Please see the following page for more details.

## **6. Conclusion**

Mr Munn indicated to the review panel that one of the main problems when making recommendations as to the attraction of funding within the Borough, is that currently there is a degree of uncertainty concerning the multiple projects being undertaken in Gravesham, for example, the Ebbsfleet development, Canal Basin, availability of old company sports sites, Thames Gateway, rail-link, new A2 motorway. Until these developments become clearer, we cannot be sure as to the effect these will have on the attraction of funding. If projected estimates prove to be correct, work needs to be done in identifying the sports fields we wish to keep and the facilities to be placed on them. Work will also need to be completed to identify which sites we are prepared to allow for alternative uses. With the recent award from the big lottery for 'children's play', every authority within the UK was allocated funds directly and no applications were required. This is the first time such a form of distribution had occurred and may well be a fore-runner of future distribution for specific purposes. This will ensure that lottery funds are more evenly spread than at present.

### Overview Scrutiny

**Review:** Sports development

**Venue:** Civic Centre, Committee Room 2 - 19 July 2006

**Present:**

**Cllrs.** Valerie Ashenden (Chair)  
Jean Christie  
Lyn Milner  
David Turner

#### Also in Attendance

James Deamer  
Sarah Knight  
John Moxham

### Summary of Evidence

#### John Moxham – Gravesend Rugby Football Club

John Moxham explained to the panel that he was currently a co-ordinator of the various sports undertaken at Gravesend Rugby Football club. Membership is open to those over 18, offering facilities to eight sections: Rugby, Hockey (ladies), Cricket, Veteran Bowls, Petanque, Tennis and Pigeon Racing. It was explained that it was the intention of Gravesend Rugby Football club to promote these respective sports as widely as possible within the Borough, providing facilities at as high a standard as possible.

John Moxham informed the panel that to keep subscriptions at their current low levels to avoid pricing out many local residents, funding is needed for certain projects/upkeep.

Many private sports clubs are aware that full time coaching for children and representation of the sport is vital for the promotion of the game throughout the Borough. John Moxham described his intention to search for avenues of funding to cover the

implementation of a Borough wide coach as well as general repairs and upgrades to the Club's facilities.

It appeared crucial that more information could be shared between the private Sports Clubs within Gravesham and our Sports Development Officer (SDO). Much is carried out by GBC's SDO that is of a huge benefit to many of the private clubs within Gravesham. Likewise, Mr Moxham was directed to liaise directly with Thomas Munn (subject of a earlier Sports Development Evidence Gathering session) regarding potential avenues of funding for the implementation of Borough wide coaches and necessary improvements to existing facilities. It was noted that many of the points that Mr Moxham considered to be of benefit to local Private sports clubs are already undertaken by our SDO therefore more needs to be done to publicise the successful work currently being implemented by GBC's SDO.

#### Sarah Knight – Sports Development Officer

#### What do we mean by 'sport'?

The 'National Framework for Sport' defines 'sport' as all forms of exercise and physical activity which through casual organised participation aims at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental wellbeing, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels.

Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) is aiming to consider the bigger picture when viewing 'Sports Development', combining the development of sports for sports sake as well as sports for health gain. The level of obesity in England has tripled in the past twenty years. One in five adults is clinically obese and more than half are overweight. The challenge is to create a culture of physical activity that engages people and motivates them to get physically involved. i.e. Sports England's 'Start, Stay and Succeed'.



Success does not necessarily mean competing at a chosen sport but can be explained as becoming physically active, therefore improving health. Improved health can be both mentally and physically stimulating.

**Mental:** Increased participation can increase one person's self-esteem and confidence. Exercise is now widely becoming prescribed as an anti-depressant. Participants can also benefit emotionally, socially and linguistically while improved social skills can mean learning the value of team work and increased employability.

**Physical:** Improved gross and fine motor skills, physical fitness, reduced risk of illness i.e. heart disease.

The government recommends that individuals partake in 30 minutes of physical activity five times per week and children should take part in 60 minutes, five times per week.

