

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT SERVICE COMMITTEE**  
**17 January 2008**

Agenda Item	
Report No	

**Report on Sport and Activity Working Group**

**Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service**

**Summary**

This report recommends the establishment of a Member/officer working group to look at a number of issues in sport and activity linked to the Programme for Administration. The report further suggests a remit for the Working Group and asks Committee to appoint a Chair and Member representatives.

**1. Background**

1.1 There are a number of commitments in the Council's programme for Administration either directly relating to sport and activity, or which sport and activity has a role to play in help delivering. These include:

- We will work to increase the number of older people who can be supported in their own homes rather than institutional care
- We will build on the success of the Highland Promise, which, as part of Highland 2007, provided opportunities for young people to enjoy the arts, sport and cultural experiences
- We will support the development of shinty and of other specialised sporting activities

1.2 The Scottish Government are working on advice to Local Authorities to produce plans to increase activity and active lifestyles. Currently physical activity lies across a number of the Council's strategies including safer routes to school and healthy living. There is a need to review the physical activity element of these various strategies; check progress against the various existing outcomes; revise and adapt these if necessary; and pull together an action plan for co-operation and joint working for the next few years. This would not seek to replicate work already done or develop new outcomes unless significant gaps are identified.

1.3 With the awarding of the Commonwealth Games to Scotland in 2014, there is an opportunity to plan for having the maximum number of athletes from the Highlands in the Scottish team, and also to plan opportunities for people living in the Highlands to volunteer to help in sport, and in the Commonwealth games themselves. The Scottish Government have endorsed "Reaching Higher" as Scotland's strategy for sport. This contains a number of actions for local authorities.

- 1.4 At the Council meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2007 Councillor Clark suggested in a written question that a Working Group be established to look at the Administration's commitment to develop shinty and other specialised sporting activities. The Convener responded that a Working Group to look at sporting and activity issues would be being discussed at a future Education Culture and Sport Committee and that this group would also look at the availability of facilities for elite athletes in the run up to the Olympic and Commonwealth games.
- 1.5 Officers have been looking at the issues raised by the equalisation of sporting facilities in Highland, particularly around the geography of associated school groups. This raises a number of matters, such as population differences across associated school groups, centres of urban population in Highland, and rurality. **sportscotland's** facilities planning model, when applied to Highland, gives some interesting results that might be a basis for future estate management planning in future.

## **2. A Member/Officer Working Group**

- 2.1 One method of examining these issues in detail would be to create a short life Member and officer working group, with a view to one or more reports coming to a future Education, Culture and Sport Committee.
- 2.2 If Members are willing to approve such a group, it might have the following remit:
- To draft a plan for sport responding to "Reaching Higher" and for maximising participation in the 2014 Commonwealth Games in both Highland representation in the Scottish and possibly other teams, and for volunteers and community participation
  - To draft a multi-agency plan to increase activity in Highland and promote active lifestyles. This would review the many actions on promoting activity across various strategies and plans in Highland and seek to bring coherence to these, rather than simply replicate work already done
  - Review the provision of leisure facilities in Highland and develop a draft facilities plan/estate strategy – maximising opportunities for all, including options for ensuring that elite athletes can access facilities in preparation for the Olympic and Commonwealth Games.
  - To regularly report to the Education Culture and Sport Committee on progress, and to bring one or more final reports to Committee for discussion and approval
- 2.3 The Council is not the only provider in terms of sport and activity, and NHS Highland is the key agency for health promotion linked to active lifestyles. It is suggested that the Working Group might have an officer level Working Parties reporting to it that may have officer representation from other organisations.
- 2.4 Members may wish to choose a Chair for the Working Group, and four Elected Members to sit on the group.

### **3. Recommendation**

3.1 The Committee is invited to agree:-

- i a member/officer Working Group be established to look at sporting and activity provision in Highland;
- ii if such a Working Group is approved that it have the following remit:
  - To draft a plan for sport responding to “Reaching Higher” and for maximising participation in the 2014 Commonwealth Games in both Highland representation in the Scottish and possibly other teams, and for volunteers and community participation
  - To draft a multi-agency plan to increase activity in Highland and promote active lifestyles. This would review the many actions on promoting activity across various strategies and plans in Highland and seek to bring coherence to these, rather than simply replicate work already done
  - Review the provision of leisure facilities in Highland and develop a draft facilities plan maximising opportunities for all, including options for ensuring that elite athletes can access facilities in preparation for the Olympic and Commonwealth Games.
  - To regularly report to the Education Culture and Sport Committee on progress, and to bring one or more final reports to Committee for discussion and approval
- iii Members nominate a Chair and four additional Elected Members for the Working Group.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 4 December 2007

Author: Graham Watson, Community Development Manager

Background Papers: Reaching Higher, Scotland’s revised sports strategy

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/07105145/0](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/07105145/0)