

**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CSP  
CUSTODIAL GROUP**

**TOWARDS A CSP IN  
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

**A**

**Final Report**

**By**

**Strategic Leisure Limited and VAGA  
Associates**

**February 2005**

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# ***SECTION I – INTRODUCTION***

## **The Study**

- 1.1 Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) and VAGA Associates were appointed in September 2004 to undertake a review of the need for a County Sports Partnership (CSP) in Nottinghamshire. The study has been undertaken on behalf of the Custodial Group, a volunteer group of representative and interested stakeholders, currently responsible for delivery of sport across the county. The study has been hosted on behalf of the Custodial Group by Nottinghamshire County Council.

## **Scope of Study**

- 1.2 The scope of the study is to identify the need for, and the options for establishing a CSP in Nottinghamshire. The study has covered the county of Nottinghamshire, and all stakeholders in the current structure of sport in the county. Where possible, potential partners for the future delivery of sport in the county have also been engaged in the review process.

## **Study Aim**

- 1.3 To assist the Custodial Group with the research, analysis and process issues that are required in order to develop a County's Sports Partnership (in whatever form this may eventually take) for Nottinghamshire.
- 1.4 During the study process it became apparent that there is growing impetus from Central Government and Sport England to establish CSPs across England and a growing perception within the county that there should be a CSP for Nottinghamshire. Given this, the focus of the study was changed to identify how this structure could best serve and meet the identified needs for sport in the county, and how a CSP should be developed to deliver and address these needs.

## **Study Objectives**

- 1.5 The focus of the study is about strengthening the development of sport across the traditional county of Nottinghamshire. It is important to stress that this study is about the development of sport for the county, and not the development of sport for, or by Local Authorities, Governing Bodies or other agencies in the county. A central theme to explore is how to build any new structures without disturbing the strong consensual working practices and results that Nottinghamshire often delivers. Key objectives include identifying:
  - What's good and working well?
  - Areas for improvement and gaps or duplication in provision
  - The added value of a CSP in Nottinghamshire?

## ***SECTION I – INTRODUCTION***

1.6 The following outputs have informed the study recommendations:

- Desk Research and Network Analysis
- Functional Audit and Evidence Gathering
- Analysis and Recommended Action

### **Background to Study**

1.7 Sport England has ring-fenced £39.5 million across the nine regions until 2009 to support the creation of CSPs. In the East Midlands, this will help support Nottinghamshire and its strategic positioning in relation to the East Midlands Regional Sports Board, by identifying its function and sustainability, understanding the context and directions of sports funding, and assessing how well sporting opportunities in the Nottinghamshire area are configured to face up to the future. The East Midlands Regional Plan for Sport 2004-2008 aspires to having five strong and well resourced CSPs operating across its area.

1.8 The study towards a CSP has been commissioned against the context of national policies for sport and recreation (Game Plan, the National Framework for Sport in England: Making England an Active and Successful Sporting Nation: A Vision for 2020) and the focus on physical activity and health which highlights the roles of schools, local authorities and National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs).

### **Study Methodology**

1.9 The approach to undertaking the study has been developed with the Custodial Group, and has focussed on consultation. This focus has been deliberate to provide and develop as inclusive, and informed, approach as possible. Given the extent of current sporting activity in the county (facility provision, participation, number, level and type of provider, specialist initiatives, sports development networks etc) it has been important to understand sport in the county now, and whether there are any issues, or gaps, that a future CSP could address or fill. This approach has therefore been based on the need for a CSP, or similar vehicle, to add value, rather than duplicate, given the existing level of resource, investment and commitment to sport across Nottinghamshire.

### **Assumptions**

1.10 In order to achieve engagement in the CSP review process, and more importantly, the way forward, a number of assumptions have been made by the consultant team. Although frank, these are, and have been, critical to the way in which the consultation has been approached. The assumptions are:

- Although termed a CSP, it is important to develop, and implement a structure/delivery vehicle appropriate for the county, and sport in the county; this is

## ***SECTION I – INTRODUCTION***

critical given the existing structures, level of investment and commitment already in existence in Nottinghamshire, to ensure value-add from a CSP

- There is a common desire to move forward, given the length of time a CSP has been on the agenda for Nottinghamshire
- There is a need to leave existing baggage/views/agendas behind in determining a way forward, which will benefit, and add value to, everything that is currently being delivered in the county
- There is a recognition that the national environment for sport has changed in the last 5 years, and the future development of sport in Nottinghamshire needs to reflect this
- There are opportunities to capitalise on existing, and emerging partnerships and investments in sport in the county
- All those involved in sport in Nottinghamshire wish to make a difference as individuals, and as part of a wider partnership, and in so doing, re-emphasise Nottinghamshire's position as one of the leading counties for sport in the UK

### **Timescale**

- 1.11 The timescale for the study has been short, deliberately i.e. 4 months. This has galvanised the study process, raised expectations from consultees, and now demands delivery, through consensus, commitment and further consultation. Cogniscent of this, the Custodial Group has already identified the need to have mechanisms in place for implementing the outcomes of the study. Depending on the communication of these outcomes, it is planned to commence the way forward early in 2005.

## SECTION II – STUDY FINDINGS

### Strategic Context for a CSP in Nottinghamshire

- 2.1 In undertaking a comprehensive review of sports development structures and systems in Nottinghamshire, it is relevant and important to the overall study outputs to consider the strategic context that the services are provided within. To this end, this section of the report sets out the main local, regional and national strategies that are key influences and drivers upon how sport is developed across Nottinghamshire. Whilst the context can be added to and is not by any means exhaustive, it does provide useful background for the key challenges and issues arising from this review, with particular reference to CSPs. It is assumed that any emerging CSP will need to reflect key principles of many of these strategies.

### Change 4 Sport in England's East Midlands. A Regional Plan for Sport 2004 to 2008

- 2.2 This plan aims to unite the East Midlands in one goal – to be the best in England at raising levels of physical activity through sport and at helping our very best talent to win significant international sporting events. The plan has been produced by East Midlands Regional Sport Board, whose three aims are:

- To massively increase participation
- To widen access to sport and recreation
- To succeed in the key national sports.

