

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 19 June 2023

Wards: All

Subject: Borough of Sport

Lead Director: Dan Jones, Executive Director Environment, Civic Pride & Climate

Lead member: Cllr Caroline Cooper Marbiah, Cabinet Member for Sport and Heritage

Contact officer: Mike Diaper and David Gentles (Borough of Sport Consultants)

Part 4b Section 10 of the constitution applies in respect of information within appendixes 1 and 2 and it is therefore exempt from publication:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

Members and officers are advised not to disclose the contents of the Exempt appendix.

Recommendations:

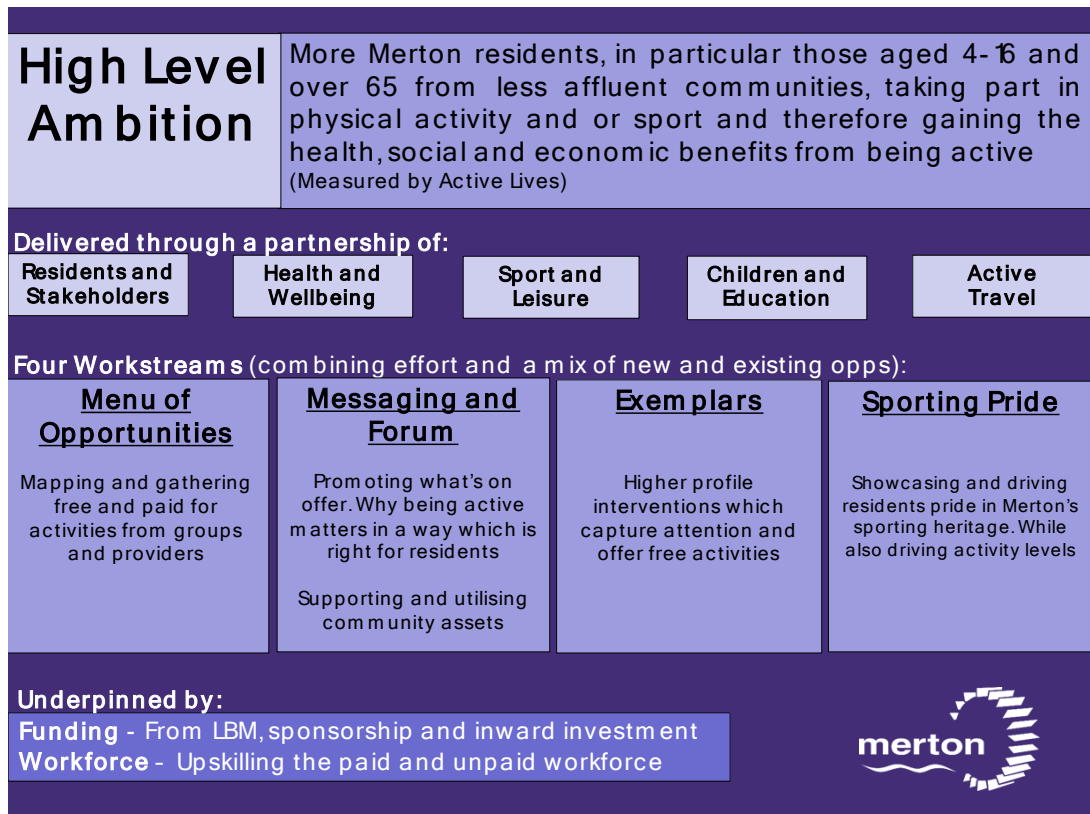
That Cabinet:

