

Title of Report	Sport England Grant Award for the Hackney Place Partnership	
Key Decision No	CED S639	
For Consideration By	Cabinet	
Meeting Date	24 November 2025	
Cabinet Member	Cllr Kennedy, Cabinet member for Health, Adult Social Care, Voluntary Sector and Culture	
Classification	Open	
Ward(s) Affected	All wards	
Key Decision & Reason	Yes	Significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards
Implementation Date if Not Called In	2 December 2025	
Group Director	Dawn Carter-McDonald	
Report Author	Lola Akindoyin, Head of Programme - Sport England Place Partnership Email: lola.akindoyin@hackney.gov.uk	

1. Cabinet Member's introduction

- 1.1. I am delighted that Sport England have committed to continuing their work with us in Hackney, focussed on reducing inequalities in physical activity.
- 1.2. It gives me great pleasure to recommend to Cabinet that we accept this Lottery Grant of £1,680,376 and an in-principle funding award of £293,000 ringfenced to improve multi-use games areas in the borough.

As a borough, Hackney has much to be positive about in relation to the different ways that we support residents to live more active lifestyles. Data from [Sport England's Active Lives](#) survey and [Active Travel indicators](#) show that as a borough, Hackney has some of the most active residents in London.

However, we also know that for some residents, being physically active and incorporating regular movement into their lives continues to be difficult and is

at lower levels than needed (Chief Medical Officer [guidelines](#)) to make a positive impact on an individual's health. In Hackney, we estimate that around 30% of adults are doing less than the recommended levels of physical activity for good health, with this increasing for particular population groups. Further information is available [here](#).

- 1.3. Hackney was selected as one of Sport England's 12 local delivery pilots back in 2018. Much of the work has been focused in the King's Park ward, engaging the local community to develop rich insights into both the enablers and barriers to being active. This insight was particularly important in highlighting the need to consider wider inequalities and local context impacting physical activity, and re-enforced the importance of working across different elements of our local system to achieve the ambitions of the programme - to reduce inequalities in physical activity. It has been long understood that there is no magic pill to address inactivity, which is recognised as being complex and requires a range of interventions influenced by local context.
- 1.4. The work in King's Park has been summarised into two thematic areas of focus with specific opportunities developed to test and learn:
 - Inclusion and Tackling Interconnected Inequalities
 - Active Environments
- 1.5. As a result of the work in King's Park, new partnerships have been formed, collaborations developed, new and existing spaces have been activated and approximately a third of the population anticipated to be inactive has been involved in King's Park Moving Together. By taking a population level approach, we wanted to reach as many residents as possible, with a particular focus on women and girls, older people, residents from Black and Global Majority communities, and children and families. Based on the data available, 72% of those engaged were women, 59% from Black and Global majority communities with good participation across most age groups, although there is limited data on engagement of young people from secondary school age upwards.
- 1.6. Some notable achievements include:
 - establishing a cycle hub supporting over 500 residents to learn to ride or improve their cycling skills, with 91% from Black and Global Majority communities
 - engagement with the health sector and training 70 Social Prescribers to have more confident conversations about being active
 - partnering with 36 partner organisations to deliver physical activity opportunities to local people
 - improving and activating Daubeney Fields as a place for everyone to be active, with the Swing Fitness boxes at Daubeney becoming some of the most successful in London

- developing a partnership between the Council, Sport England and The Pedro Club, raising £3m partnership funding to refurbish the club
- 700 physical activity packs distributed (during the pandemic lockdowns)
- establishing a borough wide physical activity network for voluntary sector physical activity partners
- collaborating with a range of Council teams including Public Health, Community Gangs Team, Parks and Green Spaces, Libraries and Culture and Young Hackney, to enhance physical activity opportunities, further highlighting the importance of working across service as well as organisational boundaries. An example of this is the partnership project at Homerton Library, offering yoga and fun physical activity sessions in a safe, accessible and trusted environment.

1.7. Due to the cross-cutting nature of a whole-systems approach, this work must continue to involve different partners and sections of the Council. And I am pleased to see several areas of my portfolio connecting with this work: health, libraries, and the voluntary sector.

1.8. Improving mental wellbeing is a priority within Hackney's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and is great to see Sport England's commitment to bringing both mental and physical wellbeing together by providing investment for a partnership with the City and Hackney Talking Therapies service. This will deliver a mental health trailblazer with the aim of embedding physical activity into treatment plans for people experiencing low level anxiety and depression.

1.9. With work to develop the MUGA (multi-use games areas) Charter starting in my ward and championed by Hackney Quest, I am also pleased to see the important emphasis on these spaces and how this aligns with work that the Council is already committed to progressing in the borough. Sport England are committing an in-principle capital award for investment in MUGAs, as well as revenue funding for activation: an exciting opportunity to improve these local spaces, which can be incredibly important to young people, the wider community and partners who support them.