- 2.3 The plan has eight outcomes for the East Midlands:

- 4% increase in sports participation
- To be the most successful sporting region
- Reduced inequalities
- Improved Health
- Stronger and Safer Communities
- Improved education and lifelong learning
- Strengthened local economy
- Better sports "system"

- 2.4 This over arching plan refers specifically to County Sport Partnerships:

*"At a sub – regional level, the plan will set up five strong and well – resourced County Sport Partnerships (CSPs) committed to achieving some or all of the plan's outcomes. These partnerships will decide strategies for sport in their counties. We hope these partnerships will be committed to focusing on achieving the outcomes of this plan and applying the principles within it "*

## SECTION II – STUDY FINDINGS

### Game Plan

- 2.5 In 2002 the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit and DCMS carried out a major review of sport in England. It concluded that: “ In spite of major sports development and major financial investment in facilities , participation has not increased, inequalities have not been tackled and England’s international success in the major sports is not good enough. “The review stated that “Sport is underachieving” and that it demonstrates “market failure” in terms of the significant lack of disadvantage groups taking part in sport. The plan goes on to identify that there needs to be a complete behavioural change in attitude and approach to sport and physical activity in England.
- 2.6 Game Plan’s two broad targets relate to activity and success:
- Increase significantly levels of sport and physical activity with the target of achieving 70% of the population as BEING reasonably active defined as participating in 30 minutes of moderate activity five times a week by 2020 (currently about 30% of the population achieves this )
  - British and English teams and individuals to sustain rankings within the top five, particularly in the more popular sports”.
- 2.7 Game Plan called for the cross – government Activity Co ordination Team ( ACT) to be set up to join up policy – making an investment at a national level. ACT is responsible for co –coordinating activity through nine regional government departments and national agencies.

### Sport England Policy Statement for CSPs Nov 2004

- 2.8 This sets out the proposed nature and scope of the CSPs. It defines the role of a CSP as “a network of key agencies and providers committed to establishing a sustainable infrastructure to provide a single system for all people to benefit from sport”. There are four overarching aims:
- To increase participation in sport
  - To widen access to sport
  - To increase sporting excellence and
  - Support the development of player pathways to performance.
- 2.9 The statement sets out a role for CSPs and core functions that include: strategic planning, performance management, marketing and communication, club development, workforce development and pathways for young people in sport.

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### Towards and Excellent Service – a performance management framework for sport and recreation services

2.10 This new framework is being actively promoted by: Sport England, DCMS, CCPR, CLOA, Audit Commission, ISRM, NASD, IDeA and ILAM. It is based around self assessment and has the potential of being linked to local government performance reviews. It has eight themes that are relevant to CSPs:

- Leadership
- Policy and strategy
- Community engagement
- Partnership working
- Use of resources
- People management
- Standards of service
- Performance measurement and learning

### Regional Context

2.11 Sport is described as “one of the jewels in the East Midlands crown” and is identified in EMDA’s (East Midlands Development Agency) regional plan. The population is approximately 4.1 million and covers:

- Derbyshire
- Leicestershire
- Lincolnshire
- Northamptonshire
- Nottinghamshire
- Rutland

2.12 Population is growing faster than the national average and there is increasing percentage of the population that is elderly. The most deprived areas are in the three cities of Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and the former coalfields area along Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire border, plus major towns and the coastal strip of Lincolnshire.

2.13 Total Local Authority spending on sport in the region is estimated at £75 million every year. There are 114 swimming pools ,197 leisure centres , over 10,000 sport clubs and 35,400 people employed in sports related activities with a large volunteer base and the plan describes how there is a history of “ sports partnership working in all five shire counties”.

2.14 The regional vision is; “The East Midlands will be recognised as a region with a high quality of life and sustainable communities that thrives because of its vibrant economy ,

## SECTION II – STUDY FINDINGS

rich cultural and environmental diversity and the way it creatively addresses social inequalities , manages its resources and contributes to a safer, more inclusive society. " Sport and Leisure falls within the Regional Social strategies as a key strand of the region's overall plan.

- 2.15 Sport and physical activity plays a fundamental role throughout a number of key plans and strategies at a regional level. For example;
- International Connections Emda initiative
- 2.16 The action plan has sport as one of its main themes.
- Destination East Midlands
- 2.17 This includes sport tourism
- GOEM Business Plan
- 2.18 Three priority aims covering the creation of stronger and safer communities that include everyone, developing business and learning and building capacity.
- Investment for Health
- 2.19 Sport also features strongly in the public health strategy for the East Midlands. Its overall aim is: "To improve the health of the East Midlands' residents by reducing health inequalities year on year through: addressing the determinants of health, supporting healthy lifestyles, protecting health, health service provision. "
- Time for Culture
- 2.20 The regional cultural strategy also falls under the social strand. It outlines a vision based on a series of celebrating cultural differences, promoting lifelong learning, supporting the economy, developing an evidence base, supporting long term regeneration, winning resources and campaigning for culture.

### **Choosing Health: Making healthy Choices Easier: Department of Health White Paper Executive summary**

- 2.21 The paper sets out the governments' new approach to public health. At its core it seeks to enable everyone to "Choose Health". It aspires to offer support and assistance to people who wish to improve their health. It sets out details of areas of important change, including key changes regarding Physical Activity. Action will be targeted under the areas of:

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- Health in the Consumer Society
- Children and young people – starting on the right path
- Work and Health
- Health promoting NHS

### Local Strategies

#### City of Nottingham Leisure and Community Services

##### Sport Development Service Plan 2004 -2005

- 2.22 The vision of this plan is: “To change the culture of sport physical activity in order to increase participation across all social groups leading to improvements in health and other social benefits and providing the basis for progression into higher levels of performance.”
- 2.23 Their key objective is “to work in partnership to maximise physical and sporting opportunities”. The plan is measurable and targeted. There is a customer focus as well as a business focus. The identified targets include “to lead on the establishment of a County Sports Partnership”. However there is limited detail within the plan regarding how to achieve their vision and aim.

##### Developing Sport through Partnerships Our Strategic Framework and Business Development Plan 2004 – 2005 Nottinghamshire CC

- 2.24 This plan closely reflects the County Council’s corporate strategic plan “Building a Future ” and sets out how the sport development service will contribute to addressing a number of the Council’s key priorities . The mission statement is:

*“Work in partnership to represent and support all who are involved in developing sporting opportunities in Nottinghamshire with the ultimate aim of creating a sustainable legacy of sporting participation and performance”.*

- 2.25 There are eight key aims:
- Providing a strategic lead for sports development across the county, providing advice, support and information to key partners, and raising the profile and reputation of Nottinghamshire sport.
  - Strengthening the structure of sport in Nottinghamshire by establishing a strategic framework for the development of clubs, volunteers and participants and supporting key partners to achieve their aims.
  - Improving standards of coaching by playing a lead role in establishing a strategic framework for the development of coaching

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- Strengthening the partnership between sport and education to improve the links between PE and sport in the community
- Improving the support offered to talented performers , their coaches , officials and parents
- Securing sufficient resources for sports development to achieve its objectives, and developing quality places to play sport.
- Advocating and facilitating other agencies to utilise the power of sport to improve the lives of people in Nottinghamshire
- Improving our performance to reach the highest standards of service delivery to our customers, partners and stakeholders.

