

Committee(s): Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub Committee (For Decision) Community and Children's Services Committee (For Information) Streets and Walkways Sub Committee (For Information) Policy and Resources Committee (For Decision)	Dated: 19 th April 2023 9 th May 2023 23 rd May 2023 8 th June 2023
Subject: Global City of Sport – A New Sport Strategy for the Square Mile (2023-2030)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Y
If so, how much?	£175,000
What is the source of Funding?	PIF
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Y
Report of: Philip Saunders, Interim Director of Communications and External Affairs	For Decision
Report author: Sam Hutchings, Sport Engagement Manager, Town Clerk's Department	

Summary

This report sets out the work that has taken place to respond to Member requests to prioritise sport engagement and develop a strategy to guide this work over the medium term.

Following independent stakeholder analysis of sport needs, five priorities – linked to initial deliverables - have been identified for the City Corporation to take forward as part of the new strategy.

To deliver a meaningful strategy, this area of work needs to be adequately resourced and managed. It is therefore recommended that a phased approach be used to address priority issues efficiently. This approach requires additional funding which should initially be met from the Policy Initiatives Fund (PIF) over a 3-year period.

As well as Member involvement via the Sounding Board, the strategy has been formulated through extensive consultation with officers from the Departments of Environment, Community & Children's Services, Chamberlain's and Innovation & Growth.

Recommendation(s)

Members of Communication and Corporate Affairs Sub-Committee are asked to:

- Note and approve the five sport priorities for the City Corporation set out in Appendix 1 of this report: 'Global City of Sport – A New Sport Strategy for the Square Mile (2023-2030)';
- Agree the proposed objectives for Phase 1 of the strategy delivery, as outlined in paragraph 6 of this report;
- Endorse proposals for the Member Sport Sounding Board – chaired by the Member Lead for Sport – to informally oversee progress of the strategy delivery, as outlined in paragraph 8 of this report; and

Members of the Policy and Resources Committee are asked to:

- Agree an allocation from the Policy Initiatives Fund of £175,000 each year for 3 years from 2023/24 to 2025/26 to cover costs of delivering Phase 1 of the sport strategy, to be categorised as 'Sport Strategy' and charged to City's Cash.

Members of Community and Children's Services Committee and **Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee** are invited to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. In June 2022, the Communications and Corporate Affairs Sub Committee (which has responsibility for sport engagement at the City Corporation (with power to act), as per its Terms of Reference) met to consider an independent review of the City Corporation's approach to sport, and agreed that:
 - i. delivering an improved sport offer should be a priority for the City Corporation going forward
 - ii. the Sport Engagement Manager – should lead on the response to the review and prepare a new sport strategy aimed initially at the Square Mile
 - iii. the sport strategy work should continue to be part of this Sub Committee's remit and that no additional governance arrangements are set up for the time being
 - iv. as part of the development of the strategy, the Sport Engagement Manager should work with the Chamberlain to consider essential funding requirements for a greater sport offer and what the source of this funding might be.
2. Since that meeting, the Sport Engagement Manager has worked with sector leading sport and leisure consultants – Max Associates – to engage with stakeholders on sport needs and develop a sport strategy for the Square Mile

which will guide the City Corporation's approach to sport until 2030. In addition, a Member Lead for sport has been appointed by the Policy and Resources Committee and an informal Member sounding board on sport has met several times to guide the development of the strategy.

A New Sport Strategy

3. Working with the Sport Engagement Manager, Max Associates undertook extensive stakeholder analysis, consulting our residents, workers and potential visitors on their sport interests and needs. This is in addition to recent surveys undertaken for the City Corporation by London Sport and ukactive. Details of the stakeholder analysis are set out in the Consultant's Report at Appendix 2. The responses from stakeholders through this engagement have helped to formulate the sport priorities for the Square Mile going forward.
4. A Sport Sounding Board has also been set up by the Member Lead for Sport to support the formulation of a new strategy. The Sounding Board consists of those Members of the Court of Common Council with an interest in sport (currently 23 Members). It has met five times since October last year to discuss the feedback from the stakeholder analysis and agree the priorities for sport going forward.
5. The new sport strategy – Global City of Sport – is attached as Appendix 1 to the report. It sets out a vision and five sport themes / priorities for the City Corporation over the next seven years. These include:
 - INVEST in sport facilities - to ensure they are fit-for-purpose, commercially viable and meet stakeholder needs
 - ACTIVATE our streets / spaces – to encourage accessible sport and physical activity that is free to use and open to all
 - CELEBRATE the impact of sport – to continue delivering a focused sport engagement programme that brings long term benefits to our stakeholders
 - ATTRACT more high quality sport events – to entice more mass participation and high-profile spectator sport events onto City streets and public spaces
 - SUPPORT community sport – help to establish more sport clubs, classes and activities in the Square Mile, with a particular focus on activities for young people and those from disadvantaged backgrounds

