



THE WIDER CASE FOR FOOTBALL IN KENT

Report to

Kent County Football Association

From the

Centre for Sport, Physical Education & Activity Research (SPEAR)

Canterbury Christ Church University

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Foreword

This report was commissioned by the Kent County Football Association from the Centre for Sport, Physical Education & Activity Research (SPEAR) at Canterbury Christ Church University. The report explores evidence to support the wider case that football can contribute to broader social policy outcomes, investigates the messages and challenges involved in making the local case for football, and provides a framework to support clubs, leagues and the KCFA in making the local case for football and securing provision partnerships.

Throughout the report, a distinction is made between **football provision** and **football-related interventions**:

... by **football provision** we mean the simple provision of football participation opportunities by clubs or the public sector, with no overt aims to address social policy outcomes, and no supporting or related programmes targeting social policy outcomes.

... by **football-related interventions**, we mean interventions that incorporate football participation opportunities into a wider programme of activities specifically targeting particular social policy outcomes, such as the reduction of crime or anti-social behaviour.

In making both the wider case, and the more local case, for football, this report finds that football provision and football-related interventions can make a contribution to locally relevant community and social policy outcomes, and that there appears to be a persuasive case that can be made to local authorities and other potential provision partners.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE WIDER CASE FOR FOOTBALL

PROCESSES

- **Football provision** can have an impact on anti-social behaviour, minor criminality and can enhance community cohesion through **diversion** and **deterrence** effects, but:
 - **IF THE PROVISION IS REMOVED THE EFFECT CEASES.**
- **Football-related interventions** can have an impact on reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and improving health outcomes through integration within **social development programmes** that can effect positive behavioural change or development such that:
 - **WHEN THE INTERVENTION ENDS, THE EFFECT CAN BE SUSTAINED.**

OUTCOMES

- **Football provision** can contribute to community cohesion and pride and, if promoted in innovative ways and tailored to the needs of target groups, can increase physical activity levels among normally less active young people.
 - **BUT THESE OUTCOMES ARE DEPENDENT ON PROVISION BEING PERCEIVED TO BE IN AN INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT.**
 - **Football-related interventions** can have a positive impact in reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour, in reducing physical inactivity, and in promoting healthy behaviours and awareness of health issues. It can also have spin-off benefits for community cohesion.
 - **BUT THE CONTRIBUTION OF FOOTBALL TO THESE OUTCOMES CANNOT BE DELIVERED (OR MEASURED) IN ISOLATION FROM WIDER SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES.**
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MAKING THE LOCAL CASE FOR FOOTBALL

Local research in Kent underpins this section, including interviews with: Dartford Football Club; Medway Messenger Sunday League; Sheppey Sunday League; Medway Messenger Youth League; and Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club.

MESSAGES

...to help make the local case for football

- *A local **competent football provider** can help local authorities more efficiently provide local services by taking on responsibility for the management of local facilities.*
- *Local **football provision** can engage large proportions of young people in the community.*
- *Local **football provision** can contribute to cross-generational community integration.*

- *Local **football provision** can help build respect within communities.*
- *Local **football provision** can help develop a positive local profile and community pride.*
- *Local football provision can contribute to **football-related interventions** that can support the delivery of local social and health objectives.*

CHALLENGES

...that might be faced in making the local case for football

- *Reduction in local authority funding and internal local authority resource constraints.*
- *Pressure on local authority departments to meet internal income generation targets.*
- *Variations in local authorities' policies in relation to asset transfer.*
- *The 'duty of care' of local authorities to only enter into agreements with 'informed partners'.*
- *Lack of capacity, or perceived lack of capacity, among clubs and leagues.*
- *Previous negative experiences in local authorities of asset transfer or management partnerships with community organisations.*