### **Sports for the Community**

Community regeneration can deal with and break down barriers to racism and other social inclusion issues such as crime reduction amongst groups and criminal behaviour amongst individual participants. Gravesham's 'Sports Development Officer' (SDO) aims to work towards the government's recommendations including Sport England's 'mission possible' which seeks to encourage local people across all social groups to partake in physical exercise, resulting in the improvements in health and other social and economic benefits listed above.

This involves aiming to widen access to sports, making sports and physical activity available, affordable and accessible to all.

Below are some examples of the work that the SDO has been involved in to promote physical activity and develop sport within Gravesham.

GBC's SDO often works in partnership with other agencies in the community such as local schools. Regular work takes place with the Gravesham SSP - The School Sport Partnership Programme (formally known as the School Sport Co-ordinator Programme). This was established in 2000, to support the original Department for Education and Skills/Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DfES/DCMS). It sought to aid the 'Public Service Agreement' target to increase the percentage of school children who spend at least two hours each week on high quality physical education (PE) and school sport to 75 per cent by 2006. This target has since been increased and extended to 85 per cent by 2008.

### **The School's Sports Partnership**

The school sports partnership seeks to:

1. increase participation in sport among school age children;
2. increase participation by girls, young women, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and young people in areas of socio-economic disadvantage;
3. to improve the standard of performance by children across a range of sports;
4. to improve children's motivation and attitude, resulting in an increase in their achievement in all aspects of their school life;

5. to increase the number of qualified and active coaches, leaders and officials in secondary schools, local primary schools and local sports clubs.

#### **What Other projects/partnerships do you have in place?**

- [Gr@nd](#) project, several projects with the Gr@nd have taken place over the past few months and at present the SDO and don't sit get fit project are aiming to set up a Healthy Walking Scheme.
- Surestart. SDO has also been assisting Surestart with projects to get young people from deprived areas physically active for example Play in the Park in Wallis Park
- REC - Racial Equality Centre. SDO work closely with agencies like the REC on projects for example Kick Out Racism - a football project to promote equality
- KCC and Kent Sports Development Unit.
- Local sports clubs - SDO has regular contact with local sports clubs assisting them with various projects, advertising and promotion and club development.
- GCLL - Gravesham Community Leisure Limited.
- NGB - National Governing Bodies.
- Positive Futures - Charlton Athletic football club.

#### **What work within the community has GBC carried out thus far?**

Through the SDO work with Schools, SSP, PESSCL (PE Schools Sports Club Links) and active sports, the following activities have been undertaken:

**Athletics** - all GBC primary schools were invited to participate in an athletics coaching/resource package for nine to 11 year olds. As part of this package, 16 local

schools were offered a free kit and taster sessions led by qualified coaches. Following on from the schools package a subsidised pilot 'Star:Trak' coaching programme during the Easter 06 holidays was held at Cascades. This was deemed by those participating to be very successful and more 'Star:Trak' coaching programmes are planned for future School holidays. The coaching programmes give young people the opportunity to continue with its athletic taster sessions that took place initially within the Schools. GBC assisted Riverview primary school with their annual athletics tournament/festival after the coaching sessions took place. It was noted that the schools that had participated in the free sessions had noticeably improved. Therefore the athletics project could be deemed a success and we would like to replicate such a project again in the future.

Thamesview school inclusion project - in partnership with GBC, Thamesview School has been working with pupils with behaviour issues through sport. The SDO has sourced different sporting activities to encourage social inclusion and education through sport for those in the inclusion project. The pupils started a golf project with a local golf centre on 23 March 2006 and all have successfully completed the programme.

Thamesview healthy schools - This pilot project has been set up in this school for aerobics sessions after school to encourage young people to partake in physical activity. Again this project has been deemed a success with at least ten girls regularly attending. The [Gr@nd](#) project is now funding these sessions to continue for another year. GBC in partnership with Thamesview School has applied for funding to start a breakfast activity club for students to come into school early to take part in some physical activity, such as speed stacks to improve hand eye co-ordination, young people will also be given an opportunity to have a healthy breakfast at school.

Golf – The SDO have negotiated a deal with Thamesview Golf Centre to provide free golf taster sessions for all GBC Primary and Secondary Schools. Schools will then be encouraged to book additional sessions. This will also promote opportunities for the young people to become involved and partake in golf outside of school.

