

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CULTURE COMMITTEE**£1 MILLION OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC LEGACY FUND****Purpose of the Report**

1. To approve a £1million sports grant fund for Nottinghamshire's community sports clubs as part of Nottinghamshire's Olympic and Paralympic legacy programme. This special one-off fund, thought to be the only local authority fund of its kind in the country, is designed to support the network of sports clubs across the County to meet the increased demand they are experiencing and enable more people in Nottinghamshire to get involved in sports, following the success of the London Games.

Information and Advice

2. The Council is responding to the call to 'Inspire a Generation' and offering practical funding to support grass roots sports clubs to grow Nottinghamshire's future Olympians and Paralympians. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games produced outstanding performances from UK sportspeople, many of whom live and/or train in Nottinghamshire. The 2012 Games captivated the watching public, and have inspired many people to investigate opportunities to get involved in sports activities at a local level. Every person competing at the 2012 Games started their sporting career at a local sports club, and the network of sports clubs across Nottinghamshire will be crucial to the development of the next generation of talented performers.
3. Community based sports clubs play a crucial role in providing positive and health promoting activities for their members, many of whom are children and young people. There are an estimated 1,500 sports clubs active within Nottinghamshire with membership numbers ranging from 20 to 1,500 across a wide range of sports. 600 clubs are currently registered on the County Council's sports club database, which provides a rich source of information about Nottinghamshire's sports club network.
4. The club network is largely responsible for supporting participants to develop their skills and move up the performance ladder of their chosen sport. In this respect, the quality of both the facilities and equipment available to clubs and their members are of critical importance.
5. Recent Council research into the challenges faced by Nottinghamshire sports clubs has highlighted the following key facility and equipment issues:-
 - Difficulty in accessing suitable training venues, and the variable quality of sports pitches and playing surfaces
 - Increases to facility hire costs impacting on the sustainability of clubs

- Rising equipment costs and not having enough equipment to meet demand holding back clubs' ability to take on new members.
6. The research also highlighted a number of specific examples that illustrate some of the key challenges faced by clubs:-
- a cricket club which was looking to develop a cricket pitch in its village and was in need of funding to help kick start the project
 - a gymnastics club which had outgrown its current facilities and was keen to locate to larger premises, but needed help with the purchase of equipment so that it could take on new members
 - a village football club which was seeking to develop a second pitch to enable it to offer more opportunities for young people in the village
 - a tennis club which needed funding to resurface an unused court as demand to join the club had increased by 400%.
7. Of the 60 clubs which took part in the research, only two had received external funding in excess of £1,000 in the previous 12 months, and several clubs commented they had given up trying and considered application processes for funding from various grant giving bodies to be too lengthy and time consuming.

The Scheme

8. To respond to the legacy challenge created by the 2012 Games, and to maintain the momentum of increased sports participation that has been generated by them, a £1million Nottinghamshire Olympic Legacy grants scheme is proposed. As well as providing direct financial support, the grants scheme will also support club efforts to lever in additional matched funding.
9. The scheme will be designed to support local sports clubs to retain and grow membership and will focus on supporting clubs to buy much needed equipment and/or to support small/medium sized capital improvements to facilities. Clubs will be able to bid for two different streams of funding.
10. The first stream, 'Kick Start', will be available to registered, constituted sports clubs and will provide funding from £500 up to a maximum of £10,000. Clubs will need to demonstrate how the funding will be used to support increased participation and/or improve the performance of club members. Kick Start will incorporate a fast track application process to ensure that funds are made available to clubs in a timely fashion.
11. The second stream of funding, 'Game Changer', will be intended to support clubs that may be requiring a greater investment than £10,000. This scheme will have a maximum contribution ceiling from the County Council of £50,000. The Game Changer application process will be more detailed, and will include the requirement for a costed business case to be in place before bids will be considered. The Game Changer stream will look favourably on projects where part funding is already committed from other parties.

12. Summary criteria for both funding streams is set out below:-

Kick Start (£500 - £10,000)

Applicant clubs must:

- be from a sport with a national governing body recognised by Sport England or a national disability sports organisation
- be affiliated to their national governing body – this ensures that clubs adhere to governing body regulations and practices
- be formally constituted on a not for profit basis
- aim to increase or sustain participation in sport
- be willing to sign up to a Volunteer Co-ordinator position within the structure of the club (the County Council will commit to work with clubs to support this role, providing training and advice to help the club with volunteer recruitment and retention).

Game Changer (up to £50,000)

As per 'Kick Start' with clubs also being required to:

- demonstrate a significant level of matched funding to support the proposal
- have a robust business plan showing financial sustainability
- provide clear evidence that the development is needed and how it will be sustained into the future
- provide a clear and detailed project budget
- hold or be working towards a club accreditation scheme.

Scheme Application process

13. The scheme will open for applications on 1 November 2012 with a closing date of 31 December 2012. Clubs will be informed of decisions no later than 1 February 2013. It is intended that all of the available funding will be distributed in the current financial year, in order to deliver an immediate legacy impact.
14. Scheme specific monitoring and award protocols will be established to ensure that funds are appropriately utilised, and that required sporting outcomes for each grant are met.

Scheme Governance

15. Applications will be evaluated by officers from the sports team within Cultural and Enrichment Services, with recommendations made to the Culture Committee for approval.
16. The scheme will be managed within the existing staffing resource of Cultural and Enrichment Services.

Other Options Considered

17. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

18. The introduction of this major scheme will support sports clubs across Nottinghamshire to develop new opportunities for people to play and succeed in their chosen sport. Local sports clubs are a cost effective route for channelling resources that will increase participation.

Statutory and Policy Implications

19. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

20. The scheme will support improved access to upgraded sports facilities and equipment for people across Nottinghamshire, and as such will support increased levels of community participation in sport.

Financial Implications

21. The proposal is to establish a £1million Olympic Legacy Fund to be distributed within the current financial year. At present the Council is forecasting an overall saving in year of approximately £8million. The main reason for this level of saving, as set out in the Period 4 Budget Monitoring Report, is the level of corporate contingency that the Council has established. It is therefore proposed that the cost of the Olympic Legacy Fund is met from the corporate contingency.
22. The Fund is a one-off investment. As such, there will not be ongoing investment that will require funding.

Equalities Implications

23. The scheme will be effectively promoted across the sports network, including to those clubs that deliver and promote disability sport. The scheme's emphasis on increasing participation in sport will support increased take up of sport by those with protected characteristics.

Crime and Disorder Implications

24. The scheme will support increased access and take up of sport by children and young people, and as such will provide young people with more places to go and things to do. Evidence suggests that increased access to constructive positive activities for young people can result in reduced levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in local communities.

Safeguarding of Children Implications

25. The scheme's awarding criteria will require clubs to conform to national governing body regulations and approved practices. In all cases, these will require clubs to demonstrate effective safeguarding practice.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That a £1million sports grant fund for Nottinghamshire's community sports clubs be established for distribution in the 2012/13 financial year.

Councillor John Cottee
Chairman of the Culture Committee

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 01/10/2012)

26. Policy Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in the report. The proposal falls within the Annual Budget; in accordance with the Financial Regulations it is an allocation from reserves created by under spends,

Financial Comments (PDS 02/10/12)

27. Whilst the intention behind the Fund is to distribute all funding within the current financial year, any unspent funding will be set aside in an earmarked reserve at the year end to fund any continuing commitments.

Background Papers

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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