SUPPORT MECHANISMS

...that KCFA might provide to support local football provision partnerships

- *Development of a county-specific and football-specific toolkit on asset transfer.*
- *Awareness raising events on responsibilities and implications of asset transfer.*
- *Provision of a direct legal and financial advice service to small clubs and leagues that do not have the potential to develop such capacity themselves.*
- *Capacity-building training and support to larger clubs and leagues to identify and train individuals within the club or league to develop professional legal and financial skills.*
- *In circumstances where it may make the difference between a partnership taking place and not taking place, underwrite or guarantee the terms of an asset transfer or lease.*
- *Encouragement for clubs and leagues to identify 'liaison officers': individuals with the skillset, or the potential to develop the skillset, to liaise with local authorities and other potential provision partners.*
- *Provision of training and support for liaison officers, and the establishment and support of a county network of liaison officers.*
- *Laying the ground for liaison officers, by making the wider case for football among county opinion formers, and by encouraging and facilitating introductions.*

SUPPORTING THE LOCAL CASE FOR FOOTBALL

SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

- *A support framework to make the local case for football and secure provision partnerships is presented in figure one on page 25.*

RISKS AND REWARDS

- **Risks include:**
 - *Clubs and leagues encouraged to enter into provision partnership beyond their capacity.*
 - *Requirements of asset transfer or management agreements may be daunting for volunteers.*
 - *Smaller clubs and leagues may be de-motivated by the successes of larger clubs and leagues.*
 - *KCFA may suffer reputational damage if the approach is not perceived to be successful.*
 - *A high-profile failure or default may adversely affect existing or potential provision partnerships.*
 - *Poorly trained liaison officers may damage the reputation of the football community in Kent with key opinion formers.*
 - *A lack of capacity, competence or inclination among the KCFA workforce and membership to undertake the work necessary to contribute to football-related interventions.*
 - **Rewards for clubs and leagues include:**
 - Greater access to local facilities, or access to better quality facilities.
 - The possibility, albeit not currently widespread in Kent, that the provision of facility management or maintenance services by clubs or leagues may be offset against facility rental costs.
 - Increased control over how and when clubs and leagues can use facilities.
 - Greater stability and an increased confidence in a secure future.
 - **Rewards for local authorities include:**
 - More effective and cost-efficient management and use of local sport and recreation facilities.
 - Safeguarding the future of local facilities as a community resource for sport and recreation.
 - Enhanced delivery of a range of social and community policy goals.
 - **Rewards for KCFA include:**
 - Securing and safeguarding football provision within Kent.
 - Enhancing the appreciation of football's capacity to contribute to local communities.
 - An enhanced reputation among key opinion formers as an innovative and valued partner in delivering wider community and social goals through football.
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1) EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE WIDER CASE FOR FOOTBALL

This section is informed by a rapid review of previous research and evaluation evidence for the wider impacts football provision and football-related interventions. It is derived from 23 sources of evidence, dated between 1990 and 2011, which were the best quality sources selected from 39 sources initially identified (details of how this was carried out are provided in the methodological annex).

In general, the evidence supports the case that there are advantages and benefits in relation to reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, positive health outcomes, and the development of community cohesion that can flow from either **football provision** or **football-related interventions** (see the Foreword to the report for an explanation of these terms).

The first part of this section examines the evidence for the *processes* by which football provision and football-related interventions can contribute to social goals, whilst the second part examines the evidence for the wider social policy *outcomes* that football provision and football-related interventions can deliver.

PART ONE - PROCESSES

PROCESSES

Football provision can have an impact on anti-social behaviour, minor criminality and can enhance community cohesion through **diversion** and **deterrence** effects, but:

...IF THE PROVISION IS REMOVED THE EFFECT CEASES.

Football-related interventions can have an impact on reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and improving health outcomes through integration within **social development programmes** that can effect positive behavioural change or development such that:

...WHEN THE INTERVENTION ENDS, THE EFFECT CAN BE SUSTAINED.

The evidence (e.g., Nichols, 2007; Laureus, 2009; Pringle *et al*, 2011) shows that football provision and football-related interventions can be grouped into two main categories: (a) those that divert participants away from, or deter, negative activity and behaviour; (b) those that are designed to promote positive social development or behavioural change.

(a) Diversion and Deterrence

Positive social outcomes in the form of crime reduction and positive community development can result from the provision of activities which divert participants from otherwise negative behaviour.

This is generally achieved through the provision of activities at times and in places where concentrations of anti-social behaviour are experienced. This kind of provision also operates at the more universal level of targeting boredom generally, a rationale which underpins the delivery of many sport-focused schemes offered by local authorities during school holidays.

