

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Health Select Commission – 02 October 2025

Report Title

Physical Activity for Health (Sport England)

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health

Report Author(s)

Gilly Brenner, Consultant in Public Health
gilly.brenner@rotherham.gov.uk

Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Moving Rotherham partnership is delivering a Sport England Place Expansion Programme development grant, awarded to Rotherham Council in April 2025. This has increased capacity to work together to embed physical activity as part of everyday life and tackle health inequalities across the borough. An update was requested on delivery of this grant. An action plan has been developed which tracks delivery of partner activity. The learning and evaluation of this will be collated to inform an application for further funding for a main award in Spring 2026.

Recommendations

That the Health Select Commission:

1. Note the Sport England Place Expansion Programme as a facilitator of wider activity work led and coordinated through the Moving Rotherham partnership to embed physical activity as part of everyday lives.
2. Members consider the opportunity to champion the Moving Rotherham ambition within their wards and communities, promoting and identifying opportunities for residents to engage in physical activity and supporting collaboration across sectors.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Moving Rotherham Action Plan 2025-26

Background Papers

[Cabinet item 131 Monday 17 March 2025, 10.00 a.m. - Rotherham Council](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Cabinet – 17 March 2025

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Physical Activity for Health (Sport England)

1. Background

- 1.1 There is strong evidence that regular physical activity can significantly reduce the risk and impact of long-term health conditions and support positive mental health for people of all ages. The Chief Medical Officer's Physical Activity Guidelines note that: *"If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the great many illnesses it can prevent and help treat."*
- 1.2 But physical activity is not just a health issue. It brings people together to enjoy shared activities and contributes to building strong communities whilst supporting the economy to grow. Using the UK Treasury methodology, researchers have estimated that Parkrun contributes £667 million annually to the UK economy, primarily through significant improvements in participants' physical and mental health and life satisfaction.
- 1.3 Rotherham was chosen by Sport England as a Place Expansion Programme area based on the high levels of physical inactivity in the borough and also on the strength of the existing Moving Rotherham partnership and our readiness to work together as a system to tackle this.
- 1.4 A Cabinet paper was presented in March 2025 setting out the proposals for spend of the £455K Sport England Place Expansion Programme development award for Rotherham. This paper provides some further detail on the delivery to date of that award, expected future delivery and timescales for further investment, all within the context of the wider Moving Rotherham partnership.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Appendix 1 contains the Moving Rotherham Partnership Action Plan 2025-26 which is aligned against five strategic aims designed to deliver a successful Sport England development award and application for further main award funding in March 2026.
- 2.2 **Aim A** focuses on strategy and coordination. The grant has been used to create two Council officer posts supporting programme management and data and evaluation. These new officers have worked to develop the action plan and pull together data and research to inform the planning and future evaluation of new delivery. A new governance structure has been implemented, with the Moving Rotherham Board providing overall assurance and a Moving Rotherham Systems Leaders Group overseeing operational delivery of the plan. A much broader Big Active Network is being developed for wide-ranging partners to remain connected and inspired to work towards the aims of the partnership. Communication and resource sharing with these three groups will be supported by a new extranet resource. Moving Rotherham partners are actively involved in learning from other areas and best practice to ensure our plans are informed by findings and research from elsewhere.

- 2.3 **Aim B** seeks to increase physical activity levels in the borough, supporting those who do some activity, to become more active. As part of this work, mapping is being coordinated to better understand the breadth of opportunities that exist in the borough to enable signposting and support, and to raise awareness and use of the existing Activity Finder webtool on the Rotherhive website. Further work will be needed to refresh a public-facing Moving Rotherham website and develop a public communications / marketing plan to raise the profile of the Moving Rotherham branding.
- 2.4 Further training is planned to ensure front-line workers, such as those in the NHS, feel confident and have the knowledge and skills to talk to people about the benefits and opportunities of doing more physical activity and to champion its importance. Further resources will be hosted on the extranet site.
- 2.5 **Aim C** focuses on decreasing inactivity by supporting people who are currently inactive to start moving more and identification of barriers. Flux Rotherham have been grant funded through the Sport England development award to deliver an Active Outdoors project in priority neighbourhoods to better understand the barriers to being active, with a particular focus on the outdoors. We have heard from residents that they enjoy spending time outdoors and see benefits to their wellbeing. We would like to enhance these opportunities and remove barriers to embedding active time outdoors into daily lives.
- 2.6 There are a range of actions being led by the Council's Culture, Sport and Tourism service relating to sport and leisure facility improvements in the borough and with insight from Playing Pitch Strategy findings and including regeneration works in parks, including the splash park at Clifton Park and new facilities at Rother Valley and Thrybergh Country Parks.
- 2.7 We have worked with South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority colleagues to influence and contribute to the newly launched South Yorkshire Walking, Wheeling and Cycling Strategy, so that reaching local shops, amenities, schools and work as part of our everyday lives can be active and safe for all
- 2.8 Yorkshire Sport Foundation and Flux Rotherham will be leading community consultation in identified priority neighbourhoods where Sport England identified lower levels of physical activity, initially in: Masbrough and Bradgate, Greasbrough and Wingfield, East Dene and Herringthorpe, and Rawmarsh. Consultation in these areas will ensure the lived experience of residents informs how we can support changes to local communities that facilitate them to be more active in their daily lives. This might include changes to the local environment, offering training to voluntary and community sector partners, or working with organisations in the area to increase opportunities to be active. For some changes we will be able to consider options for resource from the Sport England main award funding or other identified funding sources. Learning from these neighbourhoods will inform wider plans for the borough.

