

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Education, Culture and Sport Committee
13 November 2008

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Highland Sport and Activity Strategy

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Summary

This report outlines the work of the Sport and Activity Working Group and recommends the content of a proposed Highland Sport and Activity

1. Background

1.1 At its meeting on the 17th January 2008, the Education, Culture and Sport Committee established a Working Group to take forward a sport and activity strategy for Highland. The remit of the Group was:

- 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 to 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 could access facilities in preparation for the Olympic and Commonwealth Games.

2.2 Councillors Mr W Fernie, Mr A.M. Millar, Ms J. Douglas, Mrs E. McAllister and Mr B Gormley formed the membership of the Working group

2.3 The review of leisure facilities forms an element of the Education, Culture and Sport capital planning process and consequently has been addressed in a separate report to this Committee.

2. Methodology

2.1 The Working Group established three multi-agency officer groups to take forward the three elements of the project. The Sport Strategy Group consisted of officers from The Highland Council; **sportscotland**; UHI; Coaching Highland; Highland Institute of Sport; Highland Disability Sport; and Volunteering Highland. The Activity

Strategy Group had the following Members: NHS Highland, Paths to Health, Step it up Highland, Forestry Commission Scotland and officers from each of the Council Services; and the facility group was made up of Council officers taking advice from national agencies such as **sportscotland**. The groups met regularly and presented a series of progress reports to the Members of Sport and Activity Working Group.

- 2.2 The actions recommended by the Sport and Activity Working group have been screened for their impact on equalities legislation, and for their environmental impact.
- 2.3 The strategy has been developed on the basis of using existing revenue resources available to the partner organisations, and therefore this report has no budget implications for the Council.
- 2.4 There are a number of measurable outcomes for sport and activity included in the Council's Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) with the Scottish Government. The actions proposed for the strategy seek to impact on and improve these outcomes, and the success of the strategy will be measured against the delivery of the SOA.

3. Public Consultation

- 3.1 There was considerable public consultation on the sport and activity strategy. Seven local meetings were held for the sports sector and other interested parties, and the activity group launched a questionnaire based consultation including a web survey which also involved young people.

4. Key Actions

- 4.1 The main areas for action to promote sport and activity are outlined in Appendix A of this report.
- 4.3 Members will be invited to comment on the actions. It will be recommended that approval of the final document that includes these comments is delegated to the Chairmen and Director of Education, Culture and Sport in consultation with the Chairman of the ECS Committee. It is suggested that one further meeting of the Sport and Activity Working Group is required to look at the final design and lay-out of the document and to discuss any final changes that might result following this meeting.

5. Publication Strategy

- 5.1 It will be proposed to publish in paper form a short action plan, which will include, if approved, Appendix A to this report; and a statement of the actions the Council proposes to take in terms of capital developments to support the Highland Sport and Activity Strategy. It is proposed to publish the results of the consultations, the rationale for the strategy, and other tables and information as web-only documents, with links given in the paper document.

5.2 It will be further recommended that approval of the final documents for publication is delegated to the Director of Education, Culture and Sport, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

6. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members:

- a) Comment on the proposed content of the Highland Sport and Activity Strategy
- b) Approve the publication strategy of a short published plan backed up by web-based documents
- c) Agree to delegate approval of the final documents for publication to the Chairman and Director of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 3 November 2008

Author: Graham Watson

Ref: HF/IM/GW

Background Papers

HIGHLAND PASS

'PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & SPORTS STRATEGY'

A STRATEGY FOR THE SECTOR

FOREWORD to be inserted here signed by both:

**Cllr Bill Fernie
Chairman
Education, Culture and Sport Committee
The Highland Council**

**Cllr Drew Millar
Chairman
Sport & Activity Working Group
The Highland Council**

INDEX to be inserted here.

HIGHLAND PASS – PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

'Lets make Highland more active' - A strategy for Physical Activity in Highland.

Introduction

The Highland Physical Activity strategy is a strategic document set in the context of national policy on physical activity. It is a strategy that will complement the NHS Healthy Weight Strategy and pull together physical activity opportunities within all Highland Council services, NHS Highland and voluntary sectors.

National policy and vision for physical activity.

Physical activity in Scotland is set within the context of a 2003 Scottish Executive report called 'Lets make Scotland More Active'. This report outlined the health benefits of more physical activity to the population with evidence based research and recommendations of physical activity levels for good health. Within the report the following quotes outlined the vision.

“To increase and maintain the proportion of physically active people in Scotland”

“People in Scotland will enjoy the benefits of having a physically active life”

The minimum recommended levels of daily physical activity are;

- 60 minutes of moderate physical activity for children on most days of the week.
- 30 minutes of moderate physical activity a day for adults on most days of the week.

