

CULTURE COMMITTEE CC 02-03 (p1) Annex 1

Date: 22nd January 2003

Time: 9.00am-12.30pm

Venue: National Assembly for Wales

Game Plan: a strategy for delivering Government's sport and physical activity objectives, published by the Strategy Unit.

Chapter 4. DEVELOPING OUR SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CULTURE

Summary

To develop our sport and physical activity culture will require significant behavioural change, probably only achievable over a 20 year period.

Participation levels need to be raised for the whole population; but interventions should focus on the most economically disadvantaged groups, and within those especially on young people, women and older people. There is much work currently ongoing in the area of school sports, but greater attention needs to be paid to promoting sustained adult participation. The most sedentary groups will gain the most from a small rise in activity.

A range of actions are needed to achieve change. Targeting only one area (eg. facilities) will not be enough. A holistic approach should address:

- the barriers which prevent people from participating (problems of time, cost or lack of information or motivation); as well as
- failures in provision (poor supply of sporting opportunities, facilities or coaching staff).

Different policies are needed for different target groups. For young people the aim should be to develop "sports literacy" (this is an ability across a range of skills, with an emphasis on quality and choice), building on current government work in schools. But work with young people in schools will not, in itself, be enough. Adults should also be targeted, with the aim of enabling as many people as possible to become lifelong regular participants.

Examples of interventions that might be considered are: better use of existing facilities (building on current efforts to open up school facilities out of hours); initiatives to encourage employees to take part in physical activity through the workplace; direct subsidy for targeted individuals; or greater opportunities for healthy travel such as walking and cycling.

To develop mass participation policies and determine what works, we recommend:

- establishing a cross departmental Sport and Physical Activity Board (SPAB) working with a wide range of partners, particularly in the health sector in order to develop proposals for the 2004 Spending Review;
- implementing a package of initiatives aimed at adults, including extending availability of school facilities, subsidising individuals and providing consistent information;
- commissioning a series of robustly evaluated pilot programmes to build an evidence-base with pilots being directly commissioned and an innovation fund being established to support local ideas; and
- collecting robust information to enable monitoring and evaluation. This should include a national facilities database; and an annual national survey of participation and fitness. It should be supported by nationally commissioned long-term research, to consider further issues such as the relationship between sport and physical activity and crime reduction.