Walking bus – This encourages children to walk to school. The SDO has negotiated deals with local businesses such as GCLL to donate prizes to act as incentives for children to walk to school.

Cricket – GBC organises a kwik cricket festival every year. This year was deemed to be the most successful due to the fact that 22 teams participated.

#### **General Sports Development for various age groups within Gravesham**

Holiday activities – a Summer Fun Guide is produced every year by the SDO which goes out to every school child, nurseries, Doctors surgeries, libraries etc. This leisure guide is a free entertainment programme for children up to 11 years, including sports courses and things to do. This encourages physical activity and Play in the Park which is a free entertainment programme for young people up to the age of 11 years over a two week period. Play in the park encourages local young people to visit their local parks to watch and participate in various activities. Over 4,500 children participated in some form of physical activity through the Gravesham Summer fun Guide this summer.

Gravesham fans scheme - Free Access for National Sportspeople (FANS) - enabling free access to leisure facilities for those that perform at a national standard for any particular sport within Gravesham.

Target development – 50 plus. Various activities for those aged 50 or above consisting of taster tai chi sessions with local active retirement associations, local

residential homes and other 50 plus groups to encourage participation and physical activity within the 50 plus age group.

Cardiac referral scheme – GBC's SDO has assisted the PCT and GCLL to set up a cardiac referral scheme for those with heart problems to be rehabilitated into everyday life and promote healthy lifestyle after heart illness.

Kent Youth Games – GBC actively supports Gravesham teams in the Kent youth games and Kent disability youth games. It aids in the Selection of teams from local festivals and assisting them at the events.

#### **What has been done for minority groups within Gravesham?**

Town centre events - The SDO assists with the organisation of leisure programmes including Guru Nanak sports festival, sports grand slam, big day out and children's day. Community cohesion events including kick out racism, promoting physical exercise, local sports clubs are also carried out by the SDO.

It was explained that the SDO has assisted several clubs with funding applications and the delivery of the projects, once funding has been obtained. An example of this would be the Kent Kabaddi club which has recently applied for funding to deliver kabaddi taster sessions in local primary and secondary schools.

Ladies – GBC have assisted the Saheli writers with several events and activities such as applying for awards for funding for a badminton development project. At present in partnership with the Saheli Writers the SDO is organising ladies badminton coaching sessions at the Guru Nanak sports centre to encourage ladies to become physically active and take up badminton followed by a festival/tournament at Cascades Leisure centre.

The SDO has also been promoting 'every day' sport, for example encouraging people to do gardening, take the dog for a walk etc. This seeks to promote to the population of Gravesham the benefits of physical activity.

### **Club Development**

GBC hosted a club development forum where local clubs were encouraged to adopt good practice such as implementing child protection policies while ensuring that their coaches are qualified to an adequate standard. They were encouraged to try to achieve club mark which is Sport England's, recommended good practice guidelines. This acts as an achievement level to indicate that the club in question fulfils certain criteria such as: it has adequate child protection policies in place; promotion of equal opportunities and the inclusiveness of the club.

The SDO also assists local clubs with marketing and general club development, encouraging clubs to start up women and junior sections etc and encourage local clubs to affiliate to their NGB (national governing body).

GBC has produced a local sports club directory with information on all local sports clubs, we have been advertising the directory and aiming to make all clubs accessible to all.

### **What problems do you face in delivering your programmes?**

All of the above are examples of the work that the SDO and GBC have been undertaking over the past year, obviously funding and staffing levels are always an issue and ideally projects like the Gravesham Leisure Guide could be much more comprehensive and over a longer period than just two weeks if more funding was available.

More action needs to be undertaken with regards to publicising and promoting the work of the SDO and the External Funding Officer to the benefit of those private Sports clubs within Gravesham.

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- (4) Count me in - The English Federation of Disability Sport

**Local:**

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- (2) Kent Partnership - "Vision for Kent"  
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- (3) The Corporate Plan (Taking Pride in Gravesham)
- (4) Playing Pitch Assessment, June 2002. Revised February 2006