Highland Vision.

The vision is of a healthier and more active Highland population who are able to understand and enjoy the benefits of being physically active and who are able to access services and facilities which enable them to participate in physical activity and feel included.

'Let's make Highland more active' will pull together funded programmes for physical activity, identify opportunities for further development and set action plans around settings to ensure that physical activity is being maximised for all inhabitants of Highland inclusive of race , gender, disability, sexual orientation, literacy age, socio economic status religion and belief.

Highland should be seen as a be a place where healthy and active lifestyles are encouraged and promoted and where more Highland people are '**more active ,more often**'.

Purpose of the Highland strategy.

The purpose of the Highland Physical Activity strategy is to :

- Set the vision for the population of Highland in the context of national policy on physical activity.

- Audit what is currently being provided by Highland Council , NHS Highland and the voluntary and private sector .
- Identify where opportunities can be maximised for the population to be more physically active.
- Develop a co-ordinated partnership working approach to join up strategic documents policy and practice in the areas of physical activity and healthy weight and reduce health inequalities.
- Support participation from young people and adults who are less active in a way that combats stigma and promotes self esteem.
- Implement national policy on funded physical activity programmes through Council, health board and the voluntary sector.
- The Strategy will identify actions that can be taken with lead roles and timescales to deliver a co-ordinated approach to physical activity within Highland.

Development of the Highland Strategy.

The multi agency approach in the development of the physical activity strategy audited current provision, consulted with the public and then identified opportunities that could be developed to maximise physical activity. Action plans for each setting will ensure that progress on delivery in the areas of physical activity can be monitored and evaluated.

Through a cross service and a multi agency approach the physical activity strategy design chose to replicate the national framework and guidance for developing a physical activity strategy by identifying opportunities for physical activity within a settings approach in;

- Schools
- Workplaces
- Homes
- Communities

Evaluation and monitoring of the Strategy.

The multi agency group will meet bi annually to monitor progress against actions in the plan.

Targets for actions in the plan are also present in the high level outcome targets set for local authorities and will be monitored through ongoing reporting mechanisms within each service.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SCHOOLS			
Issue/Opportunity	Solution/Action Required	To Be Actioned By	Timescales
<p><u>Physical Education</u></p> <p>1. Provide 120 minutes of good quality PE per week for all pupils aged 3-18.</p> <p>2. Positively target girls participation within PE programme with appropriate activities .</p> <p>3. Promote inclusive opportunities for those with a disability in physical activity and PE.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Scottish Government to secure funding to increase the number of PE teachers required to deliver 120 minutes of PE per week for all children in all 29 ILC. • Roll out secondary based primary focused model to develop the 3-18 P.E curriculum in all 29 ILC. • Run a postgraduate certificate for 20 primary teachers with Glasgow University each year to expand the number of teachers with a specialist qualification in primary Physical Education. • Provide an increase of choice of physical activities within PE programmes for all pupils in all secondary schools. • Provide more activities specifically targeted at girls in PE programmes through 'Fit for Girls' training and resources. • Promote more girls participation in sport ,physical activity and P.E. through use of positive female role models. • Provide inclusion training for PE staff, school support staff and other ECS staff. • Schools will provide those with a disability appropriate opportunities to participate alongside others of similar ability. 	<p>HC/ Scottish Government.</p> <p>HC / ECS</p> <p>HC/ ECS/ Glasgow University</p> <p>HC/ECS/PE staff/teachers/youth Highland</p> <p>HC/ECS/Youth Sport Trust.</p> <p>HC/ECS</p> <p>HC/ECS/HDS</p> <p>HC/ECS/HDS</p>	<p>2008-2012</p> <p>2008 onwards</p> <p>Each year.</p> <p>2008 onwards</p> <p>2008-2011</p> <p>2008 onwards</p> <p>2008 onwards</p> <p>2008 onwards</p>