### Sports Partnership in North Nottinghamshire (SPINN)

*“Taking us into 2007 “*

- 2.26 This plan focuses on the DfES/DCMS Public Service Agreement Target by 2006; the target is for 75% of school children to be spending a minimum of two hours on high quality PE and school sport each week within and beyond the curriculum. The partnership represents 9 secondary schools and sixty five primary schools. It is the intention of Nottinghamshire LEA to support the designation of 7 Sports Colleges in each of the 7 Districts in the County as hubs for each partnership. “ A County Partnership Development Manager (PDM) consortium will ensure consistency and coherence whilst allowing individual partnerships the flexibility to develop according to their own identified needs”.
- 2.27 The Manor School, has been the hub since 1998 “ Strong and very positive partnerships with a whole range of partners in education and sports development and in Nottinghamshire and the region have been critical to the work undertaken”. Indeed the Manor School Specialist Sports College Community Development Plan 2004 – 2006 is extensive and detailed covering many aspects of development from facilities to health related initiatives.

### VOICE East Midlands: East Midlands Black + Ethnic (BME) Sport Project Annual Report (Aug 2001 – 2002)

- 2.28 Voice East Midlands was formed to enable the East Midlands BME Voluntary and Community sector to take full part in decisions which affect their development and growth and gain more benefit from regional initiatives. Based in Nottingham, the Strategic objectives of VOICE East Midlands are:
- To be an informed voice of the BME voluntary and community sector and promote its interests at a regional level.
  - To increase the effectiveness of the sector through capacity building support.
  - To unlock funding for the sector at a regional level.

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2.29 Regional Black and Minority Ethnic Sports Projects Strategic Objectives include:

- Raise the level of awareness about Sport England resources within BME
- To build more effective links between the BME communities and the local sports development functions and other sports organisations e.g. CSPs

2.30 BME were involved in management of the Active Sports project through a research project. The aim of this research project was to maximise a sustained involvement by the different ethnic minority communities as participants, deliverers and planners in the Active Sports programme.

### **Bowling for the Coalfields – A key issues paper and Action Plan for the North Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Coalfield Alliance SAZ March 03**

2.31 The North Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire SAZ was one of only two established in the East Midlands in recognition that it was 'deprived in sporting' opportunities and was under achieving in investment from Lottery sources. This report follows an extensive needs assessment of the area. The findings, which have not been implemented, are still relevant.

### **Nottinghamshire Sport and Education – Review of Function and Structure Consultation October 2004**

2.32 This review looks at the mechanisms for co-ordinating sport and educational services within Nottinghamshire. It recommends:

- The continuation of the 'internal' Nottinghamshire County Council Sport and Education Strategy Group with a revised role based around information sharing, co-operative working, attracting resources to its area and supporting sports organisations.
- No immediate action on the formation of a new 'external' Nottinghamshire Sport and Education Group until the CSP for Nottinghamshire is in place or a decision is made not to have one.

### **Evidence Gathering**

2.33 As highlighted, the research towards the establishment of a CSP in Nottinghamshire has predominantly adopted a qualitative, interpretative approach, with data collected and assessed in relation to the strategic context in which the service of sports development is delivered. This was interpreted as the most appropriate approach as the study predominately concentrates upon people and their understanding, perceptions and attitudes to working in partnerships across agencies for the good of sport and physical activity development. In addition, we have reviewed existing structural arrangements at

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both the County Council and the City Council. The existing structures are appended to this final report. It is important to note that the focus has not been upon existing structure in defining the need for a CSP, but more on what and how additional resources can strengthen the work and development of these structures. The issue of structures and processes under a new body is dealt with in Section IV.

- 2.34 From the evidence gathered in relation to existing provision within sport development in the county a functional matrix has been produced and given to the Custodial Group. This data should be considered the starting point for further audit and assessment by a future CSP, but provides an indication of the levels of existing work, and importantly, the gaps which a CSP should focus on, to support the future development of sport countywide.
- 2.35 In summary over, 153 people have been contacted and engaged with this review. The approach to consultation and evidence gathering has been flexible and allowed consultees and key stakeholder to contribute in a way that is appropriate to them. This has resulted in:
- 7 workshops
  - 43 face to face consultations
  - 7 telephone interviews
  - 48 completed and returned questionnaires
- 2.36 A full updated consultee list is attached within Appendix 1. This list is by no means exhaustive; however, we recognise that this interim report is an important milestone along the way in the overall process of finding the correct CSP solution for Nottinghamshire.
- 2.37 The adopted methodology has provided the custodial group with a rich source of data that provides a summary of the current delivery status and issues facing practitioners and policy makers in providing quality effective and relevant sport development services for the citizens of Nottinghamshire. However, time for the initial phase has been limited, and further targeted consultation will need to address the issues raised at a later juncture in this study. It is worth emphasising that several areas of good practice have been highlighted and detailed regarding partnership working and sports development delivery across Nottinghamshire. However, the intention of raising key issues at this point in the study is to explore further the value of changing or adding to, what already exists through the establishment of a CSP. It is worth emphasising that the feedback from the consultation undertaken validates the need for a CSP in the county.

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### Headline Findings

2.38 This section summarises the key messages received from the consultation and how the work has been built up through a phased programme of workshops, face to face consultations, telephone interviews and questionnaire analysis.

