

Physical Activity Strategy

Scrutiny Board

5 March 2024

Presenter:

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Recommendations for action or decision

The Scrutiny Board is recommended to:

1. Note the recent investment into WV Active and impact upon population health physical activity targets and, linked impact upon Public Health outcomes.
2. Note the published Health and Wellbeing Together Physical Activity Strategy.

Key Questions for Scrutiny to consider:

1. What are the benefits of physical activity on health?
2. How active are our residents?
3. How does WV Active help us improve the health of our residents?
4. How does the wider physical activity strategy support our residents?
5. What has been delivered since the launch of the strategy?

Purpose

- To present an overview on the recent investment into WV Active fitness areas and impact upon population health physical activity targets and, linked impact upon Public Health outcomes.
- To present the published Health & Wellbeing Physical Activity Strategy for noting by Scrutiny Board.

Benefits of physical activity to health

- Physical inactivity is responsible for one in six UK deaths (equal to smoking) and is estimated to cost the UK £7.4 billion annually (including £0.9 billion to the NHS alone).¹
- Physical inactivity is the fourth leading cause of disease and disability in the UK and is responsible for up to 40% of long-term health conditions and 30% of later life functional limitations and falls.²
- Regular exercise is proven to help prevent and manage noncommunicable diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and several cancers. In children and adolescents, it improves physical fitness, cardiometabolic health, bone health, cognitive outcomes, mental health, and reduces storage of fat.³

¹ Physical activity: applying All Our Health (Office for Health Improvements and Disparities, 2022)

² Health Matters: Physical activity – prevention and management of long-term conditions (Department of Health and Social Care, 2020)

³ Physical Activity (World Health Organisation, 2020)

Benefits of physical activity to wider determinants of health⁴

- Having a physically active population has a positive impact on climate change and air pollution, as usage of motorised transport is reduced as people opt for active forms of transport such as walking and cycling, particularly for short journeys. This can assist with reducing the carbon footprint of the city.
- Active populations have more opportunities to interact, be part of their local community through interacting with others when exercising and this can enhance the connectivity and cohesion of communities.
- Participation in physical activity is associated with increased educational attainment and reduced crime rates.
- Physical activity can improve the number of years people are living in good health and independently thus reducing need for statutory services intervention and risk of accidents such as fire through reduced levels of frailty.

⁴ Get a Move on – British Medical Association (British Medical Association, 2019)

Background

- Unfortunately, nearly a third of Wolverhampton's adult population are classed as physically inactive (30.5%), significantly worse than the regional and national average.⁵
- According to 2021/22, 42.5% of children and young people are 'less active'. However, data released on 7 December 2023 showed a significant increase in active children and a significant reduction in 'less active' to 33.3%.⁶
- The *Health and Wellbeing Together Board* have made tackling physical inactivity a key priority in the *Wolverhampton Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy* and, together will create an environment where our residents can live longer, healthier and more active lives.
- The premise of the strategy is to **create equal and fair access** for all Wolverhampton residents to engage in physical activity and live happier and healthier lives.
- The strategy, published in December 2023 sets out the approach as a system, where the council plays a pivot role to be the facilitator of change and new ways of working both internally and externally.

⁵ Public Health Outcomes Framework (Office of Health and Disparities, 2023)

⁶ Active Lives Children and Young People Survey – academic year 2022-2023 (Sport England, 2023)

WV Active Gym Refurbishment

- The physical activity strategy outlines the following two recommendations:
 - Take an insight and evidence-based approach to developing the offer at council run leisure facilities that meet the diverse needs of Wulfrunians.
 - Create a network of safe, accessible, and welcoming indoor and outdoor spaces for people to be active.
- We have responded to these through delivering a £1M refurbishment of WV Active gym facilities at all 3 centres, Bert Williams, Central and Aldersley which includes the realignment and redecoration of all spaces, new equipment and new maintenance agreement. We are ensuring that the facilities can appropriately cater for all protected characteristics, an example of this is the current customer consultation exercise for adaptive gym equipment.

WVActive Gym Refurbishment

- The investment has been made in two phases utilising a framework for the purchase of the equipment. Approximate expenditure will be £625,000 for the initial purchase of urgent equipment to replace equipment that is currently obsolete or broken, and a second phase of expenditure for remaining required equipment, in particular equipment that is suitable for members with additional needs and any necessary refurbishment works, up to £375,000.
- The chosen provider includes a 2 year fully inclusive warranty and service period, and also has the option to extend this to a full 5-year period for all equipment supplied. To ensure equipment is maintained at a high standard, the Council has chosen to utilise the 5-year warranty and service period. However, this is inclusive in the initial purchase price and so no further payments will be made beyond the initial purchase price.

WV Active Gym Refurbishment

- Since widening the facility offer, WV Active have attracted an additional 1,400 members, with the low levels of physical activity in the city, this is an additional 1,400 people regularly taking part in activity every week.
- This is an additional £250,000 a year of income through membership fees and membership will continue to grow.
- This year has seen an unprecedented uplift in membership sign ups in the 'golden quarter' which is an industry wide period at the start of each new year where gym memberships increase due to new year goals.