<u>Active Schools</u>			
4.Target inactive children to improve levels of physical activity and fitness from baseline levels set in 2006.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide health and fitness checks for all primary 7 pupils bi-annually and expand these checks to include secondary age pupils making links into out of hours activity programmes. 	HC/ECS/NHS	2008 bi -annually
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With partners in health provide physical activity and healthy weight intervention programmes to those young people aged 5-15 with a BMI greater than the 91st centile in partnership with families and school nurses. 	NHS/HC/ECS	2008-2011
5.Provide more play and physical activity opportunities for children to be active for at least an hour a day in the out-of-hours programmes in schools, clubs and community services .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a wide range of physical activity and play opportunities that are accessible to all young people. 	HC/ECS/voluntary.	2008-2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a programme of training and support for junior sport leaders, community sports leaders involving community volunteers, child care staff , parents, pupils to deliver more activities in out of hours and holiday programmes . 	HC/ECS/CH	2008-2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop links to outdoor activity providers to maximise opportunity for using existing facilities in mountains lochs and forest. 	HC/ECS/FCS	2008 onwards
6.Implement PE, physical activity and sport Health Well Being experiences and outcomes within Curriculum for Excellence in all schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the range of physically active learning experiences to meet the outcomes within curriculum for excellence making it the responsibility of teachers ,all staff and partners who engage with the school to promote health and well being. 	HC/ ECS/NHS/Agencies	2009 onwards
7.Make links to community organisations who offer physical activity opportunities for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active School Co-ordinators will develop a greater number of links to community organisations, clubs and agencies offering physical activity opportunities . 	HC/ECS/FCS	2008 onwards
8.Provide more playground play and activity opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop school playgrounds to be more accessible and better equipped for play, physical activity and sport. 	HC/ECS/TECS	2008-onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Schools Co-ordinators will encourage families to join 	HC/ ECS	2008 onwards

<p>9. Make better school links to leisure centres to promote use and family participation.</p>	<p>Highlife and use leisure facilities and swimming pools on a regular basis.</p>		
<p>10. Promote positive attitudes to physical activity in young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote positive attitudes to physical activity through the use of positive role models, newsletters and notice boards. 	<p>HC/ECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p>11. Use big events to promote physical activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take advantage of major sporting events to promote physically active lifestyles. 	<p>HC/ECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p>12. Improve access and provision of transport to improve access to facilities and activity opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With partners in transport and with bus companies and through community and school mini busses develop local solutions so that young people can participate in after school, evening and holiday physical activity and sports clubs. 	<p>HC/TECS/ECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p>13. Provide more inclusive activities for those with a disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability sport programmes will continue to expand to offer more opportunities to play, be physically active and to take part in sport. 	<p>HC/ECS/HDS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p><u>Road safety.</u> 14. Encourage more children to walk and cycle to school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage young people and families to cycle and walk to school by continuing to actively promote Walk to School Weeks, Bike to School Weeks, 'Go For It' Walking/Cycling Incentive Scheme & Park Smart initiatives 	<p>HC/ECS/TECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each school working with the Road Safety Team will develop a School Travel Plan to increase walking and cycling to school. 	<p>HC/ECS/TECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road safety officers and Active Schools Co-ordinators to work to increase the proportion of schools participating in accredited "risk reduction" programmes – including cycling proficiency, driving ambition etc, 	<p>HC/ECS/TECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p><u>Outdoor Education.</u> 15. Develop and promote active outdoor learning opportunities .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide schools to support active outdoor learning opportunities where people are undertaking activities in the countryside that involve physical activity, practical and physical work on school grounds projects and in particular support for Eco-schools projects, John Muir Awards and Duke of Edinburgh Awards. 	<p>HC/ECS/FCS.</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p><u>Early years and play</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out 'Start to play' resources for early years and child care 	<p>HC/ECS/partner</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>

