



To: Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)

28 January 2015

Subject: Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 – Progress Review

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 On 5 August 2014, Cabinet approved the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024. On 9 September 2014, Council unanimously endorsed the Strategy. In line with Strategy recommendations regarding future public leisure provision, Council further approved investment of £36.7m in a City Centre destination sports and leisure facility and agreed to work with the City of Coventry Swimming Club and other partners to explore the feasibility of keeping a 50m pool within the City, if it could be technically possible and deliverable within the available financial resource.
- 1.2 This briefing note provides the background to a presentation and discussion for the meeting of the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3), which will consider the City's progress in implementing the Strategy over the four months since its endorsement in September 2014.

2 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):

Review progress on implementing the partnership Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 since its approval by Cabinet in August 2014 endorsement by Council in September 2014.

- (i) Recommend to Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Parks, Sports and Events key opportunities, considerations and priorities where the Council may support and enhance delivery of the Strategy across 2015 and in future years.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The mission of the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 is "To develop a more active, inclusive and vibrant Coventry through positive experiences in sport".
- 3.2 The Strategy is structured around eight Vision Aims and 37 Strategic Objectives. Included within these are objectives concerned with increasing and widening participation in sport; increasing the number of people receiving sports coaching; increasing the number of people volunteering in sport; establishing and embedding early specialist support services for talented athletes; developing City Centre sports facilities that are accessible, high quality, sustainable and of significance to the Midlands (proposed by switching long-term resources from Coventry Sports and Leisure Centre to investing in a new City Centre

destination facility); attracting high profile sporting events to the City; establishing a Coventry Sports Network; and harnessing the power of sport to promote community cohesion and address public health inequalities in the City.

3.3 The Strategy is influenced and supported by the Coventry Playing Pitch Strategy 2014-2024, the Coventry Indoor Facilities Strategy 2014-2024 and the Coventry Aquatics Strategy 2014-2024.

3.4 For the purposes of brevity, the 37 strategic objectives are not individually reviewed below, but key Strategy updates are provided under the heading of each of the Eight Vision Aims (VAs) within the Strategy. The full report can be found at Appendix A

4 VA1 - To inspire more people in the city to take up and regularly take part in sport

4.1 #Ucan project

In 2014, Coventry City Council secured grant of £214,779 from Sport England Community Activation Fund (the first grant award directly linked to the development of the new Sports Strategy) to deliver a three-year programme in the heart of two of the city's most deprived wards (Foleshill and Henley), through a partnership approach between Coventry City Council, Coventry Sports Foundation, Positive Youth Foundation and Sky Blues in the Community. The programme prioritises work with those who do not currently participate in sport, with three distinct priority groups: 14-19 year olds, those aged 40+ and females.

The #Ucan project was established as part of a partnership commitment to continue to offer a range of high quality sporting activities in Foleshill, from around the time of the Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre closing. Under the banner of the #Ucan project, activities are delivered in the heart of Foleshill and Henley, using local parks and open spaces, schools and community centres – with the aim of feeding into sustainable sports centre activity or local sports clubs.

4.2 Sport England Active Universities Funding

In 2014, both Coventry University and the University of Warwick have received Sport England "University Sport Activation Fund" awards to develop new programmes to support more people being physically active. Totalling £372,895, these programmes will help to create a more active city and help to deliver a number of the Strategy's objectives.

4.3 Sport England Active People Survey Results

Sport England Active People Survey results are usually published annually in December, for the preceding October to October year of surveys. However, the publication of the Sport England Active People Survey results for October 2013 to October 2014 has been delayed and the latest figures are therefore not available at the time of this briefing. Once the results of this annual survey have been released, local analysis will investigate trends and patterns in participation, updating the pool of survey data utilised in developing the Coventry Sports Strategy. This historical survey data showed that over half of the Coventry population do not take part in sport or active recreation; that age plays a key role in determining levels of activity; that regular female activity is under half that of the corresponding male rate; and more positively, that regular participation in sport and active recreation (National Indicator measure) has increased from 18.8% to 26.0% (by a statistically significant level) from the period of the survey being conducted for Active People Survey 1 (2005/6) to the period of Active People Survey 7 (2012/13).