2.39 **Community Sector**  
(Includes: local authorities and forums, health, equity groups, voluntary organisations)

- No holistic vision or strategic focus
- Significant under developed and uncoordinated areas - especially health
- Significant others - perception of being 'outside of the loop' by many
- Willingness to be involved and share learning
- Unexploited and under developed networks with growth potential
- Evidence of successful approaches and projects
- Known areas of need (North Notts. Coalfields, inner city and outer estates)

2.40 **Education Sector**  
(Includes: LEAs, schools, PDMs, Specialist Sports Colleges)

- Significant recent investment, development and growth potential
- No countywide focus or co-ordination inclusive of city
- Weak links to sports services
- Highly regarded PDM/school sports co-ordinators network
- Evidence of successful approaches and projects
- Variable involvement of FE
- Minimum involvement with HE
- Lack of coordinated opportunities to share good practice
- Some individual examples of strong links to County Sport Services
- Weak links at strategic level with County Sport Services

2.41 **Mainstream Sports Sector**  
(Includes: sports agencies, NGBs, clubs, specialist centres, performers and coaches)

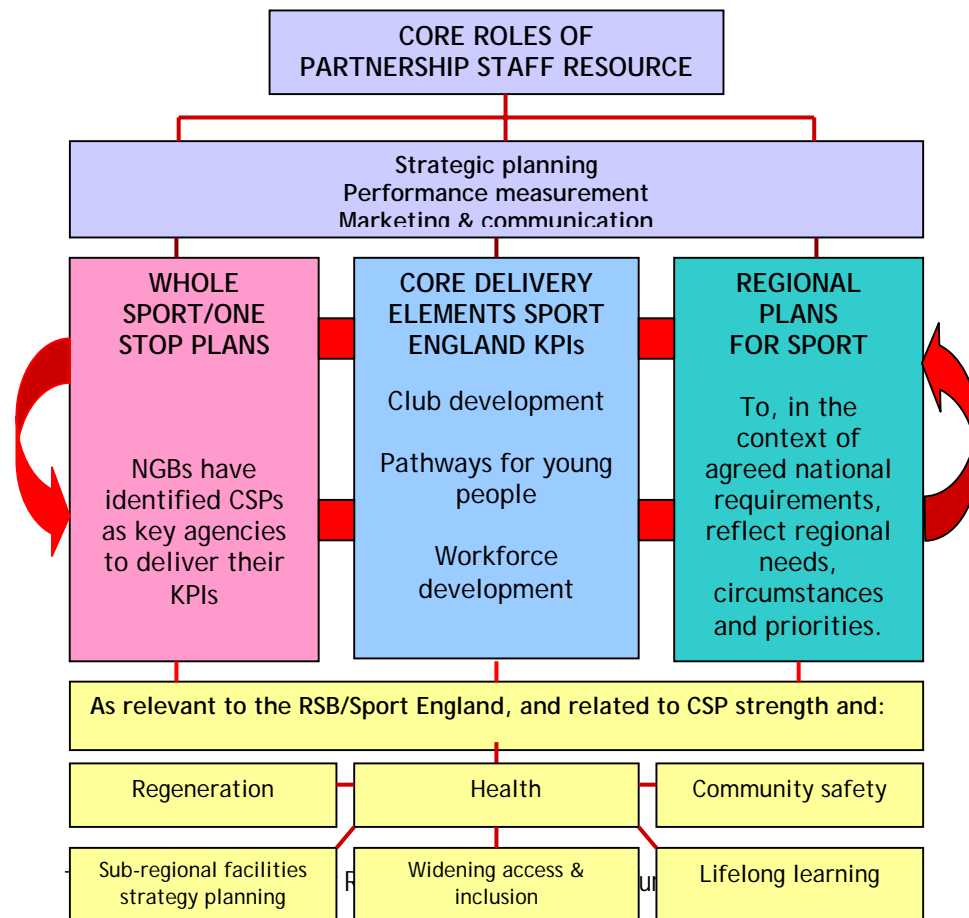
- Valued service from the County Council's Sports Services
- Good partnership working at operational level
- Awareness of tensions between City and County that 'get in the way'
- Organisations – not connected and in need of support
- High levels of activity and delivery
- Geographical bias towards City and Rushcliffe area
- Successes not being acknowledged or celebrated
- At the leading edge ten years ago, have fallen back, desire to regain ground

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### Sport England – Vision for CSPs

2.42 In November 2004, the following model and 'givens' as criteria for Regional Sports Board core funding were issued in relation to the future CSPs established:

#### County Sports Partnership model



1. The Partnership is able to make decisions based on community sport need, established through the CSP vision and strategy, not on the needs of any one stakeholder.
2. The Partnership is built on firm foundations, with clarity of purpose, shared values and regional plan outcomes and principles, a vision for success and strong commitment from key stakeholders.
3. Decision making and policy formulation is business like, quick and non-bureaucratic though a small accountable management board

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4. Accountability should not be confused with representation (to ensure effective management)
5. Effective representational and communication systems are in place to gain understanding, inclusion and ownership by stakeholders
6. People are in place to manage and deliver strategic vision, governance principles, communication and partnership working.
7. The CSP will play a key role in advocacy, will ensure accountability and responsibility sit together and will manage sustainable growth (This will usually be achieved through the post of Partnership Manager with the seniority to deliver this agenda)
8. Cost-effectiveness is demonstrated in funding proposals

2.43 The consultation undertaken with Regional Sports Board and Sport England East Midlands regional staff identified the need for a CSP, as an independent body separate to existing structures in the county, with a complementary role to existing investment and resources developing sport across Nottinghamshire. The CSP is seen as a critical vehicle in influencing future policy and development of sport in the county, and should be able to 'buy-in' through service level agreements, to existing initiatives, expertise, and resources in the county, so that new resources can be targeted at the identified 'gaps' in provision.

### 2.44 Initial SDO Workshop – 24.9.04

- Proposed vision *“Leading Nottinghamshire to a bright and successful future through sport and active living”*
- Examples of good practice in: community (Bassetlaw), education (PDM/SSCo network) and sport (youth games)
- Key issues: developing the workforce, clearer roles and remits, longer term investment of resources, agreed focus, better communication and effective planning

### 2.45 Stakeholder Event – 4.11.04

- Elaborated on vision
- Key features for making it work: shared vision, collective plan, combined effort, build on the good, one stop communication, getting resources closer to the community
- Identified the need for doing 'things differently' as well as incremental improvements across all services
- Discussion but no consensus on next steps

## ***SECTION II – STUDY FINDINGS***

### **2.46 County Sports Services Perspective - 8.11.04**

- Significant confusion and uncertainty about the CSP and its role
- Unique value of service is its countywide brief for sports development
- Key issues: facility access, territorial borders, decision making and leadership, identifying the gaps, having a vision for new initiatives
- Priorities actions: athlete and volunteer focus, countywide agreement at the right level, influential and transparent leadership, improved marketing of services