- A. Agree the proposals to make Merton London's Borough of Sport.
 - B. Note the estimated costs associated with the plans and agree the final costs are allowed for in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy between 2023-26.
 - C. Note the creation of a public forum to gain support and combine effort, and the creation of a cross sector advisory group to guide and steer actions.
 - D. Note London's Borough of Sport will be formally launched towards the end of the summer with stakeholder and community events, with preparatory activities taking place across the summer.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Being London's Borough of Sport is one of the administrations' priorities, alongside civic pride and sustainable futures. The plans set out in this paper deliver the commitment to make Merton, London's Borough of Sport.
- 1.2. Borough of Sport is about: getting more residents, in particular, but not only, 4 to 16-year-olds, the over 65s and the less affluent, physically active; putting Merton on the map for Sport; and celebrating the borough's sporting heritage. The overall ambition is to, "ensure that more Merton residents, in particular those aged 4-16, over 65 and from less affluent communities, take part in physical activity and sport once a week and therefore gain the health, social and economic benefits which come from being physically active
- 1.3. It's about sport in its widest sense so includes walking, cycling, dance – anything that gets residents moving. The call to action is to do one, or one more, physical activity session each week, to unlock benefits for individuals and the borough.

- 1.4. The plans have been informed by extensive consultation with local community groups and council officers. Over 100 local groups and individuals have helped shape the plans. It's been important to take time and listen to local groups to hear what they need and to gain their support.
- 1.5. The following diagram provides a snapshot of the Borough of Sport plans and its four workstreams.



- 1.6. Key actions across the first 18 months of delivery include:
- the recruitment of dedicated officer support at the council and two Community Activators;
 - the creation of a Borough of Sport brand;
 - the establishment of a forum and advisory group;
 - the launch of the Borough of Sport Activity Finder web platform;
 - exemplar projects to catch attention; and
 - a 3 year Borough of Sport small grants fund.

The plan is to formally launch the Borough of Sport towards the end of summer.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Borough of Sport is a three-year action plan. To drive the ambition and call to action there are three underpinning actions: 1. dedicated roles: 2. an operational group; and 3. Logo/brand.
- 2.2. **Dedicated Roles to Drive Borough of Sport** – At the council the plan is to recruit two roles:

- The first will be primarily inward facing and their key tasks will include: working across the Council to combine effort and ensure Borough of Sport is a priority, ensuring alignment with other corporate Council agendas, supporting the operational group, Leader and Cabinet Member, overseeing the small grants fund and some key stakeholder relationships, agreeing the work plans of the Community Activators and maintaining the overall work plan and risk register.
- The second role will be primarily outward community facing and key tasks include: building and maintaining relationships with the stakeholders, supporting local groups to take advantage of funding and other opportunities, building the number of activities on the Get Active Portal and supporting the forum/ advisory group.

The plan is to commence recruitment once the plans have been approved by Cabinet in June 2023.

- 2.3. There will also be two paid community activators based within a community organisation host. These are not council roles. Rather roles within the community funded by Borough of Sport – in effect shared roles, with the hosts and council agreeing their work programmes. One will be focused on children and young people and the second on older people. They will help support community groups and assets, seek to garner support and also help local groups apply for funding and combine effort with others. **The plan is to recruit the activators during the first year of Borough of Sport.**
- 2.4. **Borough of Sport Operational Group** – Within the Council there is great enthusiasm for the Borough of Sport, but effort needs to be combined and focused. To co-ordinate action, a Borough of Sport Operational Group has been established. The group draws together senior managers and met for the first time in April 2023 and is now meeting monthly.
- 2.5. **Borough of Sport brand** – A simple and easily recognisable brand which can be used widely by the council and partners to badge and promote the Borough of Sport, something akin to the hugely successful ‘Inspired by 2012’ logo.
- 2.6. Action is then focused around four workstrands.
- Theme 1- Menu of Opportunities.**
- 2.7. There is a huge amount of sport and physical activity, free and paid for, on offer across Merton, but many don’t know about what they could do. There is a need to map opportunities and then publicise them via digital and accessible formats. A bespoke **Borough of Sport Get Active portal** is in development. This will promote what is on offer to the target audiences and drive take up. Community, commercial and voluntary providers will be encouraged and supported to upload their offers on the platform. The activity finder will be promoted by local health workforce (link workers), the Community Activators and amplified by local trusted groups and networks. **The platform is in development and will be ready to be launched during the summer.**