Phase 1: Strategy Delivery (2023-26)

6. Owing to the current financial context it is acknowledged that the roll out of the new sport strategy will need to be phased to address the most pressing issues first. On this basis, the sport strategy should be considered as a direction of travel instead of an end point. Within this context, it is suggested that the following sport objectives be taken forward initially by the Sport Engagement Manager with the aspiration that they will be on track to be delivered in the first three years of the new strategy (i.e. by 2026):

- **INVEST in facilities** – City Sport Business Case: Within the context of the need to urgently address ongoing challenges at Golden Lane Leisure Centre (GLLC), a clear fully costed business case should be formulated, with help from external consultants, to direct the City Corporation's long term future leisure offer in the Square Mile. This should reflect on:
 - existing provision, including the role and future of GLLC
 - alternative location options – including new and existing builds
 - potential to align with the City Plan and other corporate priorities, such as the Climate Action Strategy
 - hub v satellite facilities appraisal
 - 'Destination City' viability – providing 'unique and attractive' facilities
 - external funding opportunities – to support capital and revenue spends
 - staff incentivisation – to encourage people into the office
 - provision of sport development function and other public health services
 - flexible office space for domestic and international sports organisations
 - alignment with needs of residents and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage

The aim will be to complete this business case, with a clear rationale for future investment of sport and leisure facilities in the Square Mile in line with the new sport strategy, with sufficient time to guide Members decisions on the leisure service contract at GLLC, which currently can be extended until March 2025.

- **ACTIVATE spaces** – Urban Fitness Trail: aligned with Destination City aspirations to make the Square Mile environment more attractive, it is proposed that a review of available locations and suitable equipment options be undertaken with the intention to pursue a network of accessible free-to-use outdoor fitness equipment and spaces across the Square Mile. This network could then be mapped, sign-posted and promoted to encourage users to follow a 'fitness trail' through the City of London. Funding for the installation of new facilities at 6 -12 locations across the City could be sought from relevant internal and external allocations. A proposal for the new trail, including funding options, will then be considered by relevant Committees once the review has been completed hopefully early next year.
- **CELEBRATE impact** - Sport Engagement Programme: with the Olympics and Paralympics taking place in Paris next year, and numerous other opportunities to engage with business and international policy makers through sport, an ongoing priority should be to continue delivering an effective sport engagement programme that helps to demonstrate the value of the City Corporation and promote soft power efforts. Already the City Corporation has been approached to sponsor UK House in Paris during the Games, which will provide a unique opportunity to support this strategically important venue and engage with an international audience on national objectives. Other initiatives, such as the Global Sport Agora, provide an important forum for senior leaders from business and sport to discuss shared issues. As has been the case previously, sport engagement events will continue to be overseen by the Communications

& Corporate Affairs Sub Committee with funding provided from any PIF allocation.

- **ATTRACT events** - Sport Mega Events: also aligned with Destination City outcomes, efforts would be made to entice at least two high profile spectator sport events to the Square Mile by the end of 2026. It is likely that one of these events would be an urban sport concept, such as 3X3 basketball, padel tennis or urban cricket. The other event could be linked to active travel and involve cycling or skateboarding. Any proposed event will need to meet obligations around health and safety as well as local community outreach. Such events would be largely dependent on commercial sponsorship and an interested event organiser, although some seed funding could be used from the agreed PIF allocation. Approval for the events will be in line with all road events in the City and subject to endorsement from the Streets and Walkways Sub Committee.
- **SUPPORT community** - Inclusive Sport Activations: to look at options for bringing regular inclusive and accessible pop-up sport activities and classes to the Square Mile, particularly focusing on young people, over 60s, those with a disability, empowering women and girls in sport and encouraging physical activity amongst our diverse communities. An option to look at meanwhile use of buildings for pop-up activities will also be considered. Costs incurred from these activations will need to be met from the PIF allocation, although it is hoped that they will be largely self-funding through commercial sponsorship or a user fee where applicable.