### **2.47 City Council Perspective – 10 & 17.11.04**

- Support a shared countywide vision, ethos and principles of a CSP
- Potential benefits: improved communication, longer term and joined up planning able to attract resources, reduced duplication increased service reach and quality
- City offers focus in housing and regeneration innovation and practice
- Recognise what needs to be sports driven and early wins for political support

### **2.48 Local Perspective (Bassetlaw) – 19.11.04**

- Successful model built on trust and action over many years
- Pathways for all young people linking community, education and sport
- Need for: continuity, increased partnership working with health, recognition of deprivation of sport and physical activity provision and the need for more local access to opportunities to specialist facilities and coaching across Nottinghamshire

### **2.49 Local Perspective (Newark + Sherwood) – 19.11.04**

- Formalisation
- Avoid duplication
- Networks very complex – CSP formalize to make clearer
- Service Level Agreements – to ensure consistency and clarity (e.g. with PCT's)
- Who is best placed to deliver health – LA closer to the ground, synergy between sport and PA, good working relationships with the community
- Right and appropriate information
- Right people
- Specialised Forums that feed into the main partnership
- Sharing of good practice
- Lead on M&E
- Streamline process of moving from conception to delivery (to speed up process)
- CSP umbrella, exec responsible, accountability, report to board
- Strategic focus
- Sustainable funding
- Moving towards a performance culture – proving value

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### 2.50 Nottinghamshire Facilities Strategy Group -12.11.04

- County wide group that has a track record in strategic coordination of facilities development e.g. funding for Green Spaces programme successfully met county priorities rather than individual District priorities.
- In light of the emerging CSP and the Regional Sports Board, the group has clarified its role by drafting new terms of reference and shown willing to reposition within the wider regional/County Structure and refocus its priorities and influence accordingly
- Its purpose is to work in partnership to represent and support all who are involved in sports and recreation facility development in Nottinghamshire.
- Obvious buy in and trust in group, with a recognition of the fact that there is substantial local knowledge and a realism of what is needed.
- Examples of compromise and consensus in managing funding and strategy production e.g. Playing pitch strategy NOF Green Spaces Funding Programme
- Issues regarding the recent lack of Sport England representation and no involvement regarding Active England Funding

### Network Analysis

2.51 The network analysis was undertaken by the Custodial Group and supported by the information gathered from the consultation and research phase. It looks at formalised countywide groups with a remit to develop some aspect of sport. It covers:

- Existing networks
- Potential networks
- Analysis of findings

### Existing Networks

2.52 Existing networks are classified as:

- Strategic – those with responsibility for policy setting, strategic planning or high level decisions
- Operational – those with responsibility for delivery.

2.53 By their nature some networks have both a strategic and a delivery element to their work.

2.54 The network groups that currently exist include:

- Chief Leisure Officers (CLOGs) - strategic
- County Facility Strategy Group - strategic
- Club Development Group – strategic/operational
- Coach Development Group - strategic/operational

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- Local Authority SDO Forum Group - operational
- Local Football Partnership - strategic/operational
- NGB Group - strategic/operational
- PE and Sports Strategy Group (Nottinghamshire County Council Internal Group)- strategic
- PE and Sports Strategy Group (External Group - on hold pending the CSP) - strategic
- Portfolio Holders Education Meeting (City and County Councils) - strategic
- Specialist Sports College, PDM and School Sports Coordinators Network – strategic/operational
- Sports Development Forum - operational
- Sport Specific Focus Groups (approx 10) - strategic/operational
- School Sports Associational – operational
- Talent Development Group - strategic/operational
- Website Group - operational.

### Potential Networks

2.55 The following areas were identified that offered potential benefits for the development of sport and physical activity from countywide networking:

- Community development and social inclusion (such as crime and safety)
- CPD and skill development
- FE/HE
- Specialist facility development
- Health and leisure partnership
- Local strategic partnerships
- Marketing and PR
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Research and development
- Voluntary sector
- Youth and community (e.g. connexions)

### Analysis of Findings

2.56 The above mapping of existing networks highlights:

- There is no high level group with representation from across the core sectors (community, education and sport) that has responsibility for setting the strategic direction or vision for sport across Nottinghamshire and for driving forward the preparation, delivery and evaluation of a strategic plan. Although the CLOGs exists as a strategic group it does not adequately represent the interests of all sectors (nor should it) and has a wider remit that covers cultural services. Several respondents

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have questioned the level of seniority of regular members who attend this group compared with several years ago.

- The high coverage of mainstream sports related groups that operate strategically and operationally offering the potential for a good level of joined up thinking and working. This reinforces our conclusion of the strength of the sports system in Nottinghamshire and the value of this service.
- There are network gaps within the mainstream sports services for parts of the service that includes: research and development, monitoring and evaluation and marketing and PR.
- There are network gaps within the mainstream sports services that supports our conclusion of 'significant others' perceived to be 'outside of the loop' for example volunteers and HE/FE.
- The largest and most obvious gap in the networks are partners from outside of the mainstream sports sector that have a potential contribution to make especially given the increasing emphasis on health and well being, crime and community safety, citizenship and volunteers, economic regeneration and skill development.

2.57 There is a potential role for the CSP to develop new and effective types of networks that cover these gaps. In order to do so its critical to attract 'new blood' so that the same people servicing existing networks are not further overstretched.

2.58 The sheer number of the existing and potential networks demonstrates the extent of potential influence of sport. It also highlights the need for effective two way channels of communication and a level of trust and team work at senior level in order to align effort and avoid confusion and duplication. It also reinforces the need for strong leadership, shared vision and an agreed direction

### Emerging Conclusions

2.59 Whilst it is not possible to detail all issues that have been raised across our extensive consultation exercise, it is possible to group those that have emerged consistently and those that are most relevant to this study:

- Leadership

From several written responses, a key emerging theme from the workshops has been the identification of a lack of one vision, and a need to develop a single reference point for driving sports development forward collectively for the county as a whole. There was a good awareness of the Regional Plan for Sport and the need to work together but frustration at the lack of one vision. It is evident that there is a desire and commitment from the majority of consultees to develop such a vision and to refine a clear overall

## ***SECTION II – STUDY FINDINGS***

direction and focus for sports development across the county. There is also a clearly defined requirement from the majority of consultees to develop a body that can drive this forward and take a leadership role. In order to facilitate this, it became evident that the “body” needs to be empowered by the key stakeholders to make strategic decisions and work autonomously from any other organisation.