4.4 Coventry Public Leisure Participation Data

Across all Coventry public leisure centre sites (i.e. those operated by both the Coventry Sports Foundation and Coventry Sports Trust), there were 2,315,056 participant visits between 1st April 2014 and 31st December 2014. This compares with 2,047,669 visits for the equivalent period in 2013 and 2,050,377 visits for the equivalent period in 2012.

5 **VA2 - To provide a wide range of high quality and exciting sporting opportunities and experiences**

5.1 National Governing Body Planning

Throughout the development and early implementation of the Coventry Sports Strategy, the City Council and partners have been holding strategic meetings with a selection of National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) to establish if they would be well positioned to be 'key sports' / 'development sports' for Coventry. A key consideration for each 'key sport' is the development and agreement of a strategic, holistic Sports Implementation Plan for the sport in the City.

In November 2014, it was agreed by the Coventry Sports Network that Tennis would be its first 'key sport'. The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) had successfully developed and articulated a comprehensive, strategic Sports Implementation Plan (SIP) for Coventry, which the CSN endorsed and has commenced working on in partnership with the LTA.

5.2 The 'Engage!' Project

The 'Engage!' Project is a prime example of new sports programme work being developed through, and driven by, the Coventry Sports Strategy.

'Engage!' is a unique rugby programme for Coventry. The ultimate aim of 'Engage!' is to use rugby and its values as a means of social and educational enrichment. Supported by the Millerchip Family Fund, the programme aims to promote the sport and its values as a way of developing healthy, well-rounded, confident young people who have greater access to opportunities and a real sense of belonging within their local communities.

The first 'Engage!' tournament was held at the Alan Higgs Centre in November 2014, with the finalists - pupils from Wyken Croft Primary School and Willenhall Primary School – securing the opportunity to play in the final at the Ricoh Arena during Wasps first home game at the stadium on 21st December 2014, in front of 28,000 people.

The 'Engage!' project is currently recruiting a manager to help to develop the programme in Coventry and the project is currently undertaking a number of pilot programmes in local primary schools.

6 **VA3 - To inspire more people to volunteer, coach and be facilitators of sport**

6.1 EnV

With regard to supporting plans for volunteer development, the CSN partnership is working closely with the new social enterprise 'EnV', which was created as a legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games in Coventry, due to the success of the Coventry Ambassadors. The social enterprise is looking at developing sports events and volunteers both within the City and the sub-region.

Coventry Sports Network is working with EnV to look at options to develop and provide sustained support to VA3. The CSN have also supported EnV to attend 'meet and greet' events for Wasps season ticket holders coming to the City and the Arena for the first time, and to negotiate a contract with Wasps to be present at their opening fixtures – where the Ambassadors will provide a welcoming, orientation service to supporters new to the City.

EnV have further supported delivery of the Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire Sport Sainsbury's School Games Festival programme across 2014, with further School Games Festivals planned for March 2015 and July 2015.

7 VA4 - To identify and support talented athletes to reach their sporting potential

7.1 Support to Succeed

Coventry Sports Network has actively supported the 'Support to Succeed' initiative. 'Support to Succeed' is a sub-regional talented athlete's bursary programme, delivered by CSW Sport. The scheme has recently funded a number of young, talented Coventry athletes with bursaries. These successfully young athletes were awarded their bursaries at the CSW Sports Awards in November 2014.

7.2 Coventry University Science and Health Building

In 2014, Coventry University announced plans for a new flagship Science and Health Building in Much Park Street. Spread over five floors, the new building will become home to a number of departments, including sports science and psychology. The new facilities, described by some as a "super lab", will include state-of-the-art health simulation facilities, a laboratory for teaching and research in biological and analytic sciences, a strength and conditioning room, with a running track, sports therapy clinic and facilities for food and environmental sciences also on site. Archaeological excavation work is underway on site, with completion of the building scheduled for 2017.

