

<b>Report on</b>	DfC Strategy for Sport Consultation
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Kieran Gordon, Head of Leisure
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Leigh Gilmore, Participation Manager

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>  If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	X

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To seek members approval in responding to the consultation for the new Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland, prepared by the Department for Communities (DfC). A copy of the proposed consultation response is in Appendix B.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Previously in November 2020, members were advised that DfC had issued correspondence that they were developing a new Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity – “ <i>Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2020 to 2030 and beyond</i> ” and therefore DfC requested key stakeholders to complete a pre-consultation survey. A response was submitted by the deadline date of 30 October 2020. Members were advised that it was DfC’s intention to publish the new strategy in March 2021 and that Officers would bring back further updates to Development Committee.
2.2	DfC commenced the consultation on the new strategy on 26 February 2021 with a closing date 23 April 2021.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	Previously, DfC has stated that they wish for the new strategy to build on the successful foundations of the Sport Matters strategy which was published in 2009 and which continues to guide Government policy until the new strategy is agreed and put in place.
3.2	DfC have stated that the new strategy will aim is to provide a flexible strategic framework for a cross-departmental, ambitious, and comprehensive approach to promoting participation and excellence in sport and physical activity.
3.3	It is understood that the new strategy will be cross-Departmental in nature, meaning that it will cover all the Departments of the Northern Ireland Executive. It will aim to focus on linkages and shared outcomes between sport and physical activity and other policies of the Executive, such as physical and mental health and well-being, education, transport, economic, urban and rural regeneration, good relations, community safety, social inclusion and social equality.
3.4	When published, it is anticipated that the new strategy will help inform and guide the Executive’s policies and priorities in relation to sport and physical activity over the next 10 years and beyond. It is anticipated that this will enable sport and physical activity to contribute more effectively to the outcomes within the new Programme for Government and the delivery of New Decade, New Approach.

3.5	<p>Officers took part in a focus group meeting with DfC and neighbouring Councils, and a number of issues that emerged from the discussion have been incorporated into the proposed response from Mid Ulster District Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objective to increase participation in sporting and non-sporting physical activities.</li> <li>• Seek to innovate by encouraging additional and new participants into physical activity through non-traditional routes.</li> <li>• Aim for closer engagement and alignment with Education that should promote early years to old age participation.</li> <li>• Aim to support entry points to promote sustained sport and/or physical activity participation along with non-elite participation especially if individuals had never been involved previously – i.e. promotion of entry points at various age brackets.</li> <li>• Seek to embrace new technology and how support can be given to become more digitally advanced.</li> <li>• Understand Impact of Covid 19 – specifically mental health and the role of physical activity.</li> <li>• Action Planning as a result of Covid 19 - financial challenges current/post pandemic and impact on programming and facilities.</li> <li>• Aim to provide enhanced support for people development and deployment specifically with volunteers.</li> <li>• Seek to clarify Sport NI's role and future engagement with Councils – i.e. Previous funded Everybody Active 2020 Programme and impact of project/funding closedown in March 2021 – What next?</li> <li>• Aim to define the prioritisation and objectives clarity on investment between participation versus performance.</li> </ul>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: N/A
	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: N/A
	Rural Needs Implications: N/A
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	That members approve the consultation response to the new Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Northern Ireland, prepared by the Department for Communities (DfC).
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
	<p>Appendix A – DfC Consultation Notice</p> <p>Appendix B - Proposed consultation response.</p>