- **Relationships**

In order to move forward it has been recognised that there is a need to remove any perceived bias from officer representation from Sport England and to improve the liaison relationships at a County Council level. As a consequence, SE has changed its liaison personnel in the spirit of partnership working assisting in moving towards the formulation of a CSP. This is a positive action, and will assist in the progress made to date in developing trust and co-operation between agencies and their representatives.

Our findings reveal that a perception of tensions between the City and the County by many involved in developing sport are summarised by one respondent of ‘getting in the way of real progress’. For the wider sports community these tensions result in confused roles and responsibilities, duplication of remits and efforts and a multiplicity of planning cycles and documents

Practical examples unearthed by the consultation exercise include: a clear lack of knowledge and awareness between officers from the County Council’s Sports Services and the City’s Education Department’s outdoor activities team and swimming officer. There was also a lack of liaison and awareness of the County’s Sport Services approach from City PCT health workers. This in the main has been attributed to a lack of work programme time. However, it also appear from our desk top research that there is no remit or clearly defined approach to sharing good practice and enabling officers to network more effectively.

It is important that these relationships between the City and the County Councils and with Sport England be adequately addressed through the opportunity presented by this review and the emergence of a CSP and not fudged. To do so it will be important to fully explore the scope for partnership working whilst giving respect to each other’s:

- Corporate plans, core businesses and degree of operational flexibility
- Appropriate lead roles in relation to their geographic coverage
- Unique contributions that could strengthen sports development within the county and support the emerging CSP.

- **Representation and Co-ordination**

During our intense period of consultation, we spent time listening too and considering the voice of the voluntary sector, on a club and association level. Whilst recognising the sheer breadth of service delivery across the county, the sector did present us with their

## ***SECTION II – STUDY FINDINGS***

view that they are slightly on the fringe of the decision making and information hubs across the county in terms of directing policy and understanding the existing roles and responsibilities of developmental staff per se. It has also been made evident that the existing organisations within the network (that is County, City, Sport England and NGBs) are not in a position to lead the way forward due to both time constraints and the need for them to focus on their own corporate agendas. Conversely however, there is a willingness and desire at officer level to develop strong working partnerships to share objectives and develop new ways of working, but this needs to be endorsed and supported at a high strategic level.

Across the consultation process, it is apparent that the existing custodial group's role and remit is not understood or conceptualised by the majority of the existing development network. It is felt that the custodial group does not reflect the diversity of the county and any interim or new body would need to include other agencies such as health, the voluntary sector etc to be more inclusive.

- **Functional Gaps and Operational Matters**

There is an apparent lack of defined mechanisms for working with health across the county. There are however pockets of excellent working both within the County Council and the City Council, but a frustration is that there is no body / agency working to enhance shared good practice and opportunities of developing more targeted delivery across both the sport and physical activity agenda. This is a recurring theme throughout all our consultation and could be a priority for a new CSP in terms of strengthening what already exists in the County. There also seemed to be the need to test if existing practices are making a difference regarding health inequalities or if the focus needs to change.

There is also an identified need to invest in workforce development and better coordination of opportunities

There was an expressed desire to produce a performance management culture within any new body established. This may have resulted from the recently publicised TAES model (Towards an excellent framework) and the ongoing ever increasing desire by the government to demonstrate a continuous improvement in public services. The need is to demonstrate the added value to the existing networks within Nottinghamshire and would also assist in the aim of providing a clear, concise and defined purpose with measurable targets that are evident to all key stakeholders.

- **Image and Credibility**

There is a sense of too much talk and no decision/action and a feeling of need to engage decision makers within some form of executive board to strengthen the voice for sport across the county. Whilst there is clear evidence from media articles regarding the successful local delivery of sport initiatives such as Youth Games, disability sport and

## ***SECTION II – STUDY FINDINGS***

SSCO partnerships, there is no single marketing strategy for sport across the county. It is clear that there is an opportunity for the county to better celebrate and promote its achievements, innovation and best practice, both within the county, and sport development networks at regional and national level.

This was further developed into the need to engage a wider scope of partners within a CSP

- **Additionality**

The establishment of a CSP for the county must be in a position to influence, and guide policy at county and regional level, to ensure that it fully represents all the sport development interests across the county. This is particularly important, given the variance across the county, in terms of resources, approach, focus and priorities within local authorities, sport development teams, other statutory, community and voluntary agencies. This approach is also the optimum way of reflecting, and addressing the equally important issues of variance in deprivation, engagement, social policy, health, provision for youth, education, and community safety across the county, within the partner agencies that need to be part of the overall CSP partnership.

## ***SECTION III – THE NEED FOR A NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CSP***

### **The Rationale for a Nottinghamshire CSP**

3.1 On the basis of our findings, the rationale for establishing a Nottinghamshire CSP is:

- The lack of a defined purpose and vision for sport in Nottinghamshire
- The opportunity to align future delivery with key local and national priorities as well as sustaining the sports development services
- The need to invest and develop the workforce
- The need for a collective voice for volunteers, and school sport volunteers
- The opportunity for objective communication, co-ordination, influence and enabling across the county, on behalf of sport
- The need for strategic and relevant decision-making for sport at a high level
- The need for influence at a high strategic level, in relation to the development of sport across the county and within a regional and national context
- The opportunity to promote sport in the county, and for the county, and in so doing raise its profile with partners, and potential partners
- The opportunity to engage with wider partnerships on behalf of sport in the county, in addition to the existing, more local partnerships, to reflect the current wider environment for sport and active lifestyles
- The opportunity to build on the existing activity and 'good' in the county
- The opportunity to look, feel, and deliver differently for sport in Nottinghamshire
- The opportunity to collectively market the good work across Nottinghamshire sports development for added profile and market place.