- 2.9 **Aim D** seeks to reduce inequalities and has included the development of an Inclusive Activity Network to champion opportunities to improve physical activity options for people with disabilities or long-term health conditions. A workshop has already been held with speakers and contributions from those with lived experience, supporting a solution-focused approach to removing barriers to physical activity opportunities. Further workshops are planned to continue this work with partners.
- 2.10 Data shows that people with disabilities or long-term health conditions are far more likely to be inactive and yet could see significant health gains from being active. 'Every Move Counts' is a pilot being delivered by health coaches based at Rotherham Connect Healthcare to provide support to develop personalised activity plans for people with long-term health conditions. This could range from support into specialist level 4 exercise classes tailored to their health condition, or more general community-based activity including walking or gardening, but focused on enjoyable activity that can be sustained long-term. Collaborative work is planned with GP practices to commit to Active Practice principles and support both staff and patients to be motivated and given opportunities to be more active.
- 2.11 **Aim E** is focused on providing positive experiences for children and young people. This work will build on the successes of the Children's Capital of Culture, including the school-baton relay and Uplift event. Further consultation work with children and young people will seek to better understand the best opportunities for increasing activity levels. This was to be led by a Council-hosted post but will now be supported by colleagues at Yorkshire Sport Foundation.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 This paper provides an update on the progress of the delivery of the Sport England Place Expansion Programme development award from March 2025. Health Select Commission are requested to note progress to date and the intention to apply for a main award in March 2026.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 As noted in the action plan and section 2 of this report, significant amounts of the Moving Rotherham plan include further consultation and engagement. This is the approach required by Sport England to ensure the main award is based on insight from communities.
- 4.2 Engagement activity will take a variety of forms including focus groups, interviews and surveys with residents to capture local voices and lived experience. Creative engagement activities in green spaces across Ferham, Bradgate, Greasbrough and Rawmarsh, is currently being delivered by Flux and further engagement activity linked into voluntary and community sector organisations is being led by Yorkshire Sport Foundation in priority neighbourhoods. Further engagement through the Moving Rotherham Zone was undertaken at the Rotherham Show. Additional engagement with

children, young people and families will be facilitated through schools, youth groups and voluntary sector organisations.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Delivery of the Sport England development award began in April 2025 on receipt of the funding following Cabinet approval in March. Key milestones are being tracked through the Moving Rotherham Action Plan 2025-26 and assurance monitored by quarterly Moving Rotherham Board meetings.
- 5.2 Key activity over the next 6 months includes:
- Ongoing delivery of the 'Every Move Counts' Active Hub for people with long-term conditions
 - Neighbourhood engagement activity delivered by Yorkshire Sport Foundation (by December 25)
 - Development of a branding toolkit and roll out of extranet resource for partners (Autumn 25)
 - Further development of the Inclusive Physical Activity Network including further workshops (January 2026)
 - Collation of community insight and thematic analysis and data evaluation to support main award bid writing (February 2026)
 - Submission of Sport England main award (April 2026)

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Expenditure with 3rd party organisations arising from the grant or other identified funding sources will be subject to the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and relevant applicable legislation (Procurement Act 2023, Provider Selection Regime (Healthcare Services), Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended)) subject to the route to market identified in partnership with the Procurement Team.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 No new legal implications. All arrangements detailed in previous March Cabinet paper.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 No new HR implications. All arrangements detailed in previous March Cabinet paper.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 No new children and young people or vulnerable adult implications. All arrangements detailed in previous March Cabinet paper.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 No new equalities or human rights implications. All arrangements detailed in previous March Cabinet paper.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 No new emissions or climate change implications. All arrangements detailed in previous March Cabinet paper.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 No new partner implications. All arrangements detailed in previous March Cabinet paper.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 The most significant risk is the tight timescale for delivery prior to submission of a bid for the further main award funding. This risk is being mitigated through careful project management by the new project manager and reporting of the action plan to the Moving Rotherham Board. Sport England have assured the Council that their timescales for submission of the main award are flexible, so the risk is only delay to implementation, not further funding.

Accountable Officer(s)

Emily Parry-Harries, Director of Public Health

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

| | Name | Date |
|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Chief Executive | | Click here to enter a date. |
| Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer) | Named officer | Click here to enter a date. |
| Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) | Named officer | Click here to enter a date. |
| Assistant Director of Human Resources (if appropriate) | | Click here to enter a date. |
| Head of Human Resources (if appropriate) | | Click here to enter a date. |
| The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report | Ian Spicer, Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health | 16/09/25 |
| Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member | Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health - Councillor Baker- Rogers | 15/09/25 |

Report Author: Gilly Brenner, Consultant in Public Health
gilly.brenner@rotherham.gov.uk
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