8 VA5 - To provide a range of modern, accessible and high quality sports facilities in the city

8.1 Centre AT7

In August 2014, the new Aquatic and community facilities extension to Centre AT7 (including delivery of a new 25m x 6 lane swimming pool, learner pool and racing slides) was formally opened, with a public open day on 30th August. The £8m development opened on time and circa £250,000 under budget, representing the first phase of re-provisioning of public aquatic facilities in the city. A seamless transition was managed with the closure of Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre (which closed in August 2014). Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre was opened in 1937 and was situated less than a mile away from the significantly more modern facilities now accommodated within Centre AT7.

Since opening the new aquatics facilities in August 2014, Centre AT7 has seen a 74% increase in memberships and a 250% rise in schools accessing public swimming facilities in the north of the city.

Between August 2014 and November 2014 (i.e. the first three months of its opening), the aquatic extension to Centre AT7 has delivered the following levels of participation, which represent significant increases over previous participation levels at Foleshill Sports and Leisure Centre for 2013/14.

- Participation (swimming facilities only) = 63,546
- Education Swimming Lessons = 25 Schools (averaging 1315 pupils per week)
- Private Instruction Programme = (circa 1,000 pupils per week)
- Memberships = 575 additional members (74% increase)

8.2 Destination Water Park

The development of a new Destination Water and Leisure Facility in Coventry represents the second phase of the strategy of the re-provisioning of public leisure facilities. The Council's key vision for the development is to provide an exciting, iconic, high quality facility that is accessible to everyone, draws people to Coventry, contributes to the delivery of the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014 – 2024, acts as a catalyst for the regeneration of the City Centre, increases footfall and contributes to the Council's healthy living objectives.

The Council is currently procuring Project Management, Cost Consultancy and Construction (Design and Management) Consultancy services for the development, to include the demolition of existing Council buildings, with demolition due to commence on site in 2017 and a projected opening date for the new facility in 2019. The preferred consultancy team will be appointed in March 2015.

8.3 50m Pool Feasibility

On 9 September 2014, whilst approving investment of £36.7m in the above City Centre destination sports and leisure facility, the Council further agreed to work with the City of Coventry Swimming Club and other partners to explore the feasibility of keeping a 50m pool within the City, if it could be technically possible and deliverable within the available financial resource.

The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA), as National Governing Body for swimming, was invited to, and agreed to, lead this further feasibility work. Four initial scoping meetings were held with the ASA and Coventry City Council officers in 2014. As requested, Council officers have provided a range of technical and financial baseline information to the ASA and supported the ASA and Sport England with facilities planning modelling for swimming pools. The ASA have additionally met with wider stakeholders such as the City of Coventry Swimming Club.

The ASA were scheduled to share an initial feasibility report with Council officers on 19th December. However due to the local and regional strategic and technical complexity of the work, the ASA were unable to meet the December deadline and this has now been extended with the agreement of partners.

8.4 President Kennedy School

Council and Sport England officers have been working to support President Kennedy School in further modelling work designed to retain and/or improve sports facilities accessible to the community at the school. The School has articulated an ambition to create a high quality neighbourhood sports hub, run as a community trust, which enriches sport and physical education for students who attend President Kennedy School and which raises participation in sport and promotes healthy lifestyles within the Holbrooks community. An external consultant has now been appointed to work with school to prepare a development plan for proposed new facilities.

8.5 Badminton England, England Squash and Racketball and the Sport England Inspired Facilities Fund

Development of the Coventry Sports Strategy has enabled the Council to strategically support external funding applications to Badminton England, England Squash and Racketball and Sport England to improve the changing facilities squash courts and sports hall at St Augustine's Sports Centre. This has secured £125,000 in external funding for capital improvements at the above facilities, with work currently underway and due for completion in March 2015.

9 **VA6 - To attract high profile sporting events to the city and to celebrate sporting achievement**

9.1 Ricoh Arena

Events are a key part of the development and implementation of the Coventry Sports Strategy and the arrival in Coventry of Wasps and the return of Coventry City FC to the Ricoh Arena will no doubt help deliver this Aim of the Strategy. The Coventry Sports Network has worked closely with Wasps to support the successful delivery of their opening fixtures at the stadium and will continue to support the development of sports events at the stadium, as a key showcase venue for the City. Since the endorsement of the Strategy in 2014, the Ricoh has already hosted a number of key sports events (e.g. School Games Organisers' National Summit; 'Lock, Stock and Three Smoking Arrows' Darts Tournament; GymFusion; Champions of Champions Snooker). Highlighting the continuing diversity of its programming, in addition to hosting both professional Rugby Union and Football games, in February 2015 the Ricoh Arena will host both SPATEX 2015 (UK pool and spa trade exhibition) and the inaugural British Ethnic Diversity Sports Awards.