Delivering the Sport Strategy

7. Although formal oversight will continue to be through appropriate committees, it is suggested that – in line with Sport England governance guidance – a structure be put in place to check on the progress of delivering the strategy. Members may feel that the recently established Sport Sounding Board should meet on a quarterly basis to provide this strategic oversight of the sport approach and ensure the new priorities are delivered on track. Success of the new sport strategy will be measured against the delivery of the five objectives for Phase 1 at the end of the first three years i.e. by 2026. Targets will be set around each of the priorities that contribute to the Destination City agenda and will be focused on, but not limited to, driving footfall that encourages spend, driving increased dwell time, enhancing customer perceptions and experience and increasing stakeholder satisfaction. Agreement for funding and objectives for Phase 2 will need to then be reviewed towards the end of Phase 1 by Members.
8. Assuming the Member Lead for Sport continues to be appointed by the Policy and Resources Committee and have responsibility for overseeing the delivery of the new strategy, that person could continue to chair the Sport Sounding Board. Its membership could continue to include all Members of the Court of Common Council with an interest in sport although the size might be capped at 20 to facilitate productive discussion. It also could be deemed appropriate that steps are taken to ensure those committees with an interest in sport are represented on the sounding board.

9. Delivery of the sport strategy as well as our sport engagement function currently rests solely with the Sport Engagement Manager. It is suggested that, to recognise the increased prioritisation of sport going forward, this post should continue to have responsibility for overseeing the strategic direction of sport at the City Corporation and taking forward objectives set out in the new strategy. Given the additional workload that will arise from this new strategy, it is also suggested that a new post be created to support the Sport Engagement Manager on delivering the sport priorities. A primary responsibility of this new post will be to develop an action plan and seek and apply for external funding opportunities that will help deliver and expand on the five sport priorities.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. Strategic implications – the new sport strategy aligns with and will support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, mainly by improving the wellbeing of our community but also in support of plans to make the City of London a vibrant and attractive destination. Reviews of the City Plan and the Transport Strategy are at an advanced stage and will be likely to be finalised before the City Sport Business Case and the Urban Fitness Trail. However, there is scope to explore further how the overarching aspirations of the Sport Strategy can be supported in the City Plan and Transport Strategy, and how they can contribute towards delivery alongside other land use and transport and priorities.
11. Resource implications - to address the additional workload created by the strategy, it is proposed that a new fixed term full-time post should be created - Sport Strategy Officer (Grade E) - to support the Sport Engagement Manager on delivering phase 1 of the sport delivery. In addition, there is a case for reviewing the job title and grade of the Sport Engagement Manager to reflect the change in responsibilities and increased prioritisation of sport within the organisation. This will be carried out in accordance with relevant HR procedures.
12. Financial implications - The City Corporation currently allocates £80,000 per year to sport engagement, which predominantly covers the salary of the Sport Engagement Manager. Additional funding to cover costs of delivering the new sport priorities is essential to achieve successful outcomes. Owing to current financial constraints it has so far not been possible to source a permanent uplift to the sport budget at present. It is therefore suggested that Phase 1 of the sport strategy be funded from Policy Initiatives Fund, categorised as 'Sport Strategy' and charged to City's Cash, to ensure the work can get underway as quickly as possible. A request is made for £175,000 per year for 3 years from 2023/24 to 2025/26 covering the following allocations:

£75,000	Additional Staff Costs
£70,000	Sport Engagement, Events & Activations
£30,000	Sport Facility Appraisal
£175,000	TOTAL

The current uncommitted balance available within the 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 Policy Initiative Fund is £517,000, £800,000 and £1,150,000, prior to any allowances being made for any other proposals on today's agenda.

Subject to the financial context and successful progress on Phase 1 of the new sport strategy implementation, a permanent funding solution for sport, addressing potential external sources of funding and ongoing maintenance costs, should be considered by Members before the end of 2025.

13. Legal implications - None

14. Risk implications - None

15. Equalities implications – In line with our Public Sector Equality Duty 2010, proposals set out within the strategy are intended to have a positive impact on people protected by existing equality legislation – age, disability, gender, race etc. Sport naturally breaks down barriers and encourages social cohesion. Efforts will be made to support events and initiatives that have a positive impact on diversity and equality.

16. Climate implications – Owing to the nature of sport and physical activity, objectives are likely to reinforce climate goals and the need to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint. Particularly by encouraging active travel options and by using outdoor facilities which do not require energy supplies. Furthermore, the aim of developing new facilities could also set out to attain renewable energy options and maximise energy efficiency. We will seek to reduce the environmental impacts of delivery, for example by reusing materials and choosing materials with the lowest whole life carbon footprint. Opportunities to use recycled materials to reduce the use of new material and incorporate climate resilience measures will be explored. In addition, new events should be encouraged to align with relevant sustainability guidelines.