1.10. Sport England has committed to continuing to work with us, as a result of the collaborative approach that we've taken from the beginning, and the learning that has emerged. I want to thank all the partners that have contributed to this work to date and also Sport England for their continued support for this work in Hackney. We remain committed to supporting residents to live more active and healthy lives and this further funding gives us an opportunity to do more, to build sustainability into our approach and for learning from Hackney to continue influencing what we do locally and in other parts of the country.

1.11. **Group Director's introduction**

- 1.12. We welcome the opportunity to continue our work with Sport England and our commitment to supporting residents to lead active and healthy lives.
- 1.13. Our work with Sport England began in 2018, when Hackney was selected as one of the 12 local delivery pilots, funded through a bold new strategic investment approach by Sport England to tackle physical inactivity.
- 1.14. Sport England's commitment to working with Hackney and continuing to invest in communities where the need is greatest, aligns with other work in the borough to ensure that the support and opportunities are available for those experiencing significant inequality.
- 1.15. Learning from King's Park Moving Together has helped to share the barriers and challenges that some residents face in trying to incorporate regular physical activity into their lives. Many of the issues raised are connected to the wider determinants of health and the Council's strategic plan outlines how wider activities will contribute to addressing health inequalities including ways to enable more physical activity.
- 1.16. As the place partnership enters this next phase of work, our focus remains on a whole-systems approach to achieving equitable access, experiences, and outcomes for residents. We will continue to collaborate across organisational and service boundaries, leveraging what we can to enhance physical activity levels. We will continue to learn from the place partnership's work, using this knowledge to inform and shape future ways of working.
- 1.17. As we establish our new Community Partnerships function, a cross-council "Communities Group" is also being formed to enhance our engagement with communities and community partners. I am confident that the place partnership will significantly contribute to this work, fostering further opportunities for collaboration, learning, and insight.
- 1.18. The Council's commitment to closer collaboration with communities, partners, and each other is embedded in our refreshed voluntary sector strategy, the redesign of our voluntary sector grants programme, and our [Equality Plan](#). This relational and human-centred approach will help us achieve our [future ways of working](#) vision: "a Council that works side by side with communities and partners to tackle inequality and injustice to ensure everyone, regardless of background, identity, or circumstance, can live a good life."
- 1.19. As outlined in the Council-wide Corporate Transformation Programme we are committed to working together, to build a better Council by:
- Putting residents first by providing for the people who live and work in Hackney.
 - Securing Hackney's future by maintaining financial stability and investing in what matters most.
 - Changing together by acting as one Council.

- Modernised, flexible, collaborative and skilled to meet our future challenges.

1.20 Partnerships such as this (with Sport England and others) are important to our transformation objectives and ensuring that we can continue to do our best for Hackney residents. We are grateful for Sport England's ongoing commitment, partnership, and support within the borough.

2. **Recommendations**

2.1. **For Cabinet to approve a fourth variation to the existing grant funding agreement with Sport England and acceptance of a Lottery Grant of £1,680,376 and an in-principle funding award of £293,000 ringfenced to improve multi-use games areas in the borough.**

3. **Reason(s) for decision**

3.1. This is external funding relating to the Council's partnership with Sport England and provides resources to continue the work in Hackney on developing a whole system's approach to reducing inequalities in physical activity and improving physical activity levels in the borough.

3.2. This funding represents Sport England's 'deepening' investment and has been awarded to build on Hackney's original work as a local delivery pilot. The investment is to create the local conditions for transformational and systemic change, with a line of sight to physical activity.

4. **Background**

4.1. For the last seven years, Sport England has been working in partnership with the Council, and investing in the borough to reduce inequalities in physical activity. Hackney was selected as one of 12 places to become local delivery pilots. The aim of the local delivery pilots (LDPs) was to tackle population-level physical inactivity by testing innovative, place-based strategies that foster sustainable, whole-system change within communities. These pilots were focused on understanding local identities and structures to create long-lasting, positive changes and find solutions that address inequalities for the least active groups in society, providing a blueprint for broader national application.

4.2. By taking a hyper-local approach and coproducing the programme with the local community, we've learned about the things that work to encourage and enable people to be more physically active. Much of this work has been about community-driven change and influencing work aimed at reducing the systemic inequalities linked to the wider determinants of health. In addition to the direct benefits for residents, our work has enabled significant learning about how to create the conditions for success in a diverse, long-standing community where physical activity often takes a lower priority than

immediate pressures around caring responsibilities, financial resilience or community safety.

