

<b>Cabinet</b>  24 <sup>th</sup> May 2023	 <b>TOWER HAMLETS</b>
<b>Report of:</b> James Thomas, Corporate Director Children & Culture	<b>Classification:</b> [Unrestricted]
<b>Response to Overview &amp; Scrutiny: Increasing Female Sports Participation</b>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Councillor Iqbal Hossain, Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Culture and Recreation</b>
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Matthew Eady, Director of Commissioning & Culture & Lisa Pottinger, Head of Sport & Physical Activity
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Reason for Key Decision</b>	N/A
<b>Forward Plan Notice Published</b>	28/03/2023
<b>Exempt information</b>	N/A
<b>Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome</b>	3. Accelerating Education 4. Boosting Culture, Business, Jobs, and Leisure 5. Investing in Public Services

### Executive Summary

This report submits the service action plan in response to the Overview & Scrutiny Challenge session report and recommendations on “increasing women and girls access and participation in sport provision and physical activities in the borough.

### Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Consider the report and agree the proposed action responding to the Children & Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee Challenge Session on “Increasing Women and Girls Access and Participation in sport provision and physical activity”.

## 1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council’s constitution requires the executive to respond to the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

- 1.2 This report and the action plan at Appendix 1 is the executive's response to the recommendations arising from the overview and scrutiny challenge session, increasing female participation in sport and physical activity.
- 1.3 Women constitute 49.2% of the Tower Hamlets population and is one of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. National and local data evidence show that female participation in sport & physical activity is lower than that of men. Under the Act, the Council has a duty to protect women from discrimination in accessing and participating in Council services. This report outlines ways in which female participation in sport & physical activity can be increased. Furthermore, the Council's strategic plan prioritises increase in participation of women and girls in sport and physical activity.

## **2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 To take no action. This is not recommended as the increase in women and girls in sport & physical activity is a strategic priority and the Scrutiny challenge, has provided an evidence base, from national and local data, that used best practice guidance to improve the service and the experience of female residents in accessing and using sport & physical activity services in the borough.

## **3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 Being physically active is important for overall good health. Participation in sport and physical activity lowers blood pressure, improves levels of good cholesterol, improves blood circulation, assists with weight control and prevents bone loss that can lead to osteoporosis, particularly in menopause women.
- 3.2 National, regional and local participation statistics indicate that women and girls participate in sport and physical activity less than men and boys.
- 3.3 Women constitute 49.2% of the Tower Hamlets population but the percentage of the female population that is classified as being active is 10.6% lower than their male peers (Source: Sport England Active Lives 2020-21 data set). The evidence base also indicates that female activity decreased by nearly 10% from 2015-16 to 2020-21. This reduced level of participation is not only due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic but also a variety of motivational, cultural, social, and physical barriers.
- 3.4 Following the overview and scrutiny challenge session on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023, the service has developed an action plan based on the recommendations, which came out of the session.

- 3.5 The committee heard evidence from residents, young people, external experts, and Council officers.
- 3.6 The challenge session report outlines the scope of the methodology used for the session. The report also presents key findings from the evidence gathered from the challenge session.
- 3.7 The report acknowledged the lower levels of female sport participation when compared to men and made six recommendations to improve access and increase female sports participation in the borough. The recommendations are grouped in the key findings section which can be found in the full challenge session report attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.8 The service action plan acknowledges a 'whole-systems change' approach that will require co-ordination across several Council departments and partner services such as schools, voluntary sports clubs and organisations, to name a few. It is likely the delivery of the action plan Much of will require additional resources, both human and financial with these considered as the project progresses and we engage with external organisation like London Sport and the Youth Sports Trust.

#### **4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The recommendations within this report will positively impact access to and participation in sport & physical activity for women and girls in the borough, one of the protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010.
- 4.2 It should also be noted that by addressing the barriers to access and participation by women and girls, the overall impact of these changes will also be beneficial to all regardless of their background.

#### **5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
  - Consultations,
  - Environmental (including air quality),
  - Risk Management,
  - Crime Reduction,
  - Safeguarding.
  - Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

#### **6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 6.1 Any additional costs in relation to this project will be met through repurposing current budgets or through the specifications within the new insourced Leisure service. There would be no additional cost to the General Fund.

## **7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 7.1 Section 2B of the National Health Service Act 2006 requires a local authority to take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area. These steps may include providing services or facilities to promote healthy living.
- 7.2 The public sector equality duty, set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires public authorities to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. Sex is one of the protected characteristics.
- 7.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules, set out in the Council's Constitution, require the Executive to consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and/or Sub-Committee at one of its future meetings setting out its response to any recommendations. The Council will consider the report at its next ordinary meeting if appropriate.
- 7.4 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation and with the Constitution.
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### **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

#### **Linked Report**

- NONE.

#### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Service Action Plan
- Appendix 2: Children & Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee Challenge Session Report on Increasing Women & Girls Access & Participation in Sport Provision in the Borough

#### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012**

- NONE

#### **Officer contact details for documents:**

Lisa Pottinger, Head of Sport & Physical Activity