<p>16. Encourage young people and families to participate in play and physical activity at an early age</p>	<p>centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out 'rain starts play' waterproofs which will encourage children to play outside. • Develop and expand parent and toddler activity programmes at leisure centres • Maintain and promote <i>play @ home</i> programme to parents, carers and those working with 0-5 year olds. • Develop links to agencies who have resources to encourage natural play areas and activities. 	<p>centres</p> <p>HC/ECS</p> <p>HC/ECS</p> <p>HC/ECS</p> <p>ECS/FCS</p>	<p>2008-2009</p> <p>2009 onwards</p> <p>2008 onwards</p> <p>2008 onwards</p>
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<p>17.Changing facilities for employees to shower and change after being physically active.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop opportunities to provide showering and clothes drying for employees to change and shower in HC workplaces. 	<p>HC/CEXO</p>	<p>2009 onward.</p>
<p>18.Provide support for staff to cycle to work by extending the 'Bike to Work' Initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to roll out the Bikes to Work scheme in 2009 	<p>HC/CEXO</p>	<p>2009-2010</p>
<p>19.Change the culture of inactivity at work by encouraging staff to feel that they can take the opportunity to be physically active in work time and at lunch times.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the Workplace Walks scheme (Path to Health) . • Encourage staff to walk or cycle to meetings that are close to offices. 	<p>HC/CEXO</p>	<p>2009 onwards</p>
<p>20.Highland Council to continue to meet the criteria for Healthy Working Lives award by promoting health and well being at work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highland Council will aim to Gain silver accreditation in Health Working Lives. • Include physical activity in healthy eating & BMI awareness sessions for HC staff through occupational health staff. 	<p>HC/CEXO</p>	<p>2009 onwards</p>
<p>21.Promote staff well ness clinics</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within Highland Councils buildings and at leisure centres provide MOT for men and women as part of the Councils Health at Work initiatives. 	<p>HC/CEXO/ECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p>22.Promote Highlife membership to staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the benefits of Highlife membership to staff and members of the public through a marketing strategy. 	<p>HC/ECS/CEXO</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		HOMES	
Issue/Opportunity	Solution/Action Required	To Be Actioned By	Timescales
<p><u>Home zones</u> 23. Develop areas around homes that are built with a focus around children playing and access by foot and cycle; cars are secondary and traffic calming measures incorporate landscaping, seating and play space</p> <p><u>Allotments</u> 24. Develop more allotments within Highland; as an opportunity for more physical activity as well as growing food locally.</p> <p><u>Play areas</u> 25. Working with communities improve the quality of existing play areas, to improve facilities for all ages to play and ensure that they are able to be accessed by foot and cycle.</p> <p>26. Secure better new play facilities in new developments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration should be given to Home Zones in all new residential developments as part of Supplementary Planning Guidance on Open Space and new residential developments • Consideration to be given to allotments in all new residential developments as part of Supplementary Planning Guidance Open Space and new residential developments • Maintain ongoing community play area upgrades in partnership with local communities. • Secure developer contributions to develop quality new play facilities that are fit for purpose. 	<p>HC/P&D / TECS</p> <p>HC/P&D</p> <p>TECS</p> <p>P&D/TECS</p>	<p>Open Space SPG – consultation draft expected post November 2008</p> <p>Open Space SPG – consultation draft expected post November 2008</p> <p>Open Space SPG – consultation draft expected post November 2008</p> <p>Open Space SPG – consultation draft expected post November 2008</p>
<p><u>Core paths</u> 27. Develop and expand the network of core paths, walks and cycle ways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing contributions towards core paths as part of developer contributions sought from planning applications • Support Step It Up Highland to promote walking groups. 	<p>HC P&D/Paths to health</p> <p>HC/ECS/P&D/Step it up Highland.</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p> <p>2008 onwards</p>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY		COMMUNITIES	
Issue/Opportunity	Solution/Action Required	To Be Actioned By	Timescales
28.Jog Scotland courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and grow Jog Scotland and mini jog Scotland groups with volunteer walk and jog leaders being supported to deliver walking and running groups. 	HC/ECS	2009 onwards
29.Physical activity within care homes.	TBC		
30.Ranger walking and outdoor events and activity in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide and develop guided walks and other outdoor events suitable for all sectors of the community. 	HC/P&D/Rangers	2008 onwards
31.Development of physical activities in an environmental setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop links with Forestry Commission Scotland to deliver free green gym and outdoor activity sessions. 	HC/P&D/Rangers/FCS	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with community groups to deliver conservation projects which include physical effort. 	HC/P&D/rangers/FCS	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with the process of developing Core Path Plans that highlight accessible paths in most communities and encourage their use. 	Paths to health/ECS/TECS	2008 onwards
32.Long Distance walking and cycling Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of the opportunity for communities to use the routes for short or long walk/cycles. In particular the promotion of the 'Great Glen Way in Bite-sized Chunks' either led by Rangers or self-led. 	Paths to health /ECS/TECS	2008 onwards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance green and open spaces for physical activity with consideration of personal safety, discouraging vandalism and reducing risk of personal injury. 	HC/ECS/TECS	2008 onwards
33.Parks and open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop 'step it up' groups across the Highlands with targeted opportunities for physical activity for those who 	Step it up Highland/NHS	2008 onwards

<p>34.Forestry walks and activity through 'woods for health' and Forests for people</p>	<p>are inactive or have health problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships between schools and community groups to raise the awareness of forests contribution to healthy activity. 	<p>FCS/HC ECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p>35.Develop community dance, art and drama projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the presence of woodland and improve access to woodland for exercise and enjoyment. Run health and well being programmes 	<p>FCS/HC ECS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p>36.Provide opportunities for Physical activity for older people living independently</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eden Court, through the Out of Eden project will deliver Drama, Dance and Theatre Arts opportunities for children, young people and the wider community through the outreach programme and activities within Eden Court. 	<p>HC/ECS/community arts/Eden Court/voluntary</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p>37.Support community capacity building through engagement with physical activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and encourage older people to remain physically active through the provision of specific programmes that meet their needs and abilities - in home or community Provide support for Paths to Health walks within the community, including training for leaders. 	<p>HC/ECS/Social Work</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>
<p>38.Promote Highlife scheme benefits to communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support volunteering opportunities in community organisations offering low level health enhancing physical activity to all ages. • Combine fun and socialising with physical activity to build community networks and encourage being physically active as the community norm 	<p>HC/Community Councils .</p>	<p>2008 onwards.</p>
<p>38.Promote Highlife scheme benefits to communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the uptake of highlife scheme particularly to low income families and those with a sedentary lifestyle. 	<p>HC/NHS</p>	<p>2008 onwards</p>