- 4.3. In response to learning from Hackney and the other 11 pilots, Sport England have increased their approach to [place-based partnerships](#). This commitment is outlined in Sport England's 10 year strategy [Uniting the Movement](#) and Hackney remains an area of focus for reducing inequalities in physical activity.
- 4.4. With data highlighting particular areas of the borough where there are lower rates of physical activity and high levels of wider inequalities, the work will extend beyond the boundaries of King's Park to create collaborative approaches focused on the following areas in particular:
- a) Hackney Marshes
 - b) Amhurst Road and Pembury Estate
 - c) Homerton South
 - d) Haggerston East
 - e) Hackney Downs
 - f) Woodberry Down & Manor House (high CYP inactivity)
 - g) Stamford Hill South (high CYP inactivity)

(based on MSOA areas: a Middle-layer Super Output Area (MSOA) is a medium-sized statistical geography used in England and Wales, sitting between Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) and Local Authorities. Each MSOA contains around 5,000-15,000 residents or 2,000-6,000 households)

- 4.5. Over the next 2.5 years, we will:
- continue to work in partnership with community organisations working in the target areas and invest in strengthening their capacity to support those less likely to be active
 - establish a formal partnership through a new collaboration with the City and Hackney Talking Therapies Service and wider partners, to develop sustainable approaches to embedding physical activity within talking therapies treatment pathways for Step 2 interventions relating to anxiety and depression
 - focus on the role of hyper local spaces such as libraries and multi-use games areas in supporting physical activity, developing both activation and capital (MUGA only) improvements
 - improve data collection and storytelling, with a greater focus on learning to affect change based on understanding the conditions that enable change to happen

Strategic Policy Context

- 4.6. The approach and work proposed has been informed by local, regional and national context, with the following as some of the key policy drivers.
- 4.7. **Hackney's Strategic Plan - Working for a better Hackney:** the Council's overarching plan aims to eradicate inequality and build opportunity and well-being for all residents. The plan includes priorities to address the wider social determinants of health and structural inequalities, creating the foundation needed to help reduce inequalities in physical activity.
- 4.8. **Hackney's Equality Plan:** The plan commits the Council to tackling inequality at every life stage. Its focus on using an intersectional approach to removing discrimination and socio-economic disadvantages, will contribute to eliminating the barriers that can prevent diverse communities from being active.
- 4.9. **Hackney's Health and Wellbeing Strategy:** this strategy focuses on improving mental health, increasing social connection, and supporting greater financial security. Its link to physical activity inequalities is through a holistic prevention approach, recognising that improving mental health and social connection often involves promoting physical activity and addressing the root causes (like financial insecurity) that act as barriers to participation.
- 4.10. **Hackney's Voluntary and Community Strategy:** the VCS is valued for being closest to the communities facing the starkest inequalities and for providing preventative support and tailored services that statutory agencies may struggle to reach. By taking a person-centred approach, the VCS delivers many of the grassroots, hyper-local physical activity opportunities which are effective at reaching those likely to be inactive.
- 4.11. **City and Hackney Healthy Weight Needs Assessment:** the Healthy Weight Needs Assessment identifies local unmet needs related to diet, physical activity, and weight, aiming for a "whole system approach" to improve health and wellbeing.
- 4.12. **Uniting the Movement: Sport England's 10 year strategy:** This national strategy is explicitly focused on ensuring everyone has an equal chance to be active, regardless of background, by tackling the deeply embedded inequalities in sport and physical activity. It directly addresses inequalities including "Connecting with Health and Wellbeing" and creating "Active Environments" in places that need the most support.
- 4.13. **10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future:** This national health plan commits to shifting the NHS from treating sickness to prevention, and endorses a **place-based approach** and investments into community sport facilities to integrate movement into the new Neighbourhood Health Service model.
- 4.14. **Let's Move London: A Manifesto for a Healthier and More Active City:** This manifesto calls on the Mayor of London to be bold in tackling the inactivity

crisis by breaking the direct link between inactivity and inequality, which has been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis. It proposes embedding physical activity in urban planning and major developments and champions policies to improve access, acknowledging that children in deprived areas are three times as likely to be inactive.

Options appraisal

- 4.15. Due to the capacity available locally, there are limited opportunities to further develop this work without this dedicated external resource, although it should be noted that this work will continue to inform and contribute to wider work in the borough, in line with the need for a 'whole systems approach'.

Equality, inclusion, diversity and belonging (including statutory equality impact assessment)

- 4.16. The approach and investment is targeted at those likely to be less active and this includes:

- Older people
- Disabled people and those with long term health conditions
- Women
- People from Black and Global Majority Communities

- 4.17. As outlined within the Council's Equalities Plan, the approach to working with communities is developed as strength based, systemic, trauma informed and anti-discriminatory, recognising the intersectionality of inequality and how it presents.

