

Meeting of East Midlands Regional Sports Board

to be held on 12 June 2006

at Sport England East Midlands

For

Discussion Decision Information



EQUALITY REFERENCE GROUP BASELINE REPORT

Paper No. 3

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the conclusion of a 'baseline' report undertaken by the Equality Reference Group, a sub-group of the Regional Sports Partnership.
- 1.2 The report details a suggested equality infrastructure necessary at a regional and sub-regional level if the region's recognised strength in equality and providing opportunities for all communities to participate is to continue.
- 1.3 The report also identifies an immediate issue over one key regional post and invites Members to support a CIF application to be developed to meet this need and provide continuity of the role.

2 COST / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 While the report itself has no immediate financial implications, there is potential for CIF applications to come forward to meet needs identified in the report. Any application developed would be considered on its own merits and against the criteria detailed in the Investment Strategy.

3 KEY OUTCOMES / OUTPUTS

- 3.1 The report identifies the current equalities 'picture' in the region both at regional and sub-regional levels. Having analysed the gaps it also makes a series of recommendations about the equality infrastructure we will need to establish, or support, within the region.
- 3.2 It identifies that the region has an established, credible and well-respected equality infrastructure, which has been developed over a long period. The Regional Sports Board is recognised as having shown strong leadership and visionary thinking in placing equality at the heart of what is delivered within the region.

- 3.3 It also illustrates that despite much good work the infrastructure remains incomplete and that there is an imbalance between the resource allocations (and hence posts) across equality or priority groups. In moving forward and, to meet the scale of the challenge, the report also highlights a critical core infrastructure required at the regional and county level if equality is to continue to be addressed as an underlying principle (alongside sustainability and empowerment) of the Board's work and a critical facet of the delivery system for community sport.

4 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 RSB Members are asked to:

- 4.1.1 Note the contents of the report and welcome the completion of the equality 'baseline' at the regional and sub-regional level;
- 4.1.2 Note that CIF applications are likely to come forward to reflect the suggested infrastructure within the report *; and
- 4.1.3 Endorse a prospective CIF application from* VOICE East Midlands to ensure that support for BME participation in the region continues (the baseline report highlights this role as a crucial element of the equality infrastructure going forward).

*all prospective CIF applications will be treated on their merits and against the Investment Strategy

5 **KEY POINTS**

- 5.1 The Board meeting in December 2005 received an update paper on equality that set out the region's proposals to achieve the Equality Standard but centred on placing equality as an essential element of the improvement agenda.
- 5.2 The Regional Sports Partnership Action Plan identified the need to set-up a sub-group to lead and deliver on equality within the region.
- 5.3 This group was set-up and includes the RSB Portfolio Member for Outcome 3 (Mary Butler), Sport England East Midlands Lead Officer (Russell Turner), English Federation of Disability Sports East Midlands Regional Manager (Ray Ashley), VOICE East Midlands - Sports Manager (Nik Trivedi) and Women's Sport Foundation East Midlands (Ineke Ward). The group identified a first priority, to undertake an equality baseline in the region. The purpose of this was to
- 5.3.1 capture the current position and investment in delivering equality in the region;
- 5.3.2 analyse gaps, emerging issues and trends;
- 5.3.3 provide a framework to underpin future investment by both the RSB and other partners (regionally and nationally)

5.4 This work was commissioned by Sport England and has since been completed (attached as appendix).

5.5 General Issues

5.6 The report highlights that the regional equality infrastructure in the East Midlands is well established, credible and well respected. The report also identifies the need to maintain the special knowledge, skills and understanding from the equality partners at a regional level while also ensuring closer collaboration and support to the single delivery system of community sport.'

5.7 The report also outlines the challenges facing the Board in working with partners to manage a complex, diverse and changing environment where society continues to change and move at pace.

5.8 Gaps and Areas for Improvement

5.9 While acknowledging the strength of the region the report highlights issues which detract from our ability to deliver against this agenda and support participation of priority groups

5.9.1 time limited contracts due to expire imminently;

5.9.2 lack of cohesive drive and co-ordinated approach to achieving the equity targets within Change 4 Sport;

5.9.3 lack of sharing of experience of what works well;

5.9.4 lack of leadership in the 'women and girls' theme; and'

5.9.5 the strategic direction imposed by the host organisations being at odds with the direction and ways of working agreed by the regional partnership

5.10 **Critical Core Infrastructure** - the report suggests a core critical infrastructure comprising:

5.10.1 Regional Level -Regional Equity Manager and Specialist Equity Leaders – BME, Disability and Gender and National Governing Bodies Equity Officer

5.10.2 Sub-Regional Level – County Sport Partnership level – dedicated Equity Officer (community) and Disability Pathways Officer (performance and elite) within each CSP.

6 **BME Regional Infrastructure Support** – the report emphasises the need to retain the regional BME focused support post based at VOICE East Midlands. This post has been previously funded by Sport England via a long-term (five year) exchequer funded project. The project is due to complete by the end of July 2006. The clear steer from the report underlines the importance of retaining this role and it is suggested that a CIF application be encouraged by Members to ensure continuity of role. The Sport for Communities project (an Invest to Save Treasury funded project run by Sporting Equals to increase participation and employment opportunities for BME communities) which is discussed in detail in Paper 2 could be an opportunity to bring forward a match funded application swiftly.

7 **FIT WITH REGIONAL PLAN (OUTCOMES AND PRINCIPLES)**

- 7.1 Equality is one of three underlying principles in the regional plan (along with sustainability and empowerment).
- 7.2 Outcome 3 is to 'reduce inequality through increased participation in sport and active recreation by under-represented groups and communities'
- 7.3 The Board's Business Plan for 2006 identifies the attainment of the Foundation and Preliminary Levels as a regional priority.
- 7.4 The Regional Sports Partnership Action Plan identifies various ways in which it will contribute to achieving equality (available on request).

APPENDIX Executive Summary – Audit and Infrastructure Needs for Equality at the Regional and Sub-Regional Level.

BACKGROUND None

WEB LINKS www.cre.gov.uk/sportingequals
www.cre.gov.uk/sportingequals/sportforcommunities.html