17. Security implications – Any planned new high profile sport events and activations would need to be assessed appropriately for potential security risks.

Conclusion

18. This report sets out a proposal for a new sport strategy – A Global City of Sport. The recommendations in this report provide the framework for initiating the first step in the delivery of a new sport strategy. Extensive internal and external stakeholder engagement and oversight by the Sport Sounding Board has guided the design of the strategy and creation of a vision and five key priorities. These priorities will guide the City Corporation's approach to sport over the next seven years and help ensure appropriate allocation of time and resources to the sport needs that matter to our stakeholders. Members of the Policy and Resources Committee and Communication & Corporate Affairs Sub Committee are asked to approve this new sport strategy and agree the resource and funding implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – A Global City of Sport: A Sport Strategy for the Square Mile (2023-30)
- Appendix 2 – Sport Strategy Consultant's Review - Summary Evidence Paper

Background Papers (these can be requested separately by Members from the Sport Engagement Member):

- i) Ukactive Worker Consultation Report – March 2021
- ii) London Sport Resident Consultation Report – May 2021
- iii) [Communications & Corporate Affairs Sub Committee 'Sport Review' Report – June 2022.](#)
- iv) Leisure-net Visitor Consultation Report – January 2023
- v) Leisure-net Resident and Worker Consultation Report – February 2023

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A New Sport Strategy for the Square Mile

Introduction

The City of London Corporation is the governing body for the Square Mile. It has a unique and significant role in supporting and promoting London, the UK and globally. As well as providing local authority services in the Square Mile, it promotes trade and business opportunities to an international audience, in addition to supporting the cultural sector and managing open spaces across London.

Since the London 2012 Games, and more recently hosting the Women's Euro Football Championships in England, sport is increasingly seen as a vehicle for social and economic advancement, in addition to promoting health and wellbeing. Further details on how we deliver sport across the organisation can be found on our [website](#).

Through this strategy, which outlines the direction of travel for sport in the Square Mile over the next seven years and beyond, the City Corporation stands ready to use its resources and convening power to help maximise the impact of sport to all our stakeholders.

For the purposes of this strategy, the term 'sport' covers all forms of team sport, physical activity, fitness exercise, play and wellness. Active travel is covered separately by our Local Plan and Transport Strategy, delivering measures such as widening pavements or creating pedestrian priority streets, will also help enable people to exercise, including walking and cycling for leisure, in the public realm.

Who are our stakeholders?

The Square Mile is used by a number of stakeholder groups, including:

- Residents – the City of London currently has around 8000 residents
- Workers – there are over half million workers based in the City of London
- Visitors – the City of London gets approximately 20 million tourist visits a year

The priorities set out in this strategy reflect the findings of recent stakeholder analysis undertaken by various external consultancies since 2019. This engagement has been through a mix of focus groups and surveys.

How can we deliver sport outcomes?

The City Corporation has a long history of supporting sport, through the facilities and spaces we manage, as well as events and engagement with partners and stakeholders. For the purposes of this strategy, which is focused on the Square Mile specifically, our role in supporting and promoting sport includes:

1. Facilities – we oversee delivery of sport services and facilities at Golden Lane Leisure Centre, including a gym, swimming pool, tennis courts and indoor sports hall

2. Public Spaces – as the highway and planning authority for the Square Mile, we design, manage and maintain the City’s streets and public spaces and guide the development of the built environment
3. Engagement – using our venues and convening power, we aim to celebrate the impact of sport with our stakeholders and the wider community
4. Events – sites in the City of London provide an inspiring backdrop for mass participation and high-profile spectator sport events and we oversee road closures and safety checks on large events
5. Activities – we support efforts by sport clubs and groups to improve the wellbeing of our residents and workers

Why are we prioritising sport and physical activity?

Similar to our cultural offer, sport provides the opportunity to demonstrate the value of the City Corporation to a wide and diverse audience. From elite to grassroots sport, it touches most people’s lives in some way and can provide inspiration and hope to people from different backgrounds irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, ability and affluency.

