

<b>Report title: Physical Activity in Essex ‘Fit for the Future’</b>	
<b>Report to:</b> Essex Health and Wellbeing Board	
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<b>Date:</b> 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	<b>For:</b> Information
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<b>County Divisions affected:</b> All Essex	

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report on the progress made since the previous Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021, when it was agreed to recognise the urgency of promoting physical activity across the Essex population through a new programme called ‘Fit for the Future’.
- 1.2 This report is an urgent call to action for all Board members, and wider sectors and systems, to create a new physical activity movement in Essex; to play a key role in the development, promotion and delivery of the many elements in the engagement plans for both the new physical activity strategy and new physical activity social marketing campaign, both of which launch in June.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to:
  - 2.1.1 Commit to proactively participate in the promotion and delivery of the ‘Fit for the Future’ physical activity movement engagement actions through their organisation and networks.
  - 2.1.2 Consider further actions, using their subject-matter expertise, to enable physical activity to be hardwired into the system, and where individual members of the Board (eg primary care providers) need support from ECC or others, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the various strands within the ‘Fit for the Future’ physical activity movement.

## 3. Summary

- 3.1 The physical activity paper discussed at the previous Health and Wellbeing Board meeting recognised the major impact the pandemic has had on physical activity levels across Essex and the urgent need to bring about an Essex-wide post-COVID upsurge in physical activity. The priority should be the importance of physical reconditioning; the messaging should be that physical activity is one of the most effective ways to achieve good health and wellbeing for the individual while being important for county-wide prosperity.
- 3.2 The four pillars that support the development of ‘Fit for the Future’, a new Essex physical activity movement are:
  - i. The vast and diverse range of physical activity services, programmes and projects that are currently being delivered and the opportunity to identify new ones across system settings;
  - ii. A new 10-year strategy for physical activity and sport in Essex that works across all systems;
  - iii. A new Essex-wide social marketing campaign to activate the new strategy, based on robust behaviour-change principles, with support from Britain Thinks and Public Health England;
  - iv. Promoting new ways of working that encourage system collaboration, tackling inequalities, and place-based working that build upon the learning from the Essex Local Delivery Pilot (Essex is one of 12 pilots chosen by Sport England to tackle

population levels of physical inactivity in disadvantaged communities, and the Essex LDP is one of the adopted programmes of HWB.)

- 3.3 It was agreed at the last meeting that a small working group of members would meet to discuss the next steps and actions for HWB. The working group comprised Dr Sunil Gupta from Castle Point and Rochford CCG, Danielle Frost from EALC, Jemma Mindham from Harlow CVS, and Larrissa Kerridge from Healthwatch.
- 3.4 The working group met with Active Essex on 16<sup>th</sup> April and agreed on the following points to shape next steps and action:

- A new Essex physical activity and sport strategy is welcome which calls for new ways of working and is brought to life by a major Essex-wide social marketing campaign.
- The vision and priorities of the strategy (outlined in the table below) are relevant to encouraging everyone in Essex to be active to achieve good health and wellbeing.

<b>Strategy 10 Year Vision: An active Essex to improve everyone's health and wellbeing.</b>		
	<b>Strategy 5 priorities</b>	<b>Strategy 5 foundations</b>
1	Health and wellbeing	Tackling inequalities
2	Active Environments	System change
3	Children and Young People	Place-based working
4	Strengthening Communities	Measurement of impact
5	Community Sport	Proportionate Universalism

- A new social marketing campaign that is launched in tandem with the launch of the new strategy in June would be ground-breaking for Essex and would enable an extensive and long-term reach to all citizens and residents.
- The new programme and campaign will be for all of Essex and needs to be owned by multiple systems, organisations, forums, and networks. It was appreciated that support has already been secured from Essex Partnership Board, Essex Strategic Co-ordination Group, Essex County Council's Political and Corporate Leadership Teams, and Essex Public Health Practitioner Forum. This support highlights the ongoing need for collaboration and support to help further system partners implement this important agenda.
- Every cabinet member of Essex County Council offered their full support for the major prioritisation of the physical activity programme to counteract the negative impacts of the pandemic. They each identified tangible contributions that physical activity can make and the overall development of a 'Fit for the Future' physical activity movement. The key points that each of them raised are included as Appendix 1.
- The working group advocated securing additional support from local authority Chief Executives, United in Kind, Essex Wellbeing Service and Provide, COVID Community Hubs, Social Prescribing Networks, large employers, the Essex Association of Local Councils, CVSs, Child and Family Wellbeing Service, and MIND.
- There is a need to ensure the social marketing campaign engages with schools, Facebook groups, Active Essex ambassadors, the Active Essex YouTube channel, and Young Mental Health ambassadors.
- The social marketing campaign to encourage physical activity needs to be inclusive and provide support to many people who do not yet have the confidence to be physically active. Local provision of physical activity should use all of the local assets and adapt provision so it is attractive and accessible for everyone.