HIGHLAND PASS – SPORT

Highland Sports Strategy 2009-2014 - 'A strategy for the sector'

Introduction

The Highland Sports Strategy falls within the context of national policy on sport. It is a strategy that will pull together and co-ordinate sports development opportunities between and by The Highland Council, Coaching Highland, Highland Institute of Sport, Highland Disability Sport, Volunteering Highland, the Highland Sports Development Association, University of the Highlands & Islands and sportscotland. All of these organisations have kindly contributed to the writing of this document.

While writing the strategy, the authors were fully cognisant of the excellent efforts and programmes currently operating in the Highlands from participation through to excellence, which is well documented elsewhere. The purpose of this document is to complement existing work by identifying the gaps and focussing on delivering solutions.

Definition

"Sport means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competitions at all levels." *Council of Europe, European Sports Charter.*

A Vision For Sport In The Highlands

The vision adopted in the original Highland Sports Strategy of March 2000 remains compelling and is therefore renewed for the challenges ahead for 2009-2014:

'The Highlands as a place where individuals are encouraged to be active and participate in sport and are supported to recognise and achieve their full potential'.

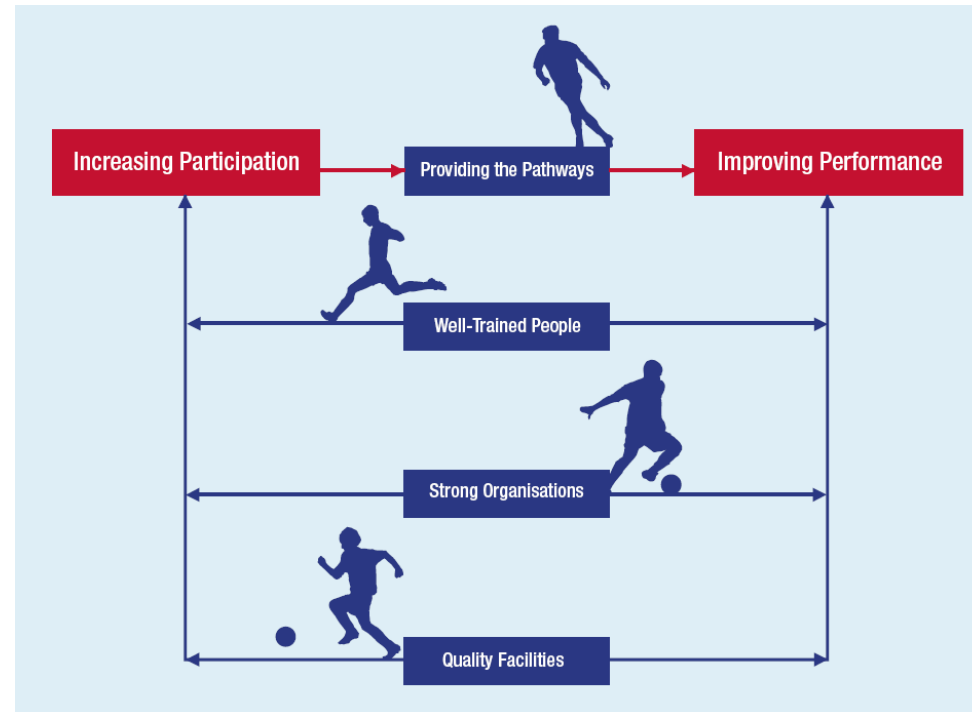
National policy and vision for sport

Sports development in Scotland is co-ordinated by a Scottish Government strategy for sport called 'Reaching Higher: Building on the success of Sport 21' which was launched in 2007. It sets out the long-term aims and objectives for sport until 2020. The strategy for physical activity 'Let's make Scotland more Active' locates sport as one element of the wider physical activity spectrum and while Reaching Higher recognises the wider agenda, it focuses solely on the development of sport - this lays the foundation for the Highland strategy.

Reaching Higher's aim is to encourage sports organisations to work in partnership towards common goals, and for coaches, volunteers and sports administrators to be well trained and their contribution to be respected and valued. It suggests that we must reinvigorate our efforts in delivering the 'Sport 21' (former national strategy) vision of a Scotland where:

- **sport is more widely enjoyed and available**
- **sporting talent is recognised and nurtured**
- **world class performance is achieved and sustained**

The document is structured around two national outcomes: **INCREASING PARTICIPATION**; and **IMPROVING PERFORMANCE**. Four national priorities were identified to bridge the gap between them by building and sustaining a sporting infrastructure enabling it to deliver the national outcomes. These outcomes and priorities as well as their relationship to each other are detailed in the diagram below.