In the context of popular concern regarding youth related crime and anti-social behaviour, an additional positive outcome of such so called diversionary activity can be the positive effect on public opinion of seeking to address the perceived 'problem' of teenagers on the streets by providing young people with something to do (Laureus, 2009).

While diversionary activity is perceived to be more effective when participants progress to a long-term interest in a sporting activity, there is limited evidence to suggest that such progression takes place in football (or any sport) provision that is not part of a wider intervention (Nichols, 2007). This supports the contention that the type of social development approach outlined in (b) is required if long term behaviour changes are a goal (Zarrett *et al*, 2008).

However, such sport-based 'diversions' remain valuable as there are clear opportunities relating to community development and engagement which can flow from such activities and which may be priorities in certain contexts. Evidence shows that diversionary or deterrent focused sport provision (including football) has the capacity to help redress disengagement and disaffection, and promote social inclusion and responsible behaviour through the capacity to engage young people that may feel excluded from society (Gibbons, 2006; Sandford, Duncombe & Armour, 2008). Such provision can also generate a feeling of pride in community facilities and increase the likelihood that the community itself will deter minor criminality such as vandalism of facilities (Nichols, 2007).

The specific advantages of community based football provision over other sports are football's broad popular appeal, and its related potential to be inclusive when delivered in local settings with wider community involvement. Certainly, feedback gained from community football stakeholders in Kent (see section 2) suggests that relatively large proportions of the local community can be engaged in community football provision, which not only provides a diversionary activity to a potentially broad population, but can also facilitate cross-generational interaction which may promote community development, integration and cohesion. Such feedback also suggests that the provision of facilities which generate a sense of pride and attachment can decrease the potential for anti-social behaviour like vandalism.

EVIDENCE SHOWS:

- **Football provision CAN act as a *diversion* to reduce anti-social behaviour and criminality if provided at times when incidences of such behaviour have been high.**
- **Football provision CAN *deter* incidences of minor criminality and anti-social behaviour such as vandalism by building more cohesive and integrated communities that take pride in local facilities and provision.**
- **Football provision alone CANNOT result in longer term behavioural or attitudinal development or changes to deliver social policy goals without being part of wider *football-related interventions* (see (b))**

(b) Social Development

There is widespread evidence that supports the case that in general terms engagement in physical activity and sport has the capacity to positively benefit participants in terms of physical health improvements, and through the development of positive personal and social skills and behaviours (Sandford, Duncombe & Armour, 2008). In the prevailing social context of concerns about the health implications of physical inactivity and concerns with increasing levels of negative social behaviour, this positive capacity indicates football-related interventions can play an important role in addressing contemporary community challenges.

However, while sport, including football, has the potential for a positive impact, the achievement of positive social outcomes and behavioural changes are only likely to result from interventions that are orientated towards achieving specific social policy goals, and that are underpinned by defined social processes. Examples include the development of positive social relations and attitudes through role models such as coaches or established players with community development training that are perceived by participants to be “like me” (Crabbe *et al*, 2006; Sandford, Duncombe & Armour, 2008).

The value of sport, and particularly football with its broad popular appeal, lies in its ability to provide a ‘hook’ through which participants can be engaged in interventions with wider social goals, and as a vehicle through which positive social networks and relationships can be developed. Accordingly, the most effective interventions are those that combine football and wider programmes of social education and engagement, and which adopt a multi-agency approach (Crabbe *et al*, 2006; Sandford, Duncombe & Armour, 2008).

There is no evidence to indicate that football provision alone can achieve positive social outcomes beyond those gained as a result of *diversion* or *deterrence* described under (a). However, there is evidence to suggest that football and football-based settings have attributes which make them particularly suitable to contribute to the successful delivery of social development interventions designed to address various social, psychological and health related concerns, and effect sustainable behavioural change.