Owing to recent events and the changing nature of work arrangements, the Square Mile is evolving to ensure it continues to be a place where people want to live, work and visit. Through this overarching ‘Destination City’ approach, the City Corporation is determined to offer attractive and relevant amenities so that it continues to be an internationally recognised destination for business and tourism. Sport facilities, events and engagement provide the City Corporation with an unparalleled opportunity to reach out to a wide and diverse audience and demonstrate our relevance in a global landscape. Sport can also have a positive contribution to range of benefits including:

- Health and wellbeing – being active provides a variety of physical and mental health benefits
- Social cohesion – sport and physical activity brings people together and breaks down social and cultural barriers
- Economic – productivity, economic regeneration and local investment often stem from sport participation and events
- Soft power and trade – success in sport and event hosting can enhance international diplomacy efforts and boost trade opportunities
- Diversity and Equality – sport promotes the importance of diversity and equality of opportunity

Following extensive stakeholder analysis and feedback from our residents, workers and visitors there is now a clear justification for prioritising sport and physical activity within the Square Mile and in the various strategies that we prepare, including the Local Plan and Transport Strategy. In addition, agreeing clear and ambitious targets for sport and physical activity could help us deliver other strategic outcomes in relation to issues such as tackling climate change, reducing anti-social behaviour and social isolation, as well as improving outcomes for young people.

Who are our partners to deliver on the strategy?

To deliver on our sport priorities, it is imperative that we work hand in hand with our partners to achieve an ambitious set of goals. These partners include the UK Government, the Mayor of London, London Boroughs, UK Sport, Sport England, London Sport, National and International Sport

Federations, and various sport consultancies and not-for-profit organisations. There will also be many occasions when we will need to work with the private sector, City businesses, developers and Business Improvement Districts (BIDS) on specific sport related initiatives.

How will we make sure we deliver on the sport strategy?

Key to ensuring the new sport strategy is delivered successfully will be appropriate oversight and management arrangements that keep the objectives on track. In addition to allocation of staff resources, a Member Lead and Sounding Board will help guide the new strategy and provide feedback on outcomes. Regular reports on progress will also be provided to the Communications & Corporate Affairs Sub Committee to maintain a necessary level of accountability for delivering on the strategy. It is anticipated that an action plan will be developed stemming from the identified sport priorities over the next seven years and beyond. Benchmarking against other urban areas within the UK and internationally can help ensure that our actions place the City at the forefront of urban sports, as well as highlighting alternatives sports, activity and play options that could be pursued.

Key departments involved in delivering on this strategy

- Town Clerk's – responsibility for overall management of the sport strategy
- Community & Children's Services – responsible for our leisure contract and public health aspects
- Environment – responsible for planning, public realm, active travel, highway management and open spaces in the Square Mile
- Innovation Growth – responsible for business engagement and trade promotion

Owing to funding constraints, the strategy will need to be split into two phases. The first phase – Phase 1 (2023-26) - will identify five major objectives, each linked to the priorities, that should be delivered in the first three years of the strategy's implementation. Success of the strategy will be measured against the delivery of these five objectives at the end of the first three years i.e. by 2026. Agreement for funding and objectives for Phase 2 will be reviewed at the end of Phase 1 by Members and agreed prior to the commencement of the second half of the sport strategy delivery.

How will we pay for this?

Of course, in order to deliver a meaningful strategy it is essential that appropriate resources are allocated to the identified priority areas. However, given the current financial challenges facing the City Corporation, a degree of flexibility and creativity will need to be followed to achieve these outcomes. There is also an expectation that efforts will be made to source external funding opportunities as well as realising the revenue enhancing potential that sport and physical activity can offer in the future.



A Global City of Sport **2023-2030**

Vision – to be a leading global city of sport, through valued and exceptional sport facilities, events and engagement

Our sport priorities are:

1. INVEST in our sport and leisure facilities

- a) By assessing options for long term future sport and leisure investment in the Square Mile
- b) By optimising existing facilities and recreational areas to maximise use and benefits to our stakeholders
- c) By collaborating with local partners and the private sector to offer a wide range of unique and appealing sport facilities and attractions

2. ACTIVATE our streets and public spaces to encourage sport and physical activity

- a) By expanding free-to-use outdoor sport and fitness facilities on our streets and public spaces
- b) By encouraging sport and fitness as an integral part of appropriate new developments
- c) By delivering our Transport Strategy to give people walking, running and cycling more space and priority on our streets

3. CELEBRATE the impact of sport

- a) By utilising our venues and convening power to promote the benefits of sport to a wide and diverse audience
- b) By maximising our domestic and international reach to promote sport opportunities in London and the UK
- c) By supporting events and initiatives that encourage collaboration between sport and business

4. ATTRACT more high quality sport events

- a) By enhancing the relationship with sport event organisers and actively promoting the City as a destination for sport
- b) By reviewing the delivery process to maximise positive outcomes from mass participation and spectator events
- c) By encouraging domestic and international sport organisations to visit and operate within the Square Mile

5. SUPPORT local community sport

- a) By opening up our venues and spaces for sport and physical activity classes and group sessions
- b) By ensuring our sport facilities and play areas are fully accessible and open to all
- c) By championing youth focussed sport clubs and initiatives targeting people over 60, with a disability or from disadvantaged backgrounds

SPORT PRIORITY 1:


INVEST in our sport and leisure facilities

What do our stakeholders say?