WV Active Gym Refurbishment

- Industry standard is that gym equipment should be replaced every 5 years to avoid high repair bills, particularly where usage is high.
- The WV Active service was receiving multiple complaints regarding the condition of existing gym equipment within its leisure facilities and this investment will resolve several service delivery issues and support the delivery of Health and Wellbeing Together's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.
- As part of the newly launched gyms WV Active has increased its amount of accessible equipment within its gym areas. At Aldersley, the provision will increase further with the additional of 2 extra machines that can be used by wheelchair users with greater levels of decreased mobility. WV Active will also be providing a wheelchair treadmill at each site. These treadmills will be placed in our gyms and spin studios, with the latter allowing customers to take part in any of our timetabled spin classes.
- The purchase of new fitness equipment has also enabled WV Active to provide a bespoke young people's fitness area at Aldersley, utilising equipment that was no longer required in the main gyms. This also enables members with health conditions to train within a safer environment.

WV Active

WV Active Gym Refurbishment - timeline

- **22 February 2023** - Budget approved within 2023-2024 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 at Cabinet 22 February 2023.
- **22 February 2023** - Approval granted for procurement exercise within Procurement: Award of Contracts for Works, Goods and Services report at Cabinet (Resources) Panel. Delegated authority granted for the Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing in consultation with Director of Public Health to award contract.
- **1 March 2023** – Budget approved within 2023-2024 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 at full Council.
- **August 2023** - IEDN signed by Councillor Jaspal and John Denley following procurement exercise.
- **December 2023** – Refurbishment works commenced.
- **January 2024** – Launch of new look gyms at WV Active.

WV Active – challenges

- Managing the number of members against availability and capacity of facilities - the tipping point.
- Reflection on the price point against capacity.
- Maintaining standards for members and users with the volume of customers using the facilities.
- Accommodating wider use of facilities.
- Resources, both staffing and equipment available to manage demand.

WV Active Improvement Plan

To further support the recommendations outlined in the Physical Activity Strategy, WV Active have highlighted the following areas of improvement.

- Aquatics – to review the current swimming lesson offer for adults, children, and particularly those residents with protected characteristics.
- SEND – to continue to build on the work to increase SEND provision already established through the gym refurbishment and Yo! Active programme.
- Workforce plan – To build a resilient workforce that offers equitable employment opportunities and to identify gaps in knowledge and skills of all WV Active staff and build a training package that will assist them in helping build an Active City.
- Community engagement – Continue to work with community physical activity spaces for example Ashmore Park Community Hub Gym to promote hyperlocal opportunities and support the development of a network of community activators.

Overview of Physical Activity Strategy - Process

Stage one: Needs Assessment

Physical Activity Joint Strategic Need Assessment has been produced for physical activity; the assessment includes:

- Data, policy and literature reviews
- Stakeholder and resident consultation and coproduction
- Population lifestyle and behavioural surveys (adults and children)
- Identified areas of concern
- Priority recommendations

Stage two: Strategy

Physical Activity Strategy is based on the findings and recommendations of the needs assessment. It has been presented to and supported by:

- Physical Activity Steering Group
- All Local Authority Senior Leadership teams and other stakeholder groups
- Cabinet member for Adults and Wellbeing and Health & Wellbeing Together chair
- Leader of the Council
- Cabinet
- Health and Wellbeing Together Executive Board
- ICB Senior Leadership Team
- Approval from Health and Wellbeing Together
- Children and Families Together Board
- Strategy publication
- Action planning against recommendations



Wolverhampton's Physical Activity Strategy

Wolverhampton's Physical Activity Strategy

The Vision: Wulfrunians will live longer healthier lives

The Mission: To inspire and support Wulfrunians to move more every day

Principles :

Innovation

Using an **evidence-based approach**, and where there isn't any evidence, **try something new or different** Wolverhampton

Collaboration

We will work in **partnership** across organisations, **combining skills, knowledge and resources** to make a difference to Wulfrunians lives.

Inclusion

Our approach will reflect the **diverse** population and communities of our city, striving to create a city where all Wulfrunians where have **equal and fair access** to being physically active.

Ambition

We will be **ambitious** in our work and strive to **transform opportunities** for Wulfrunians to be active every day.