Theme 2 – Messaging, Forum and Advisory Group

- 2.8. This is about promoting what is on offer and supporting and utilising community assets. The Borough of Sport Get Active Platform is also an essential action within this workstrand. There are then three further key actions – 1. the creation of a public forum, 2. an advisory group to co-develop Borough of Sport and 3. a small grants fund.
- 2.9. A public **forum** will be created to bring together partners. Membership will be open, so anyone can attend. Non sporting will be encouraged to join. The forum's purpose is to explain the Borough of Sport concept, garner support, gather questions, concerns and gaps and then combine effort. The forum will be used to keep local groups informed of developments and opportunities. The forum will meet up to four times a year. **The forum will meet for the first time towards the end of the summer when Borough of Sport is formally launched.**
- 2.10. In order to further garner support an **advisory group** is being created to help guide actions. The group will have a regular membership, meet more frequently, most likely monthly and bring key partners including the council around the same table. **The advisory group will meet formally towards the end of the summer when Borough of Sport is formally launched.**
- 2.11. A **small grants fund** will be created and could be transformative to many community groups focused on supporting children and young people and older people. Additional information on how the fund could operate is set out at **exempt appendix 1. The small grants fund will start up during the first year of Borough of Sport and will help realise the ambition of access to free activities. Grants will be overseen by the advisory group.**

Theme 3 - Exemplars

- 2.12. Exemplars are higher profile interventions which capture attention and provide free opportunities. The highly successful Beat the Street which engaged more than 20,000 residents is a good example of what an exemplar will be. Across the three years the plan is to run around 6 or so exemplars. The advisory group will help select the exemplars to they meet local needs.

Theme 4 – Sporting Pride

- 2.13. This workstrand is about showcasing and driving residents' pride in Merton's sporting heritage and footprint while also driving activity levels. The Civic Pride funding awards have already contributed to this theme as is a stronger presence and position within the London Youth Games. Additional actions could include utilising the Canons House Historic Track, the creation of Community Sports Awards; and a partnership with Sporting Memories.

Outcomes and Measurement of Impact

- 2.14. In addition, to the ambition to increase participation in sport and physical activity the following **outcomes** will also measure impact:
- increased physical activity levels across under-represented groups;
 - improved wellbeing (physical and mental);
 - improved social cohesion and community spirit;

- improved civic pride;
- community sports and physical activity providers feel more connected and valued; and
- positive experiences of being physically active.

2.15. The plan is to have three levels of measurement. The **Ambition** will be measured through the Sport England Active Lives adults and children's surveys which report once a year. The **Borough of Sport Activity Finder** provides an analytics dashboard that includes data which measures the number of searches, what people are searching for and their demographics. All the **exemplar** initiatives will have an additional level of monitoring and measurement. We would expect activity and volunteering levels to increase, the number of activities on offer and inward investment to both go up and for the sport sector to feel better contacted to each other and the council.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. Merton's ambition to be London's Borough of Sport is unique. No other London Borough has sought to do this. Alternative options have not been considered and the plans represent best practice. As action will be delivered across a three-year period 2023-26, plans can evolve and be tweaked to respond to changing needs.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

4.1. In drawing up the plans over 100 local groups and individuals have been consulted. It's been important to take time to listen to residents and local groups and hear what they need. It means the plans are rooted in the realities of what people are facing. Where actions are parachuted into communities without their involvement or agreement, they are unlikely to work. The proposed public forum and the advisory group which will help steer Borough of Sport, provide for an on-going dialogue with residents and local groups. Whilst Borough of Sport will be led by the Council it will only be realised through partnership working and the combining of effort.

5 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Please see **Exempt Appendix 2** for the Financial, Resource and Property implications.

6 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

7.1. There are no material equalities implications resulting from the recommendation(s) of this report.

8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

8.1. There are no material crime and disorder implications resulting from the recommendation(s) of this report.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1. The Borough of Sport Operational Group which was established in April 2023 is drawing up a risk register.

10 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- Appendix 1 – Small Grants Fund
- Appendix 2 – Financial, resource and property implications

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