The attributes that football possesses that facilitate its contribution to social development interventions include *inter alia* the popular appeal and team nature of the game, the non-institutional community based settings through which football is most often delivered, and the kudos attached to club’s, player’s and football’s ‘values’ (Brown *et al*, 2006; Pringle & Sayers, 2006). On the basis of these attributes, evidence shows that football has provided an effective medium for engaging ‘hard to reach’ audiences, including those that may not be football supporters, in interventions designed to achieve broader social, community and health outcomes (Pearson & Weed, 2006; Pringle & Sayers, 2006; Weed, Wynn & Henry, 2006; Pringle *et al*, 2011) – see part two of this section. However, there is also evidence of the need to overcome challenges in terms of inclusion which flow from the perception that football is traditionally a male dominated sport (Jeanes *et al*, 2004).

EVIDENCE SHOWS:

- **Football-related interventions** which include a wider programme of social education and engagement CAN play an important role in **addressing social policy goals** in relation to health, crime and community development.
- **Football-related interventions** CAN use football as a hook to engage 'at risk' and 'hard to reach' groups in programmes designed to promote **positive social development** and sustainable behavioural change.

PART TWO - OUTCOMES

OUTCOMES

Football provision can contribute to community cohesion and pride and, if promoted in innovative ways and tailored to the needs of target groups, can increase physical activity levels among normally less active young people.

...BUT THESE OUTCOMES ARE DEPENDENT ON PROVISION BEING PERCEIVED TO BE IN AN INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Football-related interventions can have a positive impact in reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour, in reducing physical inactivity, and in promoting healthy behaviours and awareness of health issues. It can also have spin-off benefits for community cohesion.

...BUT THE CONTRIBUTION OF FOOTBALL TO THESE OUTCOMES CANNOT BE DELIVERED (OR MEASURED) IN ISOLATION FROM WIDER SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The evidence on delivering social policy outcomes through football provision and football-related interventions suggests three broad areas in which positive social policy outcomes are possible: (a) reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour; (b) positive health development and behavioural changes; (c) community development and engagement.

(a) Reducing Youth Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Evidence shows that football-related interventions have been successful in engaging disaffected young people and reducing incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour. The value of football in this area flows from its capacity to attract target audiences and to engage with 'at risk' and 'hard to reach' participants in a supportive environment.

Specific evidence of this capacity is provided in an evaluation of the 'Positive Futures' initiative (Crabbe *et al*, 2006), a programme delivered in areas of significant social and economic deprivation

which is designed to steer young people away from crime and promote positive social behaviour. The programme is built on a developmental approach which seeks to build supportive relations with participants that can facilitate awareness of, and access to, positive choices and opportunities. However, it is acknowledged that this type of developmental intervention necessarily starts out at the level of diversion, because the initial activity provides the space for relationships to develop between mentors, youth workers and participants (Crabbe *et al*, 2006). Professional football clubs have worked with Positive Futures in the delivery of local projects and the Football Foundation is one of the programme funding partners.

The positive potential and outcomes identified in the evaluation of the Positive Futures programme are supported by a recently released report on the Premier League Kickz programme (Nevill & van Poortliet, 2010). Kickz is a predominantly football based social intervention also delivered in areas of significant deprivation which, although open to all, is primarily targeted at individuals at risk of, or engaged in, crime and anti-social behaviour.

Kickz has similar characteristics to the Positive Futures programme, in that the diversionary aspects of the intervention are acknowledged and sport, in this case football, is valued for its capacity to engage the target audience and provide a space in which positive relations can be developed. Various agencies are involved in the delivery of Kickz, which involves football sessions delivered by trained youth workers and workshops designed to support personal development in areas including healthy eating and career guidance.

Evidence presented for the success of the Kickz programme includes a reduction in youth crime rates around one of the project sites of 66%. However, because interventions such as Kickz inevitably take place in areas with a range of social problems that are subject to several concurrent social policy interventions at any one time, this 66% reduction cannot be directly attributed to the Kickz programme. While the Kickz report does try to employ a methodology to disaggregate an effect directly attributable to Kickz (Nevill & van Poortliet, 2010), the methodology used is based on a number of un-evidenced assumptions, including an implicit assumption that Kickz could have an effect in isolation from the associated social programmes alongside which it operates, an assumption that is not supported by the wider body of evidence. Therefore, taking the Kickz report alongside the wider evidence on sport-related interventions (e.g., Nichols & Crow, 2004; Nichols, 2007), the most supportable conclusion is that while football-related interventions can harness football provision to add critical mass to wider community-based interventions designed to address youth disaffection and promote social development, football provision alone is unlikely to have this effect.

