

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE****SECONDMENT OF THE SPORTS SERVICE TEAM INTO THE COUNTY  
SPORTS PARTNERSHIP****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the Sports Service team to be seconded to work alongside the County Sports Partnership (CSP) core team, initially for a period of two years; and for officers to negotiate the details of the new arrangements with Sport Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Trent University.
2. The proposal will support the objectives of the outline business case to reduce funding in this area approved by Full Council on 27 February 2014.

**Information and Advice****Context**

3. The County Council has been a significant funder of sports development activity with a national reputation for coaching and disability sport in particular. At its peak County Council investment reached £1.1 million, which when used alongside external funding provided a network of sports development activity across the County. There were 38 coaches and sports development officers directly employed by the County Council in 2007.
4. The financial challenge facing the County Council in recent years has had a major impact on the resources available to support sports development activity. The current (2014) revenue budget for the Council's sports services is £304,000 and these funds are used to support 6.6fte development officers and a small programming budget. The officers are engaged strategically to support the development of the sporting infrastructure of the County with specialised posts in 'Club Development', 'Coach Education', 'Volunteer Engagement and Development' and 'Disability Sport'. There is also a post that concentrates on developing positive relationships with the National Governing Bodies of Sport to encourage them to invest their own national funding in Nottinghamshire.
5. As resources diminish taking opportunities to work more closely with partners working in the same field is more relevant than ever before. By combining resources it should be possible to retain and grow a level of provision and support to communities, clubs, sports organisations and individuals.

6. At a national level Sport England, the national sports development agency, has concentrated its funding on a network of sports partnerships that operate at county level.
7. Sport Nottinghamshire is one of the 49 County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) covering England. CSPs are networks of local agencies committed to working together to increase the number of people taking part in sport and physical activity. CSPs also deliver Sport England's national programmes at a local level. The national network of partnerships was formed in 2000 with Sport Nottinghamshire coming on board a few years later.
8. The Sport Nottinghamshire team is hosted at and by Nottingham Trent University which provides all administrative support services and employ the current staff team of 7. The team is led by a Director of Sport who is supported by an Executive Board. The County Council has had officer representation on the Board since its inception.
9. Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) is already a key partner in the sports partnership leading on several work areas on behalf of the CSP through a Memorandum of Understanding. These work streams include developing clubs, coaches and volunteers and working with sports governing bodies to attract their resources into the County. The service also leads the safeguarding in sport element and provides specialist support in disability and equality.
10. The proposal to combine teams and resources provides the opportunity to retain much of the existing provision by the integration of a number of roles, thus minimising the impact of the proposed reductions to the current service provision. The new relationship would also provide an opportunity to reaffirm the key priorities and outcomes that the Council would want to achieve for its investment through a new formal contractual agreement.
11. In preparation for the change of approach the sports service has conducted both an operational review and consultation with existing partners and stakeholders. The overwhelming feedback is positive in respect of formalising a partnership with the CSP. The new approach will also provide an opportunity to confirm the outcomes and outputs required by the County Council which will be delivered via a new service level agreement.

### **Staffing implications**

12. The current staff cohort has been kept apprised of the proposal and is very supportive of the opportunity. The team is mindful of the budgetary challenge facing the County Council and see the potential partnership as an opportunity to continue the majority of the work programme whilst meeting the savings required.
13. In discussions with the University it has been made clear that whilst they are willing and able to host the NCC sports team as part of the existing sports partnership they would want the relationship to be cost neutral on their part. They will provide, free of charge, office accommodation and access to IT systems but will not, for example, be liable for future redundancy costs.
14. If the Council approves the new relationship with the Sports Partnership and Nottingham Trent University, the proposal would be to second staff initially for a two year period.

15. Under the secondment criteria staff would remain in the employment of the County Council under their current terms and conditions. Day to day management support and guidance will be provided via the Director of the CSP using the existing Nottinghamshire County Council policies and procedures.

### **Timescales for Delivery**

16. It is proposed that the new arrangements will take effect from 1 October 2014. This will allow time for a service level agreement to be drawn up between partners that outline the objectives to be achieved for the Council's investment. Included in this agreement will be the relevant secondment arrangements.

### **Other Options Considered**

17. The following options have been considered:-
  - That the sports development service would remain within NCC as currently configured. This was discounted as future budget reductions would make a smaller service ineffective in an increasing and diversifying sector. The transfer out of the Authority would also benefit from the management, leadership and administration resources available within the wider sports partnership.
  - Closure of the current provision was considered but deemed as unacceptable at this juncture as the Council remains committed to support the development of sport in the County, continuing to build on its enviable national reputation.
  - Consideration was given to transferring the staff cohort under a TUPE transfer, however this option would have not given the Authority the financial flexibility required into the future.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

18. The recommendation supports the decision made by Full Council on 27 February 2014 and allows Nottinghamshire to have an effective sports provision which can deliver the Council's priorities at the same level as other sports partnerships.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

19. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

20. Regular involvement in sport can benefit individuals and communities and contribute to a range of positive outcomes including:

- a reduction in youth offending and anti-social behaviour
- an increase in the culture of respect and tolerance among young people
- a reduction in crime and in alcohol and drug misuse
- a reduction in the fear of crime.

### **Financial Implications**

21. The secondment of staff to the partnership will have no direct financial implications as the salaries will continue to be paid by Nottinghamshire County Council. However, the accommodation, line management, and other running costs associated with the staff will be picked up by the Sports Partnership.
22. In addition to the saving on staffing overheads, there will be a reduction in spend on programming costs. Together these savings will achieve the £88,000 set out in the outline business case for the Sports and Arts Service.

### **Human Resources Implications**

23. The proposal for staff to be seconded to the Nottinghamshire Sports Partnership is the preferred option and the relevant processes, including consultation with staff and unions will take place in line with the Council's policies and practices for secondments. **Appendix 1** lists the posts subject to secondment.

### **Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications**

24. Continuation of the Council commitment in the new partnership arrangement will ensure the survival of the excellent work achieved by the team in safeguarding. The sports team currently has a dedicated resource that concentrates on improving safeguarding standards in voluntary sports clubs. Other team members with responsibilities for club, coach and volunteering programmes play a central role in raising standards in relation to safeguarding. The current post of disability sports officer is responsible for safe practice in association with opportunities for young people and vulnerable adults with a disability.

### **Implications for Service Users**

25. The proposal will ensure a level of continuity of support to developing the sporting infrastructure across Nottinghamshire.

### **Ways of Working Implications**

26. Staff will be hosted outside of the authority by the University and as such would free up much needed office accommodation as the Council rationalises office space across the County.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That:

- 1) the secondment of the current Sports Service team into the County Sports Partnership team, initially for a period of two years, as detailed in this report, be approved.
- 2) approval be given for officers to negotiate the details of the new arrangements with Sport Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Trent University.

**Derek Higton**  
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### **Constitutional Comments (SLB 20/05/14)**

27. Culture Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

### **Financial Comments (KLA 21/05/14)**

28. The financial implications of the report are set out in paragraphs 21 and 22 above.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Annual Budget 2014/15 – report to Full Council on 27 February 2014  
Sports Development - Option Appraisal  
Feasibility study into the potential relocation of Nottinghamshire County Council sports service into the Nottinghamshire County Sports Partnership structure

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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