9.2 Rugby World Cup 2015

As the Rugby World Cup is to be hosted in the UK during 2015, the city will plan to capitalise on the growth of rugby and establish local events that will help to showcase the sport. The CSN partners are working with the Warwickshire RFU, local clubs, the 'Engage!' project and sub-regional partners to secure a range of opportunities and events for both local people and Rugby World Cup tourists who may visit the city over the period of the tournament.

9.3 Ice Hockey

Following the successful hosting of the first GB Ice Hockey International fixture in the city in 2014, the city has been successful in securing its second full international fixture. In April 2015, the Great Britain Ice Hockey team will take on Poland at the Skydome Arena. The CSN will be working with the event organisers to ensure the success of the event and capitalise on opportunities for the City.

9.4 Wider Events

In November 2014 the National Touch Tennis event took place in Coventry and for the first time in the Midlands. The event supports an elite UK calendar, which was successfully aligned with the launch of a community programme to be delivered by Coventry Sports Foundation and local clubs, to encourage more people to play tennis through the shorter version "Touch tennis".

10 VA7 – To grow and promote sport in the city through effective partnerships

10.1 Coventry Sports Network

One of the first milestones for the Coventry Sports Strategy was to establish the group that will be responsible for delivering and managing the Sports Strategy across the city. The Coventry Sports Network (CSN) was established via an initial executive group, with founding members from Coventry City Council, Coventry University, the University of Warwick, Coventry Sports Foundation, Coventry Sports Trust and CSW Sport.

The CSN was formally launched in November 2014 and partners are now working on prioritising the Vision Aims and strategy objectives to develop an initial 2015 CSN partnership implementation plan for the Coventry Sports Strategy.

10.2 Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sport (CSW Sport)

Coventry City Council is the host agency for CSW Sport, the County Sports Partnership (CSP) for Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire. CSP's represent a collection of organisations working together to provide opportunities for people to participate in sport and physical activity within a defined geographical area.

Sport England invests Core Funding into CSP's to provide a consistent set of services for National Governing Bodies and for Sport England. This investment seeks to increase the number of people aged 14 plus playing sport each week across England, and the CSP acts as an interface between national plans for sport and local stakeholders.

Whilst 'hosted' by the Council, the CSP team operates from premises at the University of Warwick. The CSP is key to successful delivery of national and sub-regional initiatives that will support the Strategic Objectives of the Coventry Sports Strategy – such as the Satellite Clubs initiative (connecting schools and sports clubs); the 'Support to Succeed' talented athletes scheme; the Sainsbury's School Games Programme; and coach education courses and workshops.

10.3 Public Health

The Strategy recognises and references the significant contribution that sport and active recreation can make to improving health outcomes across the city. Recently published research (e.g. University of Cambridge, 2015) identifies the significant risks to health that inactivity can present, highlighting also the health benefits that exercise can deliver for people of any weight. Sport and active recreation both have a role to play in supporting and encouraging activity, and meetings have been held since the publication of the Strategy between Sport England, Public Health officers and Sports/Leisure officers to further review and consider future links between sport and public health partners in the City.

11 VA8 – For sport to make Coventry a better place to live, work and visit

- 11.1 At only four months into delivery of a 10-year strategy, it may be appropriate to be cautious around claims that the Strategy is already making the city a better place to live, work and visit. However, with the recent sporting successes of a number of the City's local professional teams, the return of regular, professional sport to the Ricoh Arena, the investment attracted to the City from external funders (directly linked to the Strategy) and the commencement of procurement/site processes for both new sports and sports science facilities in the city, the initial signs are considered encouraging that sport, and the Strategy itself, will play a very positive role in the city for years ahead.

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