- *The current leisure centre is not accessible for everyone and has limited scope for expansion*
- *We want unique state-of-the-art facilities, which take advantage of the urban landscape*
- *Swimming, sport and wellbeing facilities are important to us*

How will we deliver on this priority?


- a) By assessing options and delivering for long term future sport and leisure investment in the Square Mile

 We will undertake an in-depth feasibility study, with costed business plan, on the long term investment options for sport and leisure facilities in the Square Mile. Similar to other local authorities, we will look at partner opportunities to help with costs involved in building and managing the new site. Any proposal will need to be commercially viable in the long term and ensure revenue streams are maximised.

- b) By optimising existing facilities and recreational areas to maximise use and benefits to our stakeholders

 We will consider the role and future of our existing leisure centre at Golden Lane, as well as opportunities to partner with neighbouring boroughs to ensure access to leisure services can be maintained. We will also explore options to enhance existing sport and play areas across the Square Mile to ensure they meet adequate standards and local needs. Where this is not the case, we will look to work with partners on improving these facilities.

- c) By collaborating with local partners and the private sector to offer a wide range of unique and appealing sport facilities and attractions

 We will continue to welcome private gym, spa and leisure providers into the Square Mile and work with them to ensure our stakeholder needs are met. Where applicable we will also look to partner with these organisations to help deliver on our own sport objectives.

SPORT PRIORITY 2:


ACTIVATE our streets and public spaces to encourage sport and physical activity

What do our stakeholders say?


- *We want to use our green and grey spaces for exercise and sport*
- *Space for team games and informal sport is important*
- *Active travel must be prioritised and enhanced*

How will we deliver on this priority?


- a) By expanding free-to-use outdoor sport and fitness facilities on our streets and public spaces

 We will look to find suitable locations in the Square Mile that can accommodate bespoke free-to-use outdoor fitness equipment and, where space is limited, consider alternative multi-use facilities that encourage physical activity. In the long term, a network of outdoor facilities will be progressed across the Square Mile to provide no cost access to fitness equipment all year round.

- b) By encouraging sport and fitness as an integral part of appropriate new developments

 As the planning authority for the Square Mile, we will work with developers to ensure new planning applications reflect on the need for sport and leisure access in local public and publicly accessible spaces, including spaces within buildings, where appropriate. We will consider how this priority can be identified in the new City Plan.

- c) By delivering our Transport Strategy to give people walking, running and cycling more space and priority on our streets.

 We will continue to invest in our streets to make them safer and more attractive places to walk, run and cycle.

SPORT PRIORITY 3:


CELEBRATE the impact of sport

What do our stakeholders say?


- *We love coming to Guildhall to celebrate sport*
- *The City Corporation plays an important role in bringing sport and business leaders together*
- *Sport can generate so many positive outcomes and its great that we reflect on this*

How will we deliver on this priority?


- a) By utilising our venues and convening power to promote the benefits of sport to a wide and diverse audience

 We will continue to host events that celebrate the benefits of elite and grassroots sport to our stakeholders. Using venues such as Guildhall and Mansion House, we will welcome visiting dignitaries and guests to the City of London and provide unique backdrop to help raise awareness of the wide-ranging benefits of sport

- b) By maximising our domestic and international reach to promote sport opportunities in London and the UK

 We will utilise our overseas programme to promote London and the UK as a destination for major sport events and sporting success. We will also work with partners to use sport as a tool for international diplomacy and support the expansion of high profile international sports to London and the UK.

- c) By supporting events and initiatives that encourage collaboration between sport and business

 We will develop our role as an interlocutor between sport federations and global business firms. At a time when business and financial gain from sport is so prescient, we will bring business and sport leaders together to discuss shared issues and find solutions to current challenges.

SPORT PRIORITY 4:


ATTRACT more high-quality sport events

What do our stakeholders say?


- *A third of people from across the UK would be interested in visiting the Square Mile to watch a high-profile sport event*
- *Watching road races and events on the City streets offer a unique opportunity to promote the Square Mile's attractions*
- *Sport events need to be tied in to local stakeholder outcomes*

How will we deliver on this priority?