### **The Potential Value of a Nottinghamshire CSP**

3.2 Based on the evidence from this study it is clear that a CSP in Nottinghamshire has the potential to add value to existing services. In identifying the new value a CSP can offer it is also important to recognise the limitations of its potential role:

## SECTION III – THE NEED FOR A NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CSP

| Potential New Value<br>(to explore further)  | Potential Limitations<br>(to avoid)  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single minded focus on sport*</li> <li>• Authority with accountability to develop a shared vision, high level planning and decision making</li> <li>• Role to strengthen partnership working, communication and common core services across the county</li> <li>• Independent - to attract support &amp; investment that public sector can not</li> <li>• Market penetration into new areas</li> <li>• Ability to take risks &amp; test new ways</li> <li>• Advocacy – to promote sport, the partnership and the work of partners</li> <li>• Influence at a high strategic level</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not perceived as the only voice of sport or provider of services</li> <li>• Not viewed as a merger or take over</li> <li>• Does not seek to control or dominate</li> <li>• Does not duplicate or put at risk existing services</li> <li>• Does not deliver at local level</li> <li>• It is not a local authority service</li> <li>• Does not overstretch its resources</li> <li>• Is not another talking shop!</li> </ul> |

\* European definition covering sport, physical education and activity

### Recommendations

- 3.3 Consultation reveals that there is growing confusion, frustration and disinterest regarding a CSP in Nottinghamshire because it is a subject that has been talked about for a relatively long period of time without much perceived progress. Consequently there is already a credibility issue and 'baggage' to overcome. The consultation has been extensive. Further consultation will give diminishing returns on the subject of need, whether there should be one and what value it offers. The evidence collected provides both a rationale and potential value of a CSP in Nottinghamshire.
- 3.4 There is much to gain by making decisions on the direction for the way forward. The three principal options the Custodial Group have considered are:
- 1 Acceptance of these findings and support for establishing a CSP in Nottinghamshire
  - 2 Rejection of these findings and continue the research to prove its value
  - 3 Rejection of these findings and the concept of a CSP in Nottinghamshire
- 3.5 The Custodial Group agreed the first option at their meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2004. The next section sets out our proposed approach and recommendations for moving forward.

## SECTION IV – MOVING FORWARD

### Basic Concepts

- 4.1 Fundamentally the role of a CSP is to bring together three different sectors in a way that adds value to their individual efforts for the development of sport across their geographic area. The three sectors are:
- **Education sector:** including schools, LEAs, further and higher institutions
  - **Community sector:** including health and other cross cutting themes
  - **Sports sector:** including the voluntary and employed workforce
- 4.2 It is also important to recognise that in addition to the important contributions of the voluntary and public sectors, commercial enterprises will increasingly need to be involved in the future development of sport in the county, given their increasing role in facility development and management, and funding.
- 4.3 Consequently CSPs have a dual purpose:
- **Partnership focus** – building a high performing partnership of agencies across the three sectors enabling them to increase their collective influence, work better together and attract investment to benefit sport
  - **Sports focus** - building and improving a co-ordinated sports system for people in their areas to access, participate and progress in sport.
- 4.4 The European definition of sport is being used by most CSPs and Sport England:
- Sport means all forms of physical activity, which through casual or organised participation, aims at improving physical fitness and mental well being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels”*  
(Council of Europe, European Sports Charter, 1993)
- 4.5 Our research reveals Nottinghamshire has developed a substantial sports system that works well and is valued by most of the sports governing bodies involved in the consultation processes. It also reveals there is room for improvement and for raising standards of service and there are areas of duplication amongst the key providers where resources could be used to better effect. In moving forward, it is critical that this sports system is retained and enhanced and not put at risk.
- 4.6 It is the partnership focus across Nottinghamshire where current practice is ad hoc and there is scope for extending the level of co-ordination and influence between and within each of the three sectors. This is the area that will bring most added value through a CSP.

## SECTION IV – MOVING FORWARD

### Lessons from Other County Sports Partnerships

- 4.7 Many involved in the consultation process, including the Custodial Group, have asked the questions:
- What's happening in other CSPs?
  - Is there anything we can learn from or replicate?
  - Or are we that different and why?
- 4.8 We have up to date knowledge of progress being made in 75% (33) of the CSPs across England. This section attempts to highlight those aspects that are most relevant to the situation in Nottinghamshire. A deliberate decision has been taken not to provide detailed operating models at this stage because we feel this would distract attention away from the high level issues and decisions that need to be addressed if Nottinghamshire is to move forward. We also believe Nottinghamshire is uniquely different and therefore needs a customised way forward that best suits its circumstances.
- 4.9 The DCMS and Sport England have agreed to the target of all CSPs being *fit for purpose by April 2006*. This is a tight timescale for CSPs that, similar to Nottinghamshire, have yet to be established.
- 4.10 Currently the majority, if not all, CSPs are: reviewing their vision and core purpose and designing their strategic frameworks, operating model and governance, decision making and staffing structures. Some are at the start of the process, other are further along. Only a few, if any, have completed it and are fully operational. Therefore the lessons learnt are evolving and there is limited evidence available for impact assessment. The evidence that is available focuses on:
- Past practice based on Active Sports
  - Processes for reviewing, managing change and strategic planning
  - Different conceptual models that are emerging but remain untested by CSPs.
- 4.11 The research already undertaken in this study deals satisfactory with current practice in mainstream sports services.
- 4.12 Compared to other CSPs Nottinghamshire is the 17<sup>th</sup> largest in terms of its population size, which represents 2% of the population of England. Recent figures from the Active Sports Database (December 2004) reveals Nottinghamshire's comparative position in relation to the following KPIs based on cumulative figures since the start of the programme:
- Participants involved - 6<sup>th</sup> highest representing 3.5% of the total across all of the CSP
  - Clubs involved – 4<sup>th</sup> highest representing 4.3% of the total across all of the CSP

## SECTION IV – MOVING FORWARD

- Coaches involved – 3<sup>rd</sup> highest representing 4.9% of the total across all of the CSP.
- 4.13 This data adds further weight to our conclusion that the sports focus part Nottinghamshire's current practice is in good shape and should be retained.
- 4.14 In terms of processes used for reviewing, managing change and strategic planning a variety of methods are being used by other CSPs including:
- In house, employment of consultants or a combination
  - Traditional method of research, report, consultation and recommendations
  - Active engagement and involvement of partners
  - Linked into leadership development
  - Appointment of a Partnership Director/Development Manager
  - Appointment of an executive structure to manage the change and set up phase.
- 4.15 Nottinghamshire has applied the first two approaches so far. It now needs to look at the appropriate method for moving forward. Early lessons from other CSP would suggest the need for:
- **Active engagement of partners** – a facilitation approach with decision making built in not only ensure ownership but is also time effective in the longer term (otherwise reports and strategies will still require communication, understanding, engagement, approval and adoption that will all take effort and time).
  - **A team approach** – a Director/Manager will help significantly to drive this work but cannot do it all alone (it's a partnership not a one-person show!).
  - **Leadership** - is a fundamental ingredient for change and so developing leaders, partnership working and strategy simultaneously offers early wins on all three fronts and provides the highest probability of sustainable success.
  - **A management structure for decision making** to maintain momentum and give direction.
- 4.16 The time to explore different operating models is when the basis of a vision and strategy has been agreed. However, all the evidence would suggest a Partnership Director/Manager is a basic requirement and the role has a core set of competencies, skills and behaviours. Making this appointment at the start of the process offers the advantages of extra human resources, leadership ability (a core competency) and the opportunity to gain understanding and ownership of the work as it develops.
- 4.17 Sports provision across Nottinghamshire is a complex picture of a significant scale. Moving forward is therefore likely to be complex and require a combination of:
- Establishing the new - vision, strategy, relationships, business operations and functions
  - Improving existing services

## SECTION IV – MOVING FORWARD

- Merging some areas of existing practice
  - Managing expectation and change.
- 4.18 Taking all of the above factors into consideration Nottinghamshire needs to design a CSP that will help give it the added value by extending the partnership focus whilst retaining and enhancing its current sports services. No other CSP has such a combination of factors.