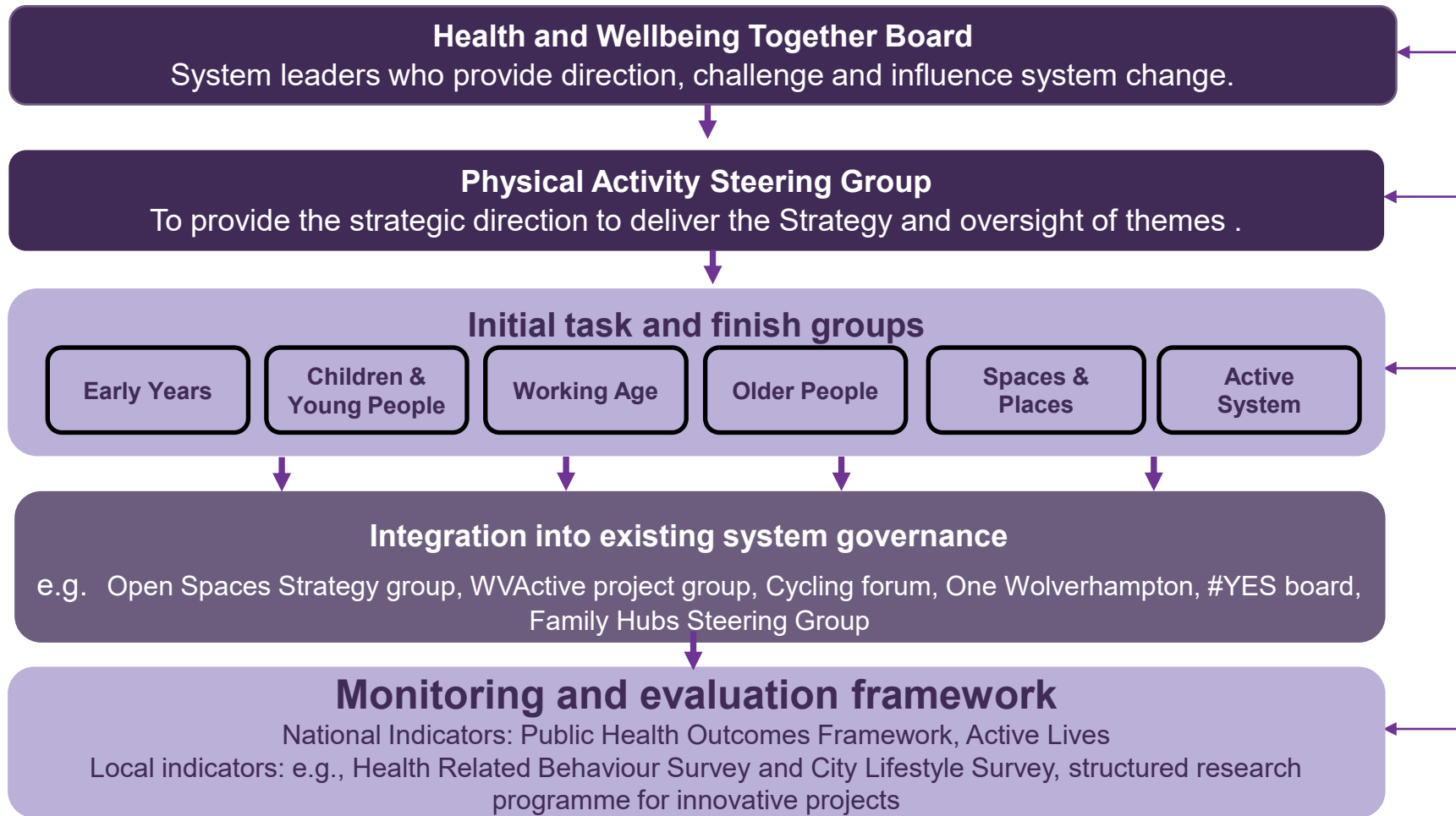
Active Wulfrunians

Active City

Active Spaces & Places

Active Systems

Governance



Other achievements to date

Work to support the recommendations in the physical activity strategy have already commenced, they include:

- **Yo! Active** - Successful appointment of Wolves Foundation to deliver a free physical activity programme for children and young people at WV Active, Bob Jones Community Hub and other community facilities across the city. The programme will offer up to 50 Hours of free activity a week, in addition to the current free-swimming offer and will compliment and enhance the existing HAF and #Yes activities already being delivered under the Yo! Wolves brand.
- **HY5! On the Move** - WV Active are working with HY5! Youth Forum, a service for young people with a special educational need or disability (SEND) on the HY5! On the move project. This project looks to assess the accessibility of venues across Wolverhampton from a young person's point of view and provide recommendations for action of how they can be improved for children and young people with a special educational need or disability.

Other achievements to date continued

- **Swimming Lessons** - the launch of ALPHA Step classes at WV Active Bilston Bert Williams these are designed to support children who have special educational needs or a disability to start their swimming journey. It builds key water skills and confidence. Alongside the launch of the children's lessons WV Active have launched adult lessons for people with special educational needs or a disability. The aim is to grow this offer and support more people to be confident and safe in water.
- **Active Ageing** - An ICB funded project to provide physical activity to residents in care homes. Using local fitness instructors, the project focuses on providing simple activity that residents and care staff can do every day to improve movement and flexibility.
- **Active Neighbourhoods** – An ICB funded project aiming to support residents to access sport and physical activity within their 'place'. The study will gather information about the local area, consulting on how residents would like to be active, the opportunities already available or could be established and how they can access them. Heath Town ward has been chosen for the pilot given its positioning as fourth most in need when wards were compared against health outcomes, physical activity participation and deprivation. The three most in need wards are taking part in the Commonwealth Active Communities project.

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