However, the capacity of football provision to be harnessed to contribute to wider social goals is evident in research which highlights how football-related interventions have offered schools an effective means, or 'hook', through which to engage children with special educational needs or behavioural problems, and to address issues like self esteem deficiencies which contribute to negative behaviour (Pearson & Weed, 2006).

EVIDENCE SHOWS:

- **Football-related interventions** CAN contribute to the reduction of youth crime and anti-social behaviour when specifically targeted at these outcomes within a broader programme of **social development**.
- **Football-related interventions** OFTEN necessarily start out by harnessing **diversion** effects with 'at risk' and 'hard to reach' participants before moving to activities focusing on more sustainable **social development**.
- The specific contribution of football as part of **football-related interventions** to reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour CANNOT be isolated from the impact of the wider programmes within which the football element is located.

(b) Positive Health Development and Behavioural Changes

Through the same processes discussed in relation to youth crime and anti social behaviour, evidence shows that sport, and particularly football, can provide a medium through which target audiences can be 'hooked' and engaged in health promotion initiatives. Football has been specifically identified as an effective tool for health interventions, and one particularly suited to those targeted at the male population, a group recognised in this context as being 'hard to reach' (Seymour-Smith, 2002; Pringle & Sayers, 2006; Pringle *et al*, 2011; Zwolinsky *et al*, 2011).

The efficacy of football-related interventions is derived not only from the likelihood that programmes delivered through local football facilities are likely to promote greater engagement than those in clinical health settings, but also from the popularity of football which provides a 'captive audience' of supporters, including women, a recognised conduit of health messages to the male population (Pringle *et al*, 2011; Zwolinsky *et al*, 2011). The successful delivery of the 'It's a Goal!' mental health project at Macclesfield Town Football Club's Moss Rose Stadium provides an example of how these attributes facilitated the engagement of male participants, previously reluctant to seek help for mental health problems, into supportive programmes which can sustain their engagement (Pringle & Sayers, 2006).

Key attributes of the 'Its a Goal!' programme included the way in which the content and style of delivery was made relevant to participants via the use of football analogy, language and metaphors, and significantly the setting was deemed accessible with participants reporting that they 'would not have engaged with such a programme in a more clinical setting' (Pringle & Sayers, 2006: 12). The positive experience of those taking part led to a more extended reach of the initiative to a wider cohort of participants via 'word of mouth' promotion, a factor deemed an important variable in the success of male focused health programmes (Pringle *et al*, 2011).

At a more general level, the positive potential of football in relation to health is linked to the capacity of sport to improve physical health by increasing physical activity and overall feelings of well being. For example 62% of schools involved in the FA's Out of School Hours Learning programme reported that their pupils were more active in breaks and at lunch times as a result of participation in the programme (Pearson & Weed, 2006). Significantly in the context of engaging hard to reach

audiences, this programme was also deemed successful in engaging female participants and pupils with special educational needs or behavioural problems.

An analysis of the Health Survey for England (2009; 2010) shows that incidences of obesity in young people are levelling off, but that inactivity is rising. The proportion of young people that choose activities at the weekend (i.e., during their leisure time) that are physically inactive rises significantly with age, and 30-40% of 12-15 year olds are completely sedentary for approaching half the weekend. This obviously suggests that such young people are not meeting the Chief Medical Officer's recommendations of 60 minutes or more of physical activity every day. However, evidence shows that football provision in and around schools and with young people can be successful in engaging those young people that are not often active (Pearson & Weed, 2006; Weed & Henry, 2003). Success factors for using football activities to engage less active young people include the promotion of an inclusive environment that is structured so as not to allow judgements of individual ability, focusing on small sided football-related games rather than formal matches, with rotating team membership and a focus on skills (Weed & Henry, 2003; Pearson & Weed, 2006).

Football based initiatives which feature a competitive aspect have demonstrated a positive impact on the well-being of children and teachers in relation to feelings of pride, achievement and social interaction (Weed, Wynn & Henry, 2003). Importantly, however, this research also highlighted a key aspect of the enjoyment for the participants in the Coca-cola U13 Cup/Coke 7s tournament was the 'friendly' and 'fun' nature of the school based competition in comparison to that provided in a club football context; a finding which points to the need to tailor interventions to target audiences.