Extracted from Reaching Higher (2007)

Purpose of the Highland Sports Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to:

- Audit the issues faced locally in sport by the voluntary, public and private sectors.
- Identify the priorities for Highland in response to Reaching Higher: Building on the success of Sport 21.
- Prevent duplication of effort between organisations working in the delivery of sports development by developing a co-ordinated partnership working approach.
- Pull together funded programmes for sport, identify opportunities for further development and set action plans to ensure that sport is being maximised for all residents and visitors in Highland.

- Identify the main issues and generate actions with lead roles and timescales to deliver a co-ordinated approach to the development of sport within Highland.

Development of the Highland Sports Strategy

An Elected Member / Officer Group of the Highland Council (Sport & Activity Working Group) was established by the Education, Culture & Sport Service in January 2008 and was tasked to lead the creation of three strategies for Highland: Sport; Physical Activity; and Facilities. The Sport & Activity Working Group (SAWG) is made up of 5 Councillors and 4 Officers.

Alan Hoseason (Highland Council – Coaching Highland) was appointed to lead on the Sports Strategy and established a multi-agency officers steering group of the organisations listed in the Introduction above. The group guided the process which began with consultation sessions being held in 7 areas of Highland during May 2008: Broadford; Dingwall; Wick; Aviemore; Fort William; Golspie; and Inverness. Invites were sent out to 870 individuals representing a wide range of organisations interested in the development of sport including 637 sports clubs.

54 people attended the consultations which involved a presentation detailing the background and process which would ultimately lead to the second Highland Sports Strategy and then the attendees discussed and recorded all outcomes on 8 topics: the 2 national outcomes and 4 national priorities of Reaching Higher plus two additional topics identified by the SAWG: Highland representation at Glasgow 2014; and the Local Sports Councils' role with regards the Highland Sports Strategy.

The lead officer collated all comments received and identified 67 issues and many associated suggested actions which the steering group debated. The table of key issues and actions which follow, detail the 21 issues agreed by the steering group and forms the basis of this strategy. While not all issues identified during the consultation have been included, they have been passed to relevant agencies / officers to consider as part of their own work plans.

The strategy has subsequently been approved by the SAWG and Education, Culture & Sport Committee and adopted by all partner organisations.

Key Issues and Actions

Key to table: **BOLD** = Lead Agent | NOT BOLD = Supporting Agencies
Abbreviations are detailed at the end of the table.

TOPIC 1 – INCREASING PARTICIPATION

KEY ISSUES	ACTIONS RECOMMENDED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMESCALES
1. Sources detailing sports participation opportunities and associated resources for Highland residents are fragmented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Highland-wide online sports directory of all clubs affiliated to Local Sports Councils (Stage 2 identifying non-sports council members) as well as key data including club meeting times. The directory will also include details of leisure facilities and sports development contacts. • Establish a Highland-wide online sporting events calendar. • Collate a directory of all Highland Council and community group minibuses detailing availability, costs and contacts. 	<p>THC HSDA, LSCs, HDS</p> <p>THC CH, HDS THC UHI</p>	<p>2009 onwards</p> <p>2009 onwards 2009</p>
2. Mountain biking requires greater co-ordination to maximise participation at all levels building on the success of the world class events held in Fort William.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a Highland Mountain Biking Strategy. 	THC SS, Relevant NGBs, HDS	2009-2010
3. Although sportscotland statistics for 2003-06, show that 23% of Highland adults volunteer in sport which is significantly higher than the 14% figure nationally, there is a need for a larger volunteer workforce to assist participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive programme with Volunteering Highland and other volunteer centres to promote volunteering opportunities. • Create and distribute a 'Coach Recruitment DVD' to all Highland clubs. • Maintain and expand the Sports Leaders Award Programme. • Increase volunteering within sport to 25% of Highland adults to be evidenced by the Scottish Household Survey. 	<p>VH THC, CH</p> <p>CH LSCs, HDS, SS CH THC VH THC, UHI, LSCs, HDS, CH</p>	<p>2009-2010</p> <p>2009 2011-2014 2014</p>
4. The image of 'sport' can deter females from participating in sport - confidence issues can be a barrier for some wanting to join sports clubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish programmes utilising the 'Fit for Girls', 'Girls on the Move', 'Skills for Work' and 'Vocational Pathways' initiatives. • Devise a more varied programme of choice in addition to traditional sports such as windsurfing, mountain biking or sailing by engaging young people in designing activity programmes to suit their needs. 	<p>THC HYV, SS, UHI</p> <p>THC UHI</p>	<p>2009 onwards</p> <p>2009 onwards</p>
5. A need has been identified to increase the opportunities for people to participate in sport through the medium of Gaelic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide free coach education courses for volunteers working with schools and community groups who promote Gaelic. • Monitor the number of Gaelic speakers attaining coaching qualifications. 	<p>THC CH, CNG</p> <p>THC CH, CNG</p>	<p>2009 onwards</p> <p>2009 onwards</p>

