

REPORT TO: Employment Learning, Skills and Community
Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 9 June 2010

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health & Community

SUBJECT: Gifted and Talented Sports provision

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report back on the Information Gathering Day on Gifted and Talented Sports provision.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) Members comment on the initial findings of the Information Gathering Day.**
- ii) Members determine how they wish to proceed with this issue.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The PPB has previously received a presentation on the approach of Children and Young Peoples Directorate's to gifted and talented young sports persons. Following this, the Chair asked for a wider information gathering day to be held to begin to fully understand the subject.

3.2 As such a 'reference day' was held in April to receive evidence from sports practitioners. Details of the day are attached as Appendix 1. Three Members attended the session.

3.3 There were wide ranging discussions, but a number of major strands began to appear, often posed as questions rather than solutions. These are set out below: -

- a) Young people and their families/carers face financial difficulty to fulfil their potential. This can be equipment, but a major problem is being able to find and employ good coaches, and good practice partners.
- b) Coaching structure needs developing in Halton. More clubs need to embrace the idea of gifted and talented, but they are reliant often on school links.
- c) Schools major focus is on Physical Education (because of curriculum requirements). They work on the five principles of creative, physical, cognitive, social, and personal: rather than focussing on specific talent in any given sport.

- d) Whilst Halton identifies above national average numbers of gifted and talented, there is a feeling that expertise might be lacking in junior schools, and high schools adopt an individual rather than a borough-wide approach.
- e) There needs to be a greater focus on school to club links, whereby once talent is identified young people are clearly pointed in a direction, which may well be outside the borough.
- f) The above, in itself, brings difficulties. Many young people are 'multi-sports talented', and play a number of disciplines. At what age do you specialise? Should you? Should you protect young people from injury/burn-out to the benefit of a particular sport? These questions have not really been addressed, and there are a myriad of views.
- g) There was general consensus that you build basic sports skills before you specialise.
- h) Governing bodies need to be challenged over their commitment to gifted and talented. Several scholarships have ceased.
- i) Disability Sports needs greater support. Currently there is only £1,500 of education funding to support Gifted and Talented disability sports. Generally schools awareness is limited.
- j) In general terms it was felt that there is no cross-borough programme that everyone is working to. However, there was a consensus that the over-riding approach was "Learn to train, Learn to compete, Learn to win". Halton has a small and limited club base, one factor being its size.

4.0 **POLICY, LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None at this stage, as the report only outlines a fact-funding approach. Any recommendations for the future, however, may have budget implications.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

5.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The aim of the approach described in the approach is to create and increase opportunities for all young people to participate in a wide range of sports and physical activities and to raise personal achievement.

5.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills**

None at this stage.

5.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Sport and physical activity is generally acknowledged to improve health and well-being, and to contribute to the preventative agenda.

5.4 **A Safer Halton**

None at this stage.

5.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None at this stage.

6.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 None identified at this stage, but in general terms there is a desire to maximise young people's potential.

7.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 The Topic Group were keen to ensure that disability sports continue to be developed across the borough.

8.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

8.1 None.

Policy and Performance Board

Gifted and Talented Topic Group

Tuesday 20 April 2010 at Stobart Stadium Halton, Box 13

9.30am **Karen Tonge**

(Halton Table Tennis Club Ltd)

Karen Tonge is an active volunteer in the operation of Table Tennis in Halton. There are a number of talented athletes in the Halton based club competing at County and National level. Halton Table Tennis Ltd employs a part time community sport coach whom goes into schools offering taster session to promote table tennis and encourage young people to participate. The clubs current junior membership is over 400.

Table Tennis is one of many sports in the Borough. Sports Development has grant supported a number of athletes. As national governing bodies provide different sporting excellence structures it would be interesting to understand the support structures in place to support young participants once they have been attracted to the sport.

9.55am **Gill McGough**

(PE & Sport Advisor in School Improvement Team – Children & Young People Directorate)

Gill looks strategically how the Physical Education and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP) is delivered in Halton. The Youth Sport Trust manages the Gifted and Talented strand of the government's PESSYP strategy. Gifted and Talented programmes focus not only on high achievers but also on those who show sporting potential, including pupils at risk of underachieving and those from disadvantaged areas. Strands of Gifted and Talented programmes include Multi Skill Academies and Multi Skill Clubs.

10.20am

Simone Hands

(School Sports Coordinator, Bankfield High School)

A School Sports Co-ordinator (SSCo) is based within a secondary school. Simone is a secondary school PE teacher released from teaching for approx two days per week. Simone looks at improving school sport opportunities, including the co-ordination and development of after school activity, out of hours learning, intra and interschool competition and club links, local community links in their own school and partners/ special schools.

10.45

Break

11am

Sue Lowrie

(Sport and Recreation Manager)

Generic support services across

11.25am

Stephen Wood

(Community Sports Coach, Halton Borough Council)

Stephen delivers sports coaching session to young people in Halton. He is funded via Sport England and HBC Priorities fund. Session are delivered in curriculum time, after school club, community sessions.

In his Leisure time he is an active Rugby League volunteer and coach educator for Rugby Football League (RFL), currently training as a level 3 coach funded by the RFL.

12noon **Mark Eccleston**

(Disability Sports Officer, Halton Borough Council - former Tennis Paralympian)

Mark is part funded through the School Sport Coaching programme which is one of 10 strands which make up the PE and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP). His aim is to assist young people in developing to the next level of competition or in joining an accredited sports club. Two days a week Mark is responsible for delivering the PE curriculum to pupils at Chesnut Lodge.

12.30pm Allyn Condon

(Great Britain summer and winter Olympian Athletics and Bobsleigh)

1pm Lunch

The attendees have been briefed as follows:

You will have the opportunity to discuss gifted and talented provision in Halton with a number of Councillors and senior officers (approximately 20mins). The discussion will include the following 4 points

- 1 A short introduction around who/what the organisation you represent is/does.
- 2 Current programmes/delivery relating to Gifted and Talented
- 3 What major barriers are there for you/your group accessing support for gifted and talented athletes?
- 4 What key improvement could be made that would benefit you/your current and future athletes.