

Subject: Active Gwent Sport Partnership Report

Meeting: Cabinet

Date: 21 May 2025

Division/Wards Affected: All

1. PURPOSE:

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet Member approval to enter a formal partnership for Sport Development in the Gwent region, with Sport Wales and the other four Gwent local authorities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve Monmouthshire sport development to formally enter the Active Gwent sport partnership.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approve the preferred approach of a hosted model of the Sport Partnership in the Gwent region.
- 2.3 That Cabinet approve the support for Newport City Council to act as the host authority for the new Active Gwent Sports Partnership.

3. KEY MESSAGES:

- 3.1 There is a national directive from Sport Wales to move towards a regional model of sports governance and delivery, with the aim of better supporting the national Vision for Sport in Wales.
- 3.2 Regional partnerships have been developed in response across Wales, and Gwent is the final area to establish its regional vehicle.
- 3.3 The ultimate function of the sport partnership will be to provide strategic focus and oversight to sports development in their region, including the development of a regional vision and strategic plan as well as the administration of all pooled Sport Wales funding currently directed to individual local authorities and partners.
- 3.4 The future direction of funds will align with the vision, priorities and objectives of the regional partnership.
- 3.5 In a key difference to current arrangements, Sport Wales require that the new strategic entity includes representation from the wide array of stakeholders alongside the local authority members, to ensure alignment with other national priorities and ensure the strategic board has the required skillsets, diversity and competencies to deliver a coherent and equitable strategy for the region.

- 3.6 The host authority (Newport City Council) takes a lead role in liaising with Sport Wales in the development and establishment of the partnership and take responsibility both for convening the stakeholders and ensuring the partnership model matures to the timescales set by Sport Wales.
- 3.7 Once established, the role of the host authority within the partnership is proposed to be equal and equivalent to the other authorities within the partnership. The host authority will not have any additional rights or responsibilities over and above the other four authorities, save those relating to the employment of staff, proper accounting practices around funding, and provision of equipment and workspace to support the operation of the partnership.

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL.

- 4.1 For Monmouthshire to formally enter the Active Gwent sport partnership allowing for the sport development team to retain the ability to operate independently but also collaborate on shared regional objectives, and share resources, best practice and learning.
- 4.2 For Monmouthshire to opt out of the Active Gwent sport partnership and fore go the opportunity to actively contribute and shape the strategic direction of sports governance and delivery in Gwent and locally to Monmouthshire. Monmouthshire sport development team would focus solely on the delivery.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- 5.1 There are three principal agreements that set out the legal framework required by the emerging partnership:
 - 5.1.1 Collaboration Agreement – setting out how the Active Gwent Board will be developed and operate and be signed by at least the 5 LA's but potentially the whole of the Active Gwent group.
 - 5.1.2 Active Gwent Strategy – this document will articulate the vision, strategy and business case for the Active Gwent Partnership, and its key aims and objectives for the initial five-year period.
 - 5.1.3 Funding and Investment Plan – effectively an agreement between Sport Wales and the host to establish key responsibilities in the funding requirements. This document will also establish the mechanisms for funding distribution against the objectives set forth in the Active Gwent Strategy.

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 There is a national directive from Sport Wales to move towards a regional model of sports governance and delivery, with the aim of better supporting the national Vision for Sport in Wales.
- 6.2 Monmouthshire sport development has a proven track record of delivering the outcomes for Monmouthshire and those set by Sport Wales annually through existing partnership agreements.

- 6.3 Monmouthshire sport development team has developed clear and measurable annual delivery plans, that dovetail into the Customer, Culture and Wellbeing business service plan and are scrutinised through Monmouthshire's annual self-assessment framework.
- 6.4 The sports development outcomes within the delivery plan are identified as measures within the Corporate and Community Plan within Fair Place; Connected Place; and Learning Place.
- 6.5 Monmouthshire sport development team, through their quarterly 'progress and learning session', with the Sport Wales relationship manager has been identified nationally for their work in Monmouthshire.
- 6.6 Through Sport Wales 'lightening learning programme', the sport sectors good practise learning sessions, attended by leaders of National Governing Bodies and stakeholders. Monmouthshire and their sport development officers have featured in quarterly newsletters; Sport Wales social media campaigns and they have presented on the national lightening learning programme.
- 6.7 For strategic oversight, Active Gwent will select a strategic and supervisory board comprised of the five local authority partners, 5 independent members and an independent chair. The aim of the Active Gwent Board will be to ensure the successful realisation of the partnership vision and objectives and communicate progress to Sport Wales.
- 6.8 Monmouthshire will appoint their officer representative on the Active Gwent Board ensuring that their representative is appointed on the basis the range of skills required and the need to comprise a balanced and inclusive Board membership.
- 6.9 Monmouthshire representative shall be "fixed" to ensure consistency though temporary replacements maybe required in certain circumstances.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The projected funding allocation for Gwent is estimated at £2,269,565. For the fiscal year 2024-2025, Monmouthshire has received an annual allocation of £141,894 through the Sport Wales partnership agreement. Additionally, Monmouthshire has successfully secured an average of £58,000 per annum to deliver specific sport intervention projects, funded through the broader allocation of resources.
- 7.2 The current sport development team comprises of five Community and Sports Development Officers. The annual budget for sport development staffing is £224,375, with 63% of this amount funded through the Sport Wales partnership annual agreement.
- 7.3 The future direction of funds will align with the vision, priorities and objectives of the regional partnership. Once established, the host organisation will act as receiver for the full amount of regional funding for the Gwent area.

7.4 For the transition period (years 1-3), it is proposed that aggregated regional funding will be maintained to avoid disruption of partnership delivery and disbenefit to service users across Gwent. From year 3, it is expected that the Active Gwent Partnership will have matured fully as a structure and will receive funding based on the regional allocation mechanisms being derived by Sport Wales.

7.5 Throughout the initial five-year period, the partnership hosted by Newport City Council will be responsible for transferring Sport Wales funding to approved groups for agreed purposes. Acting as the legal entity, Newport City Council will maintain records, manage payments, and distribute funds in accordance with the instructions of the Active Gwent Board.

8. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING & CORPORATE PARENTING)

8.1 There are no known equality and Future Generations implications arising from the transition to the Active Gwent Sport Partnership. This report summarises the changes to the strategic mechanisms and confirms that the move to a regional partnership model does not adversely affect any equality considerations.

9. CONSULTEES:

- Cabinet.
- Strategic leadership Team.
- Customer, Culture and Wellbeing DMT.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

a) Active Gwent Sport Partnership – Hosted model approach.

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