

From: Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Clair Bell, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services

Subject: External Grant Funding Acceptance by Kent County Council on behalf of Active Kent & Medway

Key Decision: 24/00104

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Electoral Division: All Divisions

Summary: Active Kent & Medway is the hosted service that provides strategic leadership, direction and support for the delivery of sport and physical activity across the county. Active Kent & Medway (formerly known as Kent Sport) has been hosted by Kent County Council continuously since March 2006 and promotes the physical, mental, and social benefits associated with being active.

Active Kent & Medway is externally funded and received a grant for the 2022 – 2027 period from Sport England of £3,452,950, paid in instalments to support the delivery of [Move Together - ActiveKent](#)– the countywide strategy for sport and physical activity. The strategy itself, with its vision to get “more people, more active, more often” and enjoying the benefits that sport and physical activity can bring, was shared with the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee for comment on 22nd November 2022. In November 2024, Active Kent & Medway was awarded an additional £219,600 of investment by Sport England linked to the original funding agreement. Consequently, it has come to light that the acceptance of the initial grant was not subject to the Key Decision process and retrospective agreement from the Cabinet Member (pertaining to the original grant and the new additional award) is now sought for Kent County Council to accept funding for the benefit of Kent’s residents on behalf of Active Kent & Medway.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services is asked to agree:

To ENDORSE Kent County Council acting as the accountable and host body for the Active Kent & Medway Partnership and permit the acceptance of funding to support the delivery of the Kent & Medway Strategic Framework for Sport and Physical Activity 2023-2027. ([Move Together - ActiveKent](#))

To ENDORSE the Kent County Council and Active Kent & Medway Memorandum of Understanding for Hosting 2023-2027.

To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Growth and Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services and the S151 Officer or Cabinet Member for Finance to accept and deploy grants and other external funding to support the delivery of the Kent & Medway Strategic Framework

for Sport and Physical Activity; including future years allocations, providing it is on the same terms and conditions as previous grant funding.

To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Growth and Communities to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision.

The proposed record of decision is attached as Appendix A.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Active Kent & Medway (AKM) is one of 43 Active Partnerships in England. The principal funders are Sport England and Kent County Council (KCC) via a Public Health Grant, whose strategies and priority outcomes set the direction of our work and activity.
- 1.2. AKM's vision is 'more people, more active, more often', with a mission to 'change and improve lives through sport and physical activity'.
- 1.3. In order to achieve this, AKM aims to increase participation in sport and physical activity with a focus on encouraging the least active of Kent's 1.9 million residents to become more active; through the promotion of the associated personal and public health benefits and targeting resources where need is greatest, especially at those from under-represented groups including women, older people, people living with a disability or long-term health condition, ethnically diverse communities and people from lower socio-economic groups.
- 1.4. AKM engages with partners and networks across the county including those in health, adult social care, community cohesion, housing, and transport as well as governing bodies of sport, clubs, school sports networks, charities, leisure providers and local authorities, to provide opportunities for everyone to get involved in sport and physical activity for enjoyment as well as wider health and social outcomes.
- 1.5. In 2022, AKM was awarded a grant of £3,452,950 by Sport England to support its work across Kent with a focus on working where need is greatest through the development and delivery of a localised iteration of Uniting the Movement, the national strategy for Sport and Physical Activity. This recognised that traditional sport alone will not encourage more people to enjoy the benefits of being physically active and that to address inactivity there is a need to engage with new partners and in different ways with more diverse audiences.
- 1.6. Move Together (Kent's Strategic Framework for Sport and Physical Activity) focuses on taking a place based approach to:

Connecting Communities – bringing people together and harnessing sport and physical activity's unique ability to make places better to live

Health and Wellbeing - working in partnership and enabling everyone to benefit physically and mentally from an active lifestyle

Providing Positive Experiences for Children and Young People – helping children and young people to enjoy being active and creating the right foundations for a long, active and healthy life

Supporting Sport - helping local organisations to better understand their community and to deliver activities appropriate to people's needs and motivations