EVIDENCE SHOWS:

- **Football-related interventions** CAN, in some cases, be more effective than clinical health settings in promoting healthy behaviours and in promoting awareness of health issues among men.
- **Football provision**, particularly among children, CAN encourage children to become more active beyond their participation in the football itself.
- Tailored to specific audiences, and promoted in a way that emphasises fun and participation, **football provision** CAN engage traditionally less active young people.

(c) Community Development and Engagement

Much of the capacity of football to contribute to community cohesion, development and engagement flows from the attributes that make football particularly effective as a medium for youth development and health interventions discussed in (a) and (b). The development of communities with fewer sites of social dislocation and disaffection, and with greater incidences of healthier behaviours, are almost universal local policy goals that football-related interventions clearly have the capacity to support. Football provision and local football clubs are also recognised as prominent 'symbols of community identity', which as a result of their popular public profile can provide a site for community engagement leading to social integration and increased cohesion (Brown *et al*, 2006).

The popular appeal of football has underpinned the success of initiatives delivered in school settings which have not only increased youth participation in sport, but also facilitated the establishment of effective links between schools and local communities in a way that helps to tie local communities together (Weed, Wynn and Henry, 2003; Jeanes *et al*, 2004).

This capacity is equally evident in football provision delivered outside of school settings. For example, an evaluation of the *Moving the Goalposts* programme of football delivered in after school clubs found that the programme not only provided participation opportunities for children from deprived backgrounds, but also facilitated links between schools and other community sports schemes, thereby encouraging social inclusion and facilitating the development of community networks (Weed & Henry, 2003).

EVIDENCE SHOWS:

- **Football-related interventions** targeted at more specific social policy goals (e.g. improving health or reducing young crime) CAN have wider benefits in terms of community cohesion, development and engagement.
- Ongoing **football provision**, particularly for young people, CAN, in and of itself, directly develop social integration and increased community cohesion.

2) MAKING THE LOCAL CASE FOR FOOTBALL

This section is primarily informed by local research in Kent, including interviews with local football providers (both clubs and leagues), and with representatives of local authorities (details of interviews undertaken are provided in the methodological annex). However, it also draws on some of the wider evidence outlined in section one. The clubs and leagues interviewed were:

- Dartford Football Club
- Medway Messenger Sunday League
- Sheppey Sunday League
- Medway Messenger Youth League
- Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club

The first part of this section outlines the key *messages* that clubs and leagues have used to make the local case for football, that local authorities have indicated that they are receptive to in listening to the local case for football, or that the wider evidence suggests might be useful in making the local case for football. Part two outlines some of the *challenges* that have been identified, mostly by local authorities, but also by clubs and leagues, in entering into provision partnership arrangements, whilst part three identifies *support mechanisms* that KCFA might consider putting in place to help overcome some of the challenges identified in part two.

PART ONE - MESSAGES

MESSAGES

...to help make the local case for football

- *A local **competent football provider** can help local authorities more efficiently provide local services by taking on responsibility for the management of local facilities.*
- *Local **football provision** can engage large proportions of young people in the community.*
- *Local **football provision** can contribute to cross-generational community integration.*
- *Local **football provision** can help build respect within communities.*
- *Local **football provision** can help develop a positive local profile and community pride.*
- *Local football provision can contribute to **football-related interventions** that can support the delivery of local social and health objectives.*

Six broad messages that have helped make the local case for football in Kent are outlined in this section. The first (a) relates to the simple convenience for local authorities of having a **competent football provider** manage their facilities for them; (b) to (e) are messages about the benefits that

football provision can provide, whilst (f) is a message about the contribution football provision might make as part of wider **football-related interventions**.

(a) A local competent football provider can help local authorities more efficiently provide local services by taking on responsibility for the management of local facilities.

