

## **Culture Committee CC-20-02 (p1)**

**Date:** 4 December 2002

**Time:** 9.00 am - 12.15 pm

**Venue:** Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales

### **Agenda Item 2: Policy Review of Sport – Healthy and Active Lifestyles Action Plan**

#### **Purpose**

1. To enable the Committee to comment on the Healthy and Active Lifestyles Action Plan as part of the consultation process.

#### **Summary**

2. The Healthy and Active Lifestyles Action Plan (attached at Annexe 1) sets out a programme of action to encourage more active daily living among the most sedentary sectors of the population of Wales. It is designed to complement Welsh Assembly Government and Sports Council for Wales initiatives focusing on organised and competitive sport.

#### **Timing**

3. The Healthy and Active Lifestyles Action Plan was issued for public consultation in November 2002. The consultation period closes on 31 January 2003.

#### **Background**

4. Inactivity and sedentary lifestyles make a significant contribution to the burden of disease in Wales. There is strong evidence that a more active population would experience significantly lower rates of obesity, cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes, as well as reductions in the incidence of some cancers, greater mobility and fewer injuries associated with ageing in the elderly, and fewer mental health problems.

5. Most of the potential health benefits in adults can be achieved through a total of 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on at least five days per week. There is evidence to suggest that the 30 minutes total can be achieved in smaller blocks of activity of at least 10 minutes. Moderate intensity activities include brisk walking, swimming, cycling, dancing, using stairs, sweeping and comparable intensity gardening or housework tasks.

6. Only 28 per cent of adults in Wales undertake regular physical activity of the recommended type and frequency. Activity levels are higher among younger age groups, with 18 to 34 year-olds almost twice as active as 35 to 49 year-olds, and the 50 – 64 year age group being least active. Men's leisure-time activity levels are twice as high as women's.

## **Action Plan**

7. Welsh Assembly Government Ministers with responsibility for the areas of health and sport invited the Sports Council for Wales to convene a Task Force to advise on cross cutting issues that could lead to increases in physical activity levels in Wales.

8. Following a review of the evidence, Task Force members concluded that maximum health gain would be achieved by encouraging moderate-intensity activity among the most sedentary groups; these include people from socially disadvantaged communities, older people, women (including women from ethnic minority communities) and people with clinical conditions such as obesity, diabetes and coronary heart disease.

9. The Action Plan (attached at Annexe 1) is based on the recommendations of the Task Force. It is structured around five strategic objectives:

- Developing national and local partnerships and strategies to increase physical activity through active living;
- Enabling public health and primary care professionals to promote active living;
- Increasing public knowledge of the health benefits of physical activity;
- Reducing the barriers to active living;
- Strengthening monitoring, surveillance and research.

The main focus of the plan is on actions that will be led by the Welsh Assembly Government, along with recommended actions for other organisations, particularly Local Authorities and Local Health Boards through their Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategies.

## **Cross-cutting action**

10. The Action Plan reflects the Assembly themes of sustainable development, inclusivity and equality. It links to the recently published *Well Being in Wales*, which reinforces the Assembly

Government's development of an integrated approach to policies and programmes. As part of action to improve health and reduce inequalities, it provides an overarching framework for a number of Welsh Assembly Government strategic initiatives that highlight the health benefits of physical activity. These include Standard 1 of the *Wales Plan for Coronary Heart Disease* and the *National Service Framework for Diabetes*.

11. The document also links to Assembly initiatives targeting young people, including the Physical Education and School Sport Task Force "Action Plan for Wales", the Safe Routes to School initiative and the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes. In addition, it links to a number of Assembly transport policies which support healthy living, including the Transport Framework for Wales and the Walking and Cycling Strategy.

## **Compliance**

12. The proposed activities are covered by Section 2 of the Ministry of Health Act 1919 and Sections 2 and 23(1) of the National Health Service Act 1977. Powers for both have been transferred to the Assembly. There are no issues of regularity or propriety.

## **Action Required**

13. The Committee is invited to comment on the Action Plan as part of the consultation process.

## **Contact person**

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