### Proposals

- 4.19 At the Custodial meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2004 the following principles were identified for moving this work forward in Nottinghamshire:
- **Collective agreement to establish a CSP** – a positive statement to move forward
  - **Executive Board** – with influence, authority and balanced representation
  - **Leadership** – identifying and investing in leaders who will help establish, raise the profile, provide the stimulus and motivation, champion, gain support and, drive forward the CSP at strategic and operational levels
  - **Appointing a Chair** – who can be a respected figure head by all partners
  - **Appointing a Director/Manager** – with the ability, time and authority to help lead this work with the Interim Executive and with other partner agencies
  - **Facilitation process** – for: agreeing a shared vision, developing leaders, engaging new partners, attracting ‘new blood’, exploring new ways of working, identifying a clear focus and priorities for action
  - **Independence** – ensuring the CSP has the independency to champion sport on behalf of its partners and to harness joint effort for the benefit of sport in Nottinghamshire, being able to operate dynamically and innovatively
  - **Supportive conditions** – creating a supportive environment that will give those involved in setting up the CSP the best chance of making it thrive and succeed.
- 4.20 A presentation reporting progress, research findings and the Custodial Group’s early ideas on moving forward was scheduled to be presented to the Nottinghamshire Sports Development Officers Forum and the Chief Leisure Officers Group in December 2004. Unfortunately the latter meeting was postponed and is now taking place in the New Year.
- 4.21 The SDO forum, at which there was good representation from all three community, education and sports sectors, did consider in detail the review findings.
- 4.22 The comments made reinforced the findings of the research study and gave strong support to the basic proposals and principles for moving forward.
- 4.23 These proposals and principles that have emerged independently through the consultation process also incorporate the Regional Sports Boards ‘givens’ for core funding.

## **SECTION IV – MOVING FORWARD**

### **Conditions for a Sustainable Success**

4.24 To realise the full potential of a CSP for Nottinghamshire it will be important that it is set up in a supportive environment conducive to achieving early wins and sustainable success. The Custodial Group identified the following conditions on which a Nottinghamshire CSP can thrive at its meeting that was held on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2004:

- A clear direction for the Nottinghamshire CSP
- An action orientated focus
- A shared understanding of added value
- Consistent use and understanding of terminology being used
- Open to new ideas and flexible thinking
- Capable of organic growth
- Inclusive to all sectors with balanced representation
- Independent of any one agency or sector
- Synergy – being more than the sum of the parts
- Demonstrate and develop leaders and leadership
- Positive image and profile
- Independence
- An inclusive process for establishing the CSP and agreeing the shared vision, values, high level strategy, success measures and operating model
- A CSP core team in place and well supported to understand, own, influence and contribute to the emerging CSP
- Mutually beneficial and well understood relationships between the CSP and major service providers with formalised agreements and success measures
- Effective two-way communications.

### **Process and Timescales**

4.25 The following process for moving forward is based on our research in Nottinghamshire and in other CSPs and our experience of other leadership development and strategic planning processes in sport and in the business world.

4.26 The key features of the process are:

- Parallel focus on developing: leaders, partnership and strategy
- Investing in different levels of leadership
- Encouraging leaders to lead, champion, work as a team and take responsibility for decisions
- Encouraging new blood
- Being inclusive, engaging, open and transparent
- Having clear milestones with strict deadlines and a clear process plan

## ***SECTION IV – MOVING FORWARD***

- Providing opportunities for stimulating thinking and positive learning
- Celebrating achievements.

4.27 To meet Sport England's timescale of having the CSP established and fit for purpose by April 06 the following timescales indicate the activities that need to be undertaken and when:

### Spring 05

- Communication of this Report with stakeholders
- Confirmation of decisions on moving forward
- Recruit Executive Board, Chair, Partnership Director/Development Manager and consultants for leadership programme and the leadership team members

### Summer 05

- Stakeholder event linked to Nottinghamshire Youth Games and introduction of the Leadership Team
- Leadership Team commence work facilitated by consultants and Partnership Director/Executive/Chair with resources for actively engaging stakeholders, staff and volunteers

### Autumn/Winter 05/06

- Milestone for agreeing outline of vision, strategy and budgets
- Milestone for agreeing operational model, governance structures and priority projects
- Managing change process

### April 06

- March 06 – CSP fully operational

### Throughout

- Stakeholder interaction events and opportunities

## **Executive Board**

4.28 At its meetings in November and December 2004 the Custodial Group agreed the need for an Executive Board with the authority and influence to drive forward this work. The following principles were suggested for the Executive Board:

- Chair – with high influence, status and independence (explore honorarium to attract the best person and buy out time)
- Small enough to operate effectively (maximum of 15 people)
- Have equal representation from the community, education and sports sectors
- Include key players at a senior level (County Council, City Council and Sport England)

## ***SECTION IV – MOVING FORWARD***

- Include 'new blood' especially significant others cited in this report (health, FE/HE) and those that can bring independence and fresh thinking
- Include some 'big hitters' that can command interest and respect
- All with a positive attitude and aspirations for a Nottinghamshire CSP.

4.29 The suggested Executive Board and Leadership Team could potentially involve over 40 key people as champions, advocates, drivers for this work across Nottinghamshire and will provide the threshold to stimulate interest and make it work. The process is designed to engage significantly more people and agencies in a meaningful way gaining their understanding, support and ownership along the way.

### **Next Steps**

4.30 The next steps include:

- Communicating the findings of this review and posting it on the web site with:
  - Executive Summary
  - Invite letter
  - Presentation
  - Key questions
- Deadline for responses by Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2005.