- 4.18. Sport England has specific strategic outcomes relating to positive activities for children and young people, and this is reflected in the design of the work proposed in Hackney, recognising the link between play and safe accessible, local spaces as important contributors to young people and opportunities to be physically active.

- 4.19. Sport England is using a Place Need Classification to identify the places where investment in sport and physical activity can have the greatest impact. The classification combines physical activity data from Active Lives Surveys, as well as wider social data including the index of multiple deprivation (IMD), community need and health inequalities data to help understand the needs of an area.

Sustainability and climate change

- 4.20. The Council is committed to the fight against climate change, working towards a net zero Hackney, with cleaner air, less motor traffic, and more liveable neighbourhoods. Walking, cycling and wheeling are forms of physical activity and active travel, and this work provides further opportunities to potentially support more of both.

Consultation/engagement

- 4.21. As the grant award and investment relates to continuing work that is already in progress and has been co-designed with a range of stakeholders, no additional engagement activities have taken place.
- 4.22. Examples of co-design and engagement include:
- Discussions at the borough-wide Physical Activity Network
 - Establishing a Mental Health Trailblazer Steering Group and consulting Talking Therapies staff and service users
 - Collaborating to align community investment with Public Health's Healthier Hackney grants
 - Collaborating with the MUGA Working Group to develop criteria that can be used to identify sites for capital improvement and activation
- 4.23. Where capital improvements are proposed for MUGAs, further consultation and engagement will be required.

Risk assessment

- 4.24. There are a range of risks linked to not accepting this grant award. These include:
- limited capacity to develop a whole systems approach in Hackney to reducing inequalities in physical activity
 - unable to progress with embedding physical activity into the City and Hackney Talking Therapies Service
 - limited capacity to facilitating further partnership working
 - missed opportunity to secure investment for the voluntary and community sector
 - missed opportunities to improve and activate local spaces, for children and young people in particular

5. Financial implications

- 5.1. This report seeks approval to accept grant funding from Sport England for £1,680,376 and an in-principle funding award of £293,000 ringfenced to improve multi-use games areas in the borough.
- 5.2. The acceptance will be the 4th contract variation with Sport England. The previous awards and proposed variation 4 are listed here:

	Date	In principle funding	Lottery Grant

Original	11/5/2020	£720,000	£1,633,250
Variation 1	5/5/2021		£1,603,950
Variation 2	29/9/2021		£924,980
Variation 3	19/12/2023	-£120,000	£120,000
Variation 4		£293,000	£1,680,376
Total		£893,000	£5,962,556

- 5.3. The funding will be monitored and managed by the existing team in the Chief Executive's directorate. The service will need to ensure they carefully adhere to the terms and conditions of the grant to ensure all funds are claimed in a timely fashion - in particular noting the additional conditions around the in-principle funding.

Financial Implications prepared on behalf of the Group Director Finance & Corporate Resources by John Holden, Assistant Director of Finance - Sustainability, Public Realm and Special Projects,
Email: john.holden@hackney.gov.uk
Date: 31/10/2025

6. **HR/OD implications**

- 6.1. There are no HR and OD implications as a result of this report.

HR/OD implications prepared on behalf of the Director of HR/OD by Sharon Ould, Strategic HR and OD Business Partner
Email: sharon.ould@hackney.gov.uk
Date: 20 October 2025

7. **Legal implications**

- 7.1. The decision in paragraph 2.1 of this Report regarding the receipt by the Council of grant funding of £1,680,376 and an in-principle funding award of £293,000 from Sport England is a key decision under Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 as it is an executive decision, which is likely (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority. Key decisions can be made by Cabinet under Article 13.6 of the Constitution and therefore this decision is being presented to Cabinet for approval.
- 7.2. In order to accept the funding from Sport England the Council will need to enter into a variation to the current grant agreement with them which will set

out the terms of the grant. It is important that the Council comply with the terms of such grant in order to secure the grant funding and ensure it is not subject to clawback. It will also be necessary to ensure that any of the grant sums which are applied in the provision of services or works from third parties are compliant with any clauses in the grant conditions regarding the appointment of third parties, and compliant with both the law regarding procurement and the Council's own internal requirements as set out in Contract Standing Orders.

Legal implications prepared on behalf of the Director of Legal, Democratic & Electoral Services by: Patrick Rodger, Senior Lawyer,
Email: patrick.rodger@hackney.gov.uk
Date: 28 October 2025

Appendix 1 - [Bold Moves - Lessons learnt on achieving healthier, happier, and more social lives through increased physical activity in King's Park, Hackney](#)

Appendix 2 - [What really makes a difference? The impact of delivering community based physical activity](#)

Appendix 3 - [Multi-Use Games Areas Charter](#)

Reason(s) for exemption

None.

Background documents

None.