- a) By enhancing the relationship with sport event organisers and actively promoting the City as a destination for sport

 We will work with organisers of sport events to ensure they are supported and embraced as an important partner in delivering on objectives to make the Square Mile more appealing to visitors. As part of this relationship, we will also look to maximise outcomes from the event for our local community, including residents and City workers.

- b) By reviewing the delivery process to maximise positive outcomes from mass participation and spectator events

 We will review internal and external processes for planning sport events on City streets and public spaces and consider any opportunities to enhance efficiencies and maximise outcomes to benefit local stakeholders.

- c) By encouraging domestic and international sport organisations to visit and operate within the Square Mile

 Efforts will be made to encourage sport bodies to base themselves in the City of London. Additionally, alongside efforts to investigate options for leisure provision in the Square Mile, consideration will also be given to providing collaborative office space for domestic and international sport federations on a permanent and temporary basis.

SPORT PRIORITY 5:

SUPPORT local community sport

What do our stakeholders say?

- *It would be great if some of the City's iconic attractions be used for pop-up sport activities*
- *We love the social side to sport clubs and classes*
- *Accessible and inclusive activities, such as yoga and pilates, are important to us*

How will we deliver on this priority?

- a) By opening up our venues and spaces for sport and physical activity classes and group sessions



We will review current assets owned by the City Corporation to see whether any buildings or outdoor spaces could be made available for sport activities and group sessions. We will also work with businesses, schools and developers to ensure consideration is given to this aspect when designing new buildings and public realm in the Square Mile.

- b) By ensuring our sport facilities and play areas are fully accessible and open to all



We will audit our current sport facilities to ensure they are fully accessible and, where this is not the case, address the issues that are preventing access. We will also consider gender, social and cultural barriers that might limit access to a facility or space and seek to resolve these matters where possible.

- c) By championing youth focussed sport clubs and initiatives targeting people over 60, with a disability or from disadvantaged backgrounds



We will work with local sport clubs to help them establish regular community focused activities and sessions in the Square Mile, providing support on external funding opportunities as well as assistance with access to local facilities and spaces. Particular focus will be given to young people, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as people over 60, carers and those with a disability



Sport Strategy Consultant's Review
Summary Evidence Paper

March 2023



1. Introduction

- 1.1. Max Associates was commissioned by the **City of London Corporation** (CoLC) to support the development of a new sports strategy for the Square Mile.
- 1.2. The two main elements of support were around: **engagement and facility review**. The findings are set out below.

2. Engagement

- 2.1. Engagement focused on three key areas:

- visitors to the Square Mile;
- residents; and
- workers.

2.2. Visitor

- 2.2.1. Research was undertaken by Leisure-net in November 2022 using a consumer panel, with a national database of 62k people. A sample of 500 people was used to understand attitudes to visiting the Square Mile and what type of sporting activities and events would attract people to the City. A report of the engagement outcomes was considered by the Sport Sounding Board in January 2023.

2.3. Residents and Workers

- 2.3.1. The engagement methods used for residents and workers included focus groups and surveys (for those who couldn't attend the focus group sessions). This was to supplement engagement via surveys undertaken with both groups by the City during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.3.2. The focus groups were undertaken by Leisure-net in December 2022 and January 2023 with 21 residents and representatives from employers taking part. A report of the engagement outcomes was considered by the Sport Sounding Board in February 2023

2.4. Key Findings

- 2.4.1. The key findings from all engagement methods have been set out under the following core themes:

FACILITIES

- Issues were raised by residents in relation to Golden Lane Sports Centre, and the operation of it, mentioning issues such as, poor programming, limited opening hours, poor maintenance, and attitude of staff.
- Many City workers and potential visitors unfamiliar with the Centre, perhaps given its location.
- People need an offer to be available to supplement provision for those who can afford 'private' interventions.
- Consider rooftop spaces for swimming, wellness and ball games.

- Rooftop swimming and spa / wellness centres were the facilities most likely to attract people to the Square Mile (Visitor survey), particularly visitors from within London.
- Activities like rooftop swimming, spa and outdoor gyms, Pilate / Yoga would attract people to take part.
- A unique facility in a suitable location in the Square Mile, is likely to be an important element of the strategy to attract City workers into the office, instead of working from home.
- Opportunity to work with large organisations to link residents to CSR activity which involves physical activity.