- The social marketing campaign should make it easy to signpost people to activities and provide simple resources and text messaging to inform. and encourage people towards appropriate physical activities.
- There was caution about the use of the word 'fit' as it has different meanings for different audiences, especially young people.
- It was advised that use be made of the expertise provided by Dr William Bird, who explains that most people are active informally or through travelling to shops, work, or school. Dr Bird stresses that there needs to be clear messaging to our most inactive people that the smallest amount of regular physical activity can reap large benefits. For this reason, sub-brands will be developed for different elements of the campaign.

3.5 The HWB will play a key leadership role in ensuring system-wide commitment to the urgent prioritisation of physical activity. 'Fit for the Future' has the ability to create more active workplaces, supporting employee health & wellbeing, and encouraging increased physical activity. A number of members of HWB and Essex Partners come from large employer anchor organisations and have a significant role to play in the health and wellbeing of those who work for them.

3.6 The Active Essex team are shaping the engagement plans for the new strategy and social marketing campaign which will require the engagement and ownership of multiple systems and partners to achieve a major physical activity movement and upsurge in physical activity levels. It is proposed that the engagement plans for both the programme itself, and the campaign, could cover the following areas:

#### Strategy engagement

##### Health and wellbeing

- Physical activity social prescribing
- Lifestyle contract signposting to physical activity
- PCNs to integrate physical activity and create physical activity ambassadors
- Mental Health Hubs activation of physical activity
- Social care increase in strength and balance conditioning
- Healthy workplace initiatives including being active working from home
- Hospital consultants to be physical activity champions
- Utilise COVID resource to support the reconditioning of the clinically extremely vulnerable
- Active Essex YouTube Channel Keep Active at Home
- Prevention and Enablement programme using

##### Active Environments

- Local authorities and anchor organisations to prioritise physical activity for their workforce and in their services as well as connecting to large employers
- New workplace active travel plans
- Increased promotion of walking and cycling
- Essex Pedal Power scaled up
- Promotion of country parks with Daily Mile wayfinding

##### Children and Young People

- Activate – School Holidays Activity and Food programme
- School active travel plans
- Increased community use of schools for physical activity
- Reintroduction and increase in take-up of Daily Mile

##### Strengthening Communities

- Activation via voluntary organisations, clubs, and community groups
- Asset-based community development ambassadors and champions
- Encourage citizen-led physical activity provision
- EALC walking and physical activity initiatives
- Tackle social isolation through physical activity

- Local Delivery Pilot
- Community Sport
- Promote all community sports clubs, gyms, and groups
- Widen diversity of users in community sports clubs
- Train new community sports coaches and officials

#### Campaign engagement

- The communications and marketing campaign will be based on robust behaviour change and social marketing principles with the support of Britain Thinks, Sport England and Public Health England.
- Critical to the messaging is the idea that there is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to physical activity:
  - "Being active is a personal thing"
  - "Find the activity which suits *you*"
- The campaign title 'Fit for the Future' reinforces this message / while supporting and reinforcing the Active Essex brand.
- Specific target groups are:
  - Adults who are out of condition
  - Inactive adults in under-represented groups
  - Children and young people
  - Over 65s
  - Active adults (reinforcing the behaviour of already active residents and prompting them to consider their role as an Ambassador / Activator who can encourage others in their family / network / community)
- Social Media analysis and an understanding of key audiences will ensure the right messages are delivered through the right channels in the right locations
- In addition to messaging, a series of activities and opportunities will be promoted, not just encouraging activity, but helping the key audiences overcome identified barriers
- The success of the campaign will come from its successful engagement with the significant and impactful network of partners, ambassadors, and community activators – this activity will be the main focus in the coming month

## **4. Ongoing Oversight Governance**

- 4.1 It is recommended that the 'Fit for the Future' physical activity movement remains as a key priority for HWB and that regular progress reports are provided at HWB on a quarterly basis. In addition, the HWB to act as long-term sponsor of this important subject.
- 4.2 The new strategy and social marketing campaign will be led by Active Essex and supported by the wider system. The oversight will be provided by the Active Essex Board with the full support of Sport England. (Active Essex is one of 43 Active Partnerships across England who work collaboratively with local partners to create the conditions for an active nation using the power of physical activity sport to transform lives. By adopting a collaborative whole system approach, Active Partnerships seek to make active lifestyles the social norm for everyone and address the worrying levels of inactivity in society.)

## **5. Questions for the HWB**

1. What concerns do members have that need to be addressed to further enhance the probability of achieving desired outcomes?
2. What ideas/actions do individual members of HWB wish to introduce themselves, bring to the table, or recommend for development?
3. As post-Covid pressures continue, particularly in primary care, how do we best achieve join-up at community level, eg in social prescribing, or with patient participation groups? What

support do GPs need?

4. How does HWB want to exercise oversight of the strategy? Has HWB want a continuing sub-group of members or will it make time to consider regular progress reports and recommendations?

## **6. Financial implications**

- 6.1 Resources will be from within existing system budgets including public health, Local Delivery Pilot, and other system partners both in kind and revenue.

## **7. Legal implications**

N/A

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 An EIA has been completed.

## **9. Appendices**

- 9.1.**Appendix 1:** Summary of key points from each meeting with the Essex County Council Cabinet members.