

Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Sport & Physical Activity Review of the Year 2009/10
Tuesday 20th July, 9am – 10.15am at Telford College of Arts and Technology

Key notes

Agenda:

Welcome from the Chair of Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin - Steve Peters

Presentation of Shropshire Progress in 2009 - 10 by Neil Wilcox, Shropshire Council – please see attached

Presentation of Telford & Wrekin Progress in 2009 – 10 by Stuart Davidson, Telford & Wrekin Council – please see attached

The work of Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin in 2009 – 10 and financial report by Chris Child, Partnership Director – please see attached

Challenges for the year ahead from the Chair of Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
“Facing up to and understanding the spending cuts and restructures of both our key partner organisations and internally will be a priority of the Energize Board in the future. Diminishing resources mean that working in partnership is going to be essential more than ever.”

Chris Child presented on several themes of ‘What’s coming up...’

- Community Games – WM CPS’s are currently finalising the contract to promote and support the community games programme. More information will be available soon.
- Behind the scenes work going on to align NGB plans with local priorities which should provide increased focus and information for all when planning and prioritising future work.
- Energize have developed the ‘Who’s Who’ guide – a soon to be launched on-line interactive tool that lists key personnel that work across the sector and wider. The interactive tool will allow you to look up contact details for people you already know, to search for people or organisations that can help you by geographical area or types of work people do and also to promote your projects to a wider audience and seek support from others.
- Energize has also committed to leading on an external funding bid/s – coordinating an application to a Sport England themed round for our sub-region when the appropriate opportunity presents itself.

Questions from the floor to the Energize Board Members:

Q1: Loveday Hickey, Chairperson, Bishops Castle Tennis Club – in what way can Energize help the club to meet the targets set within the Community Investment Fund Tennis project for Bishops Castle Tennis Club?

Steve Peters response – there is an opportunity to use the Sport England Market segmentation research to more specifically market to your audience using a suitable media. Anne-Marie Jackson commented - target figures submitted are perhaps over ambitious and the final 2 years of the project it’s proving to be a struggle to reach the figures that were originally set.

Chris Childs response - suggests getting together to look at the figures and develop an appropriate approach to engaging in conversation with Sport England to review the project and its targets.

Neil Wilcox response – Shropshire Council Leisure services department can assist with supporting community clubs and highlighted Ann Johnson as a source to support the club and project.

Q2: Derek Owen – Wrekin Riders BMX Club. Well done to Energize for running a fantastic Awards evening in 2009. With the inevitable cutbacks that we see coming will the awards evening run again this year?

Chris Childs response – Yes, we are planning to deliver the Awards evening event again this year, in October. Energize are also currently in talks with media partners to see how this valuable event can be sustained moving into future years.

Q3: Clive Knight – Telford & Wrekin Council. Given the current financial constraints and taking into consideration the generally 'free of charge' approach to the delivery of many local projects (especially Sport Unlimited). Does this create a longer term problem when clubs actually need to charge to be sustainable?

Neil Wilcox's response – this is a very challenging question, and a dilemma. There is a definite clash between some charging policies and the desire to increase participation. LA's have a role in providing affordable, accessible provision for the public. There is a link between charging and attendance but we need to get the balance right between the two for the benefit of both.

Stuart Davidson's response – price can be perceived as a barrier but we need to carry out the work to understand that once people are engaged and taking part, who and how many drop out due to the price barrier.

Other Board members agreed that the balance between pricing and encouraging participation is key to understand and get right but difficult to ascertain.

Derek Owen (Wrekin Riders BMX Club) commented – In his experience he has seen long term club members dropping out of participating when a nominal charge was introduced, so charging does seem to affect participation at both introductory and longer term levels.

Clive Knight commented - Looking back 20 yrs there was much less choice in terms of leisure opportunities, parents now see free taster sessions and encourage their children on to the next taster session, rather than getting them to buy in to the longer term programmes.

Miranda Ashwell's response - A more competitive and smarter offer needs to be in place as sport is now competing with other things than just sport itself, e.g. TV and Xbox

Colin Walker (Director for Leisure Studies TCAT) added – evidence from students is that sports interest is on the increase. More students are wishing to follow sports and leisure courses. On a separate note - one of the interesting and disappointing things is that TCAT lost £1m of investment from Sport England and £500K from England Basketball due to not being able to find the shortfall in funding for the facility development project. We all need more joined up

thinking so not to lose these opportunities in the future. The shortfall may have been out there but we couldn't find it.

Q4: Lee Moore, Lilleshall National Sports Centre Manager – the Lions share of the funding (63%) is from Sport England so where is the Boards (Energize) focus in terms of work on sport versus physical activity, especially considering the recent cut in funding from the Department of health?

Steve Peters response – Sport and physical activity is on the same continuum so its difficult to separate the two as we view them as joined and see the Board and Energize as having an essential role in PA and the Health agenda as its so intrinsically linked to sport.

Chris Child's response – the next Energize Board meeting will look to discuss this issue and implications in funding cuts on the work of Energize. We see ourselves as still being a Sport and PA partnership, even without the DOH funding. Core to our Energize role is supporting NGBs to deliver their Whole Sport Plans locally but we will still work across the broader spectrum of sport and physical activity.

Stuart Davidson's response – from a local authority partner perspective, whilst we recognise sport for sport sake one of the key drivers has to be the health of our local population. Health is one of the key outcomes that sport can achieve.

The meeting was closed shortly after 10.15am by Chris Child, Partnership Director for Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.