Active Environments – Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

- 1.7. AKM has subsequently been offered, in principle, a further £219,600 of investment for work specifically focused on the delivery of the School Games and Active Lives Children and Young People Survey.
- 1.8. At the point of offer of this investment it has come to light that whilst Move Together – the countywide strategic framework for sport and physical activity - was shared with the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee for feedback, the paper and discussion did not specifically ask that KCC agrees to receive the associated investment on behalf of AKM.
- 1.9. Therefore, retrospective agreement is sought for KCC to receive this and future grants from Sport England associated with this work, on behalf of AKM.
- 1.10. As a hosted service, AKM is subject to KCC's financial and governance processes and procedures.
- 1.11. AKM has its own independent Board, on which there is representation from KCC. The Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction of AKM and accountable for risk management and mitigation.
- 1.12. For all of AKM's work, the accountability and liability for delivery and spend sits with the Active Partnership and not KCC as per our Hosting Memorandum of Understanding.
- 1.13. External funding enables AKM, through KCC, to employ 22 staff to deliver our overarching strategy and associated activity for the benefit of Kent's residents. It also allows AKM to engage with wider opportunities – for example, attracting investment into schools through the Department of Education.
- 1.14. It also should be noted that a key function of AKM is to create alignment and unite the sport and physical activity sector behind a shared vision, strategy and approach. Since the launch of Move Together in May 2023, 147 Organisations have directly engaged with the strategy and 80 have formally pledged time and/or resource to support its delivery. Further information pertaining to the work of AKM and it's impact is summarised in its annual reviews. The most recent of which can be found here. [Annual Review 2023-24 - ActiveKent](#)

2. Active Kent & Medway and Kent County Council

2.1 Move Together was written to align with KCC's Framing Kent's Future Strategy, with its focus on the social, economic and community issues the county is facing. Move Together sought to recognise where sport and physical activity has a role to play in the levelling up of Kent, further developing infrastructure for communities, creating an environmental step change and contributing to new models of care and support. As well as ensuring alignment with KCC's Strategic Objectives, AKM has sought to provide direct benefit to KCC, not just through the delivery of Move Together, but in a number of different ways including:

- The administration of the Capital Grants for Sport Programme on behalf of KCC. Over the last five years £507k has been awarded to 104 organisations and leveraged an additional £10 million of investment into capital projects to support community sport and physical activity club delivery.
- The provision of £225k funding towards Explore Kent through the Partnership's grant funding between 2022 and 2025 to support campaign delivery and costs.
- Planned financial investment into a shared healthy placemaking resource within the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate.
- Support for major sporting events e.g. the Open Golf.
- Collaborating on a diverse range of projects with colleagues across KCC to promote active travel and to provide guidance to developers, informing strategy consultations and distributing significant grant funding to organisations and individuals across the county.

2.2. A discontinuation of the current hosting Memorandum of Understanding between KCC and AKM would significantly reduce the opportunity for collaborative work between the two organisations. It would also have a direct bearing on AKM's ability to provide the same level of support to partner organisations and stakeholders that work to provide opportunities for Kent's residents to be active, as described at 4.2.

3. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

3.1 To not enter into the agreement to act as host accountable body for Active Kent and Medway. This would reduce the opportunity for collaborative work between AKM and KCC and have an impact on support provided to partner organisations and stakeholders that work to provide opportunities for Kent's residents to be active.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Current revenue budget is nil.

4.2 AKM is hosted by KCC and in addition to this support, currently receives £300k per annum in funding via a KCC Public Health Grant and £734.5k per annum (£3,452,950 over 5 years) of external funding from Sport England to support the delivery of Move Together.

4.3 There are no match funding requirements for these grants.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 AKM is an unincorporated body and not a legal entity in its own right – hence grants being accepted by KCC on behalf of the partnership.

6. Equalities implications

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been submitted. The evidence reviewed in undertaking the EQIA suggests that there is no potential for discrimination and all appropriate measures have been taken to advance equality and foster good relations between the protected groups.

7. Data Protection Impact Assessment

7.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Has been undertaken. Minimal risk has been identified and mitigations are in place.

8. Recommendation(s)

The Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services is asked to agree:

To ENDORSE Kent County Council acting as the accountable and host body for the Active Kent & Medway Partnership and permit the acceptance of funding to support the delivery of the Kent & Medway Strategic Framework for Sport and Physical Activity 2023-2027. (Move Together - ActiveKent)

To ENDORSE the Kent County Council and Active Kent & Medway Memorandum of Understanding for Hosting 2023-2027.

To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Growth and Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services and the S151 Officer or Cabinet Member for Finance to accept and deploy grants and other external funding to support the delivery of the Kent & Medway Strategic Framework for Sport and Physical Activity; including future years allocations, providing it is on the same terms and conditions as previous grant funding.

To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Growth and Communities to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision.

The proposed record of decision is attached as Appendix A.

9. Appendices and Background Documents

- Appendix A – Proposed record of decision
- Appendix B – Hosting Agreement
- Equality Impact Assessment
- Sport England - [Uniting the Movement | Sport England](#)

- Active Kent & Medway - Move Together - ActiveKent: [Move Together](#)

10. Contact details

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