TOPIC 2 – IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

KEY ISSUES	ACTIONS RECOMMENDED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMESCALES
6. There is a lack of knowledge concerning the number of talented athletes in schools & communities to gauge levels of support mechanisms required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an audit of developing and talented athletes through schools, clubs and national governing bodies. The audit should also determine athletes expected to be on the cusp of Commonwealth Games standards by 2014. 	THC HIS, HDS, SS, UHI	2009-2010

7. Over 40% of Local Sports Council Grants to clubs is spent on 'achieving excellence' and Highlands & Islands Enterprise is currently withdrawing funding equating to approximately a third of their budgets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify alternative sources of funding and assist Local Sports Councils to secure replacement/enhanced funds. Promote The Highland Council's new Duncraig Trust which supports talented athletes who are/were pupils of a secondary school in Highland. 	HSDA LSCs THC LSCs, HIS	2009-2010 2009 onwards
8. There is a need to raise awareness to coaches about non sports specific support mechanisms to expand their understanding of the implications and requirements of achieving success as a top class athlete.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop more awareness workshops and set up a directory of athlete support service providers including sports medicine, sports science, strength & conditioning, diet & nutrition, psychology, massage therapists etc which in turn will better prepare athletes for possible inclusion in Area Institute support programmes or other high level training. 	CH HIS	2009 onwards
TOPIC 3 - WELL TRAINED PEOPLE			
KEY ISSUES	ACTIONS RECOMMENDED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMESCALES
9. Extensive support mechanisms and funding for voluntary coaches is widely available but not for paid providers, which could affect the quality of coaching available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate a multi-agency approach to the feasibility of funding paid coaches and instructors' education needs to improve the skills pool. 	CH THC, SS	2010
10. Financial support for the training of umpires / officials is limited with people often having to travel extensively to attend courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source funding to subsidise costs and organise officials training courses locally. 	UHI CH, NGBs	2009 onwards
11. Coach education courses are often cancelled due to insufficient numbers and/or National Governing Body inflexibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with National Governing Bodies to find ways to reduce minimum numbers required to run courses based on rurality issues and population levels. 	SS CH, UHI	2009 onwards
TOPIC 4 – STRONG ORGANISATIONS			
KEY ISSUES	ACTIONS RECOMMENDED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMESCALES
12. Clubs are one of the main deliverers of sport but find administration a big burden - many find it difficult to secure volunteer office bearers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All existing club development resources and support tools to be collated and distributed to clubs eg 'Help For Clubs' and a 'how good is our club questionnaire'. Organise more localised 'Running Sports' and other relevant workshops. Provide professional officer time where possible to support administration of big sporting events. 	VH CH, THC, LSCs, SS UHI HSDA, LSCs, THC THC	2009 2009 onwards Ongoing

TOPIC 5 – QUALITY FACILITIES

KEY ISSUES	ACTIONS RECOMMENDED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMESCALES
13. Strength & Conditioning is recognised as a very important part of an athlete's training and there is a perception that it is not always available due to age restrictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better promotion of The Highland Councils policy which does permit access for under 16's to strength & conditioning within leisure facilities. Review The Highland Council access policy by consulting with The UK Strength & Conditioning Association. 	THC LSCs	2009 onwards
		THC HIS	2010
14. New facility developments which include sport as a part of the build (rather than the focus) could add value by consulting with the local sporting community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure adequate consultation (referring to the 'Standards of Community Engagement') with 'sport' is put in place for new facility developments to meet the needs of developing pathways 	THC HIS, SSDOs	Ongoing