Partnership relationships with local football clubs or leagues can help local authorities deliver more efficient local services whilst providing clubs and leagues with the opportunity to gain greater ownership and control over the delivery of football in their respective area. For example, the Medway Messenger Sunday League has taken over responsibility for the management of pitch allocation from the local authority to the benefit of both

The Medway Messenger Sunday League has taken over responsibility for the management of pitch allocation from the local authority to the benefit of both parties

parties. On the local authority side, the transfer of pitch allocation responsibilities has both released the Council from an obligation to liaise with numerous clubs and more effectively secured the revenue stream from the facility. This is because the League is now the single point of contact, and it pays for the facility in advance. Although this means additional activities and responsibilities for the League, the League now has greater flexibility over pitch allocation and can make better use of the pitches available. Furthermore, the League are at less risk of non-payment than the Council because they can invoke a sanction that is meaningful to the clubs; namely, suspension from the league if they fail to pay. League representatives also indicated that this arrangement has facilitated more supportive relations with the Council which may help future developments in their favour.

One Kent school that had been unable to provide a resource for full 'caretaker' costs has transferred responsibility for the management of their fields to a local league

Asset transfer, or the transfer of responsibility for asset management, to local clubs and leagues also offers a means through which local public sector organisations are able to reduce their expenditure and service delivery responsibilities. This is something that is appealing in the context of local resource constraints, and a local Kent school

provides one example of such an arrangement in practice, with the school being happy to transfer responsibilities for the management of their field to a local league because the school was unable to provide the resource for full 'caretaker' costs. Through this arrangement, the school has been able to retain ownership of the field at a reduced management cost, whilst the league has gained access to the pitches and is able to utilise the facilities at weekends.

While not directly mentioned in any of the interviews, asset transfer, or the transfer of responsibilities for asset management, to clubs and leagues from local authorities implies that there may be some financial benefits for clubs and leagues in return for the provision of a management or maintenance service. In short, it may be possible to negotiate an agreement where the provision of a management or maintenance service by clubs or leagues is offset against facility rental costs, although we did not find evidence that this is currently widespread practice in Kent.

(b) Local football provision can engage large proportions of young people in the community.

This is clearly an area where football has significant capacity and is perceived as providing a valuable local service in areas across Kent. For example, Staplehurst Monarchs is a local football club which, in a village with a population of 6,000, engages approximately 200 children and adults on a weekly basis in structured and safe organised activities,

In a village with a population of 6,000, Staplehurst Monarchs FC engages 200 children and adults on a weekly basis, making it the largest youth activity provider in the area

making the club the largest youth activity provider in the area. The ability of the club to engage this proportion of the local community was made possible by a facilities project co-funded by the club, the local Parish and District Councils, and the Football Foundation. The project involved pitch and club house development on land leased from the Parish Council, which has enabled the club to locate both senior and junior teams on one site and improve 'the spectator experience'. As a result, the new facilities have increased the local appeal of the club, provided the opportunity for young players to access positive role models, and encouraged parental 'buy-in' to the football provision. This example suggests that the simple potential to contribute to providing activities for local populations might be an important message in communicating with smaller Parish Councils.

Medway Youth League has a base of approximately 40 clubs, which collectively engage 5,000 7-18 year olds in football based activities across 300 teams

It is unclear, however, whether there is broad awareness among local authorities of the potential aggregate number of young people involved in such football provision, which interviews with local youth leagues suggests is significant. Medway Youth League, for example, has a base of approximately 40 clubs, which collectively engage some 5,000 7-18 year olds

in football based activities across 300 teams. The fact that this is only one league is indicative of the number of young people that football provision is potentially engaging across Kent. It therefore appears that the scale of football provision in Kent means that it is already likely to be delivering some of the key outcomes outlined in section one in terms positive community development, including diversion from, and deterrence of, negative social behaviours.

(c) Local football provision can contribute to cross-generational community integration.

Whilst the youth aspect is the most obvious area for community engagement, there is significant additional value provided by clubs and leagues as a result of their volunteer structure and cross-generational characteristics. Local football provision relies on volunteers for delivery, and many volunteers who become involved as a result of the engagement of their own children remain involved once their children have moved on. The community benefit of this kind of voluntary activity is demonstrated in the development of a volunteer recognition award, the 'Unsung

Councillor John Wright, Swale Borough Council's Cabinet member for Regeneration and Economy: "Sport unites people from all backgrounds and can inspire them to achieve often unthinkable things together."