SPACES

- Employee's core requests focused on routes in the City for running, cycling and walking, which are free from obstruction, traffic and circular.
- Street signage for walking and jogging routes would be of value.
- Residents felt more could be done to enable physical activity in green and grey spaces.
- Space for team games and informal sport and relocating sound proofed ball cages were suggested.
- Active travel is important.
- Outdoor gym equipment would be popular amongst City workers during non-working time.

IMPACT

- Residents felt that older and younger generations required greater opportunities to take part in social integration which included physical activity. This didn't have to be building based but could be an engagement / enabling resource to make use of existing indoor and outdoor space.
- Socialising with others, maintaining fitness and strength levels were important.
- Employers and employees knew the benefits of physical activity for mental well-being and improved productivity.
- Keen to provide opportunities for younger people to be active, particularly after the pandemic where people were 'stuck in flats'.
- Encouraging children to play as part of a team is important to reduce social isolation. Being part of structured activity is good to feel part of a team, learn how to follow instructions etc. However unstructured play is also important (playgrounds).
- Being active together help individuals feel part of the community.
- Being active gives confidence and creates a feeling of being a part of 'something'.

EVENTS

- 34% of visitor respondents from across the UK said that spectating high profile events / competitions would attract them to the Square Mile
- Just under 30% of visitor respondents have either taken part or would like to take part in a mass participation event in the Square Mile.

COMMUNITY

- Other indoor spaces could be used for physical activities; libraries, art centre and other social areas, to provide more communal ‘bumping into’ spaces.
- Play and gymnastics are seen as new areas for investment.
- Have multi-use spaces, e.g. GP surgery, location for occupational therapy, social care, yoga, café, etc.
- Could the Barbican exhibition centre be used for pop up events / activities?
- Spaces to play indoors (soft play) and outdoors are important.

2.4.2. The full reports are provided in separate documents; City of London Consultation Report Final Feb 23 and City of London visitor survey final Feb 23.

3. Summary of recommendation actions

3.1. In addition to the stakeholder engagement, a review of sports facilities across the City and just beyond the borders was -compared by management type; public, private and educational providers. Further analysis of what other global Cities provide was also reviewed for good practice and innovative solutions. The findings of this review together with the stakeholder engagement are included in the recommendations, under the five key themes below.

INVEST IN FACILITIES

- There has been strong negative feedback in relation to Golden Lane Sports Centre. There are limited options for development and being located in the north of the City, within a residential estate is not accessible to all City residents, particularly those living in areas on the eastern side of the City. Nearby workers are generally unaware of the centre and tend not to use the facilities. It is also close to two similar centres in Islington, Ironmonger Row and Finsbury Leisure Centre. Finsbury is to be re-developed as part of a regeneration and housing scheme.
- The Square Mile has a wealth of private and school sport and fitness provision, private facilities include higher end fitness brands like Virgin and Nuffield. There is also education provision of pools in the City of London schools.
- A City Corporation owned facility is important to ensure full accessibility to all stakeholders aligned with corporate objectives and – similar to other local authorities - providing a leisure offer that meets everyone’s needs, irrespective of aspects such wealth and location.
- Given the private swimming and fitness offer in the Square Mile, new facilities must be unique, create a ‘wow’ factor taking advantage of the City-scape where possible and not compete directly with the private market. It is recommended the City Corporation considers site options available and given the space work up a suitable facility mix and outline business case.

ACTIVATE SPACES

- There was strong feeling about the important of open space, active travel, use of ‘green’ and ‘grey’ spaces and the benefits of being outdoors.
- Reviewing other Cities, many were advanced in having fitness trails, interactive running routes, guided walks and fitness equipment incorporated into the natural environment.

- It is recommended the City considers circular walking, running or fitness trails, enabling workers and residents to be active outdoors around and through the City.

CELEBRATE IMPACT

- Engagement with residents and workers strongly demonstrated the positive impact sport has on individuals at a local level. However, given the City's unique position, links with business, and growing popularity of international sporting events, there is an opportunity for the City to develop a strong sport engagement programme, bringing value back into the City.
- The wider economic and soft power benefits of sport are an added impact that the City Corporation has successfully championed.

ATTRACT EVENTS

- Given the strength of visitor engagement to either take part in or spectate at sporting events, there is an opportunity for the City, as part of its global reach to attract both traditional or urban sports events to the City.

SUPPORT COMMUNITY

- The engagement demonstrated local passion and commitment to be more active and not necessarily in traditional sports centres. The City has the opportunity to reach inactive residents and workers, through engagement and try-out sessions, both in alternative or temporary locations.
- Priority groups highlighted were inactive people, older people, women and girls and younger people.

Disclaimer

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