

EXETER CITY COUNCIL

EXETER HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

EXETER: THE MOST PHYSICALLY ACTIVE CITY IN THE SOUTH WEST REGION BY 2018?

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 There is strong evidence for the health benefits that people can gain from participating in regular moderately intense physical activity:

“Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of many chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions. Even relatively small increases in physical activity are associated with some protection against chronic diseases and an improved quality of life”.

- 1.2 Whilst there is also likely to be wider social, environmental and economic benefits:

“These benefits can deliver cost savings for health and social care services. However, the benefits of physical activity extend further to improved productivity in the workplace, reduced congestion and pollution through active travel, and healthy development of children and young people.” (Department of Health 2011)

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 Analysis of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment identifies issues in Exeter relating to the levels of overweight and obese children in City primary schools particularly at year 6. At the same time levels of adult participation in physical activity are low. In view of the research evidence set out in section 1 Exeter faces a major health challenge.
- 2.2 The Exeter Health and Wellbeing Board is well placed to oversee a co-ordinated and coherent approach to increasing levels of physical activity across all age groups in the City leading to Exeter being the most active city in the South West Region by 2018.
- 2.3 A ‘Physical Activity Challenge’ could focus on four strands:
- Using infrastructure; built and natural environment and facilities
 - Promoting community networks, organisations and clubs
 - Active communities, schools, further and higher education and workplaces
 - Communications and marketing

3. RECOMMENDATION

The Board members agree the adoption of physical activity as the main health and wellbeing priority for development and request a project plan to be presented at the next Board meeting.

PUBLIC HEALTH SPECIALIST