TOPIC 6 – PROVIDING THE PATHWAYS

KEY ISSUES	ACTIONS RECOMMENDED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMESCALES
15. There is a shortage of qualified and specialist coaches above intermediary level which minimises the development potential of some athletes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify coaches with the desire to move up the coaching pathway and support them to achieve their aspirations. Investigate opportunities with multi-agencies to develop a career structure for coaching, leading to a project to train and employ specialist coaches. 	CH HIS, HDS, SS	2010 onwards
		UHI CH, HIS, SS	2010 onwards
16. The lack of competition structure in Highland is hampering the development of athletes who have to travel to the central belt to compete regularly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and develop school sport associations to improve competition opportunities linking them where possible to regional based sports-specific competition structures. Develop inter-college sports programme and competition structure at both the Further and Higher Education levels seeking support from 'Scotland's University for Sporting Excellence' programme. Encourage national governing bodies to hold regional / national competitions in the Highlands. 	THC SS, SSDOs	2009 onwards
		UHI SS, SSDOs	2009 onwards
		SS SSDOs	2009 onwards
17. A co-ordinated talent identification system requires to be set up with sports working jointly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Highland model of identification and information sharing between sports and plan a pathway and support infrastructure for athletes as an 'area' priority rather than on a sport-by-sport basis. Use 'Pathways Mapping' exercise to identify gaps and perform basic talent identification to guide young people. 	SSDOs THC, HIS	2010-14
		THC UHI	2009 onwards

TOPIC 7 – MAXIMISING THE NUMBER OF ATHLETES REPRESENTING HIGHLAND AT THE GLASGOW 2014 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

KEY ISSUES	ACTIONS RECOMMENDED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMESCALES
18. Quality support services for athletes are not available at the level required to maximise the number of Highland athletes competing at Glasgow 2014.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate improved and cheaper access to training facilities on an athlete-by-athlete basis resulting from the audit in Issue 6. Review the unsuccessful Scottish Institute of Sport Foundation application (£50,000 per annum project) to seek funding for a talented athlete development and support programme which will focus on the athletes identified following the audit in Issue 6. 	<p>THC UHI, HIS</p> <p>THC HIS, SSDOs, SS, CH</p>	<p>2009-2014</p> <p>2009-2014</p>
19. Glasgow 2014 provides an excellent opportunity to have Highland representation in the form of volunteers / spectators attending the Games benefiting from a truly inspirational experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work up a programme budget for The Highland Council of transport and tickets for upper Primary and lower Secondary school pupils who would have the added benefit of experiencing cultural events surrounding the Games. Establish a programme to support the training of potential volunteers / officials and inform them how to register their interest for Glasgow 2014. 	<p>THC</p> <p>CH VH, THC, UHI, HDS</p>	<p>2012-2014</p> <p>2010-2014</p>

TOPIC 8 – ROLE OF LOCAL SPORTS COUNCILS WITH REGARDS THE HIGHLAND SPORTS STRATEGY

KEY ISSUES	ACTIONS RECOMMENDED	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMESCALES
20. The structures, roles and remits of Local Sports Councils require a major review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a full review and consultation around the purpose, remit, funding and development needs of the Local Sports Councils, evaluating whether the current structure is working including recommendations for the way forward. 	THC HSDA, SS, VH, SALSC	2009-2010
21. The role of the Highland Sports Development Association (HSDA) has changed considerably since being established in 1983 and requires a review to redefine its role in sports development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the review findings in Issue 20 to clarify HSDA's role and review the format of the meetings to identify what changes are required to meet the needs of Local Sports Councils. 	HSDA THC, SALSC	2010

Abbreviations

CH	Coaching Highland	SALSC	Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils
CNG	Comunn na Gàidhlig	SS	sport scotland
HDS	Highland Disability Sport	SSDOs	Sports Specific Development Officers
HIS	Highland Institute of Sport	THC	The Highland Council
HSDA	Highland Sports Development Association	UHI	University for the Highlands & Islands
LSCs	Local Sports Councils	VH	Volunteering Highland
NGBs	National Governing Bodies (of sport)		

Delivery, Monitoring & Evaluation

Specific delivery of the key issues and associated actions will be the responsibility of the lead agent identified against each one but general progress of the document will be monitored by the Highland Council's Sports Network Team who meet approximately 8-10 times per year. A document will be maintained by the team which will also be posted online showing the up-to-date status of each action.

Statistics will be obtained from the Scottish Household Survey and will be used within the evaluation as a benchmark of the progress in Highland. The multi-agency officers steering group will meet once per year to monitor overall progress and provide guidance on any areas requiring strategic redirection.

This strategy will lead Highland forward to the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow 2014 and it is anticipated that the next strategy for Highland will be required from 2014 to maximise the Glasgow Commonwealth Games legacy initiatives / funding and work should start on that during 2013.

Thank you

To all contributors at the area consultations and the organisations who have assisted the writing of the Highland Sports Strategy.

The sports strategy has been prepared by a steering group of organisations with a strategic role in sport in the Highlands:



For further information on the Highland Sports Strategy, please contact Alan Hoseason on 01463 718009 or alan@CoachingHighland.co.uk. Alternatively, to view the expanded version of this strategy and progress reports, please visit www.CoachingHighland.co.uk and follow the menu options for News and Highland Sports Strategy.

HIGHLAND PASS – FACILITIES

The Facilities (Capital Plan) will be inserted here after being approved