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| Committee(s): Community and Health Committee | Date: 13 September 2021 |
| Subject: Elite Athlete Support Programme | Wards Affected: ALL |
| Report of: Kim Anderson | Public |
| Report Author/s: Name: Kim Anderson Telephone: 01277 312634 E-mail: kim.anderson@brentwood.gov.uk | For Decision |

Summary

The Free Access for National Sports People (FANS) scheme was established as a national sports development initiative providing support to the Country's leading talented and elite athletes. The scheme aims to provide national level and above, sportspeople with free access to leisure and sports facilities for personal training and development. The Council is keen to support this scheme which is managed in Essex by Active Essex and currently there are 10 local authorities across Essex that support this scheme.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

R1. Agree that Brentwood Borough Council joins the Free Access for National Sports People (FANS) scheme and works with the Leisure operator at the Brentwood Centre to provide free access to the leisure and sports facilities for elite athletes.

Main Report

Introduction and Background

1. The Free Access for National Sports People (FANS) scheme was established as a national sports development initiative providing support to the Country's leading talented and elite athletes. The scheme aims to provide national level and above, sportspeople with free access to local leisure and sports facilities for personal training and development.
2. The FANS scheme in Essex is managed through Active Essex and currently there are 10 participating local authorities that support the scheme offering free access to their facilities.

3. To be eligible an individual must be a member of a national team or squad OR listed within the top 10 nationally within their sport and be a resident or belong to a club within the participating borough in which they are applying to use the FANS scheme.
4. Under the Essex scheme, sports people accepted on the scheme will be provided with a photo ID membership card that must be shown at each facility on each occasion, to enable free access. This card will be valid for the entire year shown on the card.
5. Each FANS member will be entitled to free training at Council owned facilities as agreed with facility staff, during designated times, when the facilities are open, and providing there is no disruption to other users and no additional cost is incurred by the facility e.g., floodlighting. If a coach is planning to accompany a FANS member under the age of 16, a letter of approval must be provided from the parents of the individual, or, the coach must provide proof of their attendance at a county Child Protection course.
6. Active Essex will stop accepting applications from October of that calendar year. Potentially members can send their applications for the following year in December ready for the new year.
7. The renewal process will start in November of each year where Active Essex will contact the individual and ask for updates of information and evidence of current eligibility. Once this is received, the FANS membership will be renewed for the following year.
8. FANS members will be required to meet with facility staff prior to use, to agree areas to be used and times of usage. FANS members must follow the rules and operating procedures of each facility at all times. FANS members will be allowed one free training partner if the sport so requires and/or personal coach if appropriate. However, all instructors/coaches will be required to provide evidence of insurance cover when they first visit the centre. If FANS members intend to use fitness gym facilities, they will need to undertake an induction, which must be paid for.

9. In return, the Council would ask members to participate in FANS days organised by Brentwood Borough Council or the Leisure Operator for the Brentwood Centre to 'give something back' to the local community. On these FANS days, the athletes could be on hand to discuss their sport with members of the public who use the Council's facilities whether this be training or dietary needs to competition and performance preparation. We also provide each FANS member personalised #teambrentwood training hoodie which we ask them to wear during their local competitions to help promote the partnership. We fully understand that whilst on International and National duties Team apparel will be required to be worn to fulfil sponsorship duties.

Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

10. In order to access the FANS scheme, an individual must live or work in Brentwood.
11. The individual will also need to provide evidence from their sport's National Governing Body that they are performing at the appropriate level to qualify for the scheme.
12. The scheme is reviewed annually, and individuals complete an electronic form on the Active Essex website providing evidence of their performance level, which must be endorsed by the appropriate governing body of the sport and provide passport photographs for their ID membership card.
13. All FANS applications are sent to the represented borough manager for the chosen facility/facilities to approve and then these are sent back to Active Essex for them to issue the ID cards.

Consultation

The scheme is currently in operation across 10 local authority areas so feedback on the scheme will go back to Active Essex.

References to Corporate Plan

The FANS scheme sits under the Developing our Communities strand and is a key objective for 2021-22 that the Council develop a support package for local elite athletes.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)
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The access to the Council leisure facilities will be part of the community element of the contract with the leisure operator managing the Brentwood Centre facility. This access is free to the individual but not to the detriment of operating the leisure facility therefore there are no direct financial concerns regarding this programme. However, by offering this access this enhances the social value the Council contributes to the borough.

Costs associated with this programme such as clothing, can be met from existing budgets.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) and Monitoring Officer
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There are no direct legal implications of the scheme. The FANS scheme contributes to the improvement of people's health and wellbeing.

Economic Implications

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director Planning and Economic Development

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Supporting individuals and investment in sport and leisure facilities will likely help provide specific economic benefits, such as the provision of jobs on site, as well as help to maintain a healthy local economy.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Name & Title: Kim Anderson, Corporate Manager Communities, Leisure and Health

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The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

The proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic.

Health & Wellbeing Implications

Name/Title: Jo Cory, Corporate Health & Wellbeing Officer

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The FANS scheme not only supports individuals on their performance pathway but can also provide role models that can inspire others to take up the sport, increase participation or just become more active.