Hero/Volunteer of the Year Award', by Active Swale (Swale Borough Council), which in 2010 was awarded to Mark Rogers, the secretary of the Sheppey Sunday League. Such community benefits clearly resonate with local authorities, as evident in the comments made by Councillor John Wright, Swale Borough Council's Cabinet member for Regeneration and Economy, when he spoke about the awards and how "Sport unites people from all backgrounds and can inspire them to achieve often unthinkable things together."

The weekly footfall of up to 1,500 players, supporters and members through Dartford FC's Princes Park encourages a cross-generation supporter base and wider family engagement in training sessions

Local football provision also offers opportunities for community integration in terms of a cross-generation supporter base and wider family engagement in training sessions. The activities of Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club outlined above

provide one example of this, whilst the weekly footfall of up to 1,500 players, supporters and club members through Princes Park, the home of Dartford Football Club, provides another. As the analysis of the evidence in section one suggests, this type of community interaction means football provision can support the development of social networks, which facilitates the development of more cohesive local communities.

(d) Local football provision can build respect within communities.

Football's 'values' and initiatives like the 'Respect' Agenda are well received by local authorities and local stakeholders because they are perceived as supporting youth and community development agendas by encouraging both positive behaviour and positive intervention in bad behaviour. One example of this capacity is the successful adoption of the FA's *Respect Agenda* by the Sheppey Sunday League which has encouraged public and private pitch owners to introduce spectator lines on their pitches. As a community site, football facilities also offer 'safe spaces' for the proactive development of community responsibility, something which one local authority representative suggested is supporting the improvement of adult behaviour in the local area.

The Sheppey Sunday League's use of the FA's Respect Agenda has encouraged public and private pitch owners to introduce spectator lines on their pitches

The management by a local Thanet club of a once 'well vandalised' local pavilion has led to a reduction in such vandalism

The feeling of 'ownership' of local facilities by communities has helped to reduce incidences of anti-social behaviour and minor criminality. In Thanet, for example, the management by a local football club of a once 'well vandalised' local pavilion has led to a reduction in such vandalism. Whilst in Dartford, in

the year following the opening of the Princes Park development three years ago, figures for anti-social behaviour in the two wards it covers fell by 17% and 20% respectively. While it would be inappropriate to attribute such changes to football provision alone, these examples do reinforce the wider evidence outlined in section one that local pride in football provision can help to deter anti-social behaviour and minor acts of criminality such as vandalism.

(e) Local football provision can help develop a positive local profile and community pride.

Well organised and successful local football clubs and leagues which help deliver local services and activities in partnership with their Parish or District Council, particularly those with good links to local media outlets, offer local authorities the capacity to raise the positive profile of an area and generate feelings of community pride. Both local authorities and football stakeholders noted that this can be helpful in terms of developing a local awareness of the ways in which the local authority works to respond to local needs.

For local media outlets, positive relations with local football clubs and leagues that are prepared to provide news items and match reports can help such media outlets to offer valuable local coverage that resource constraints may otherwise inhibit. For local clubs and leagues, these opportunities can provide the potential to increase their local public profile, which may help to generate popular local support for, or greater local authority engagement with, new or enhanced football facility development.

*(f) Local football provision can contribute to **football-related interventions** that can support the delivery of local social and health objectives.*

A local authority representative reflected that Dartford Football Club has the potential to provide the local council with 'an ideal platform' for the delivery of national initiatives like the smoking cessation health promotion campaign

The high level of engagement with football among the population as a whole means that local football provision has the capacity to contribute to football-related interventions run by local authorities. Such provision can do this by providing 'accessible routes' into local communities in order to make a broad range of health

and social policy campaigns relevant to such communities, and local authorities and community organisations do recognise this potential. For example, one local authority representative reflected that Dartford Football Club has the potential to provide the local council with 'an ideal platform' for the delivery of national initiatives like the smoking cessation health promotion campaign. The local authority representatives believed this can work because local footballers are local role models who can make health messages relevant to the local community and young people in a way that abstract health promotions can often struggle to do, something that is supported by the wider evidence outlined in section one. Of course, the large weekly footfall of people through Princes Park also means that the club has the capacity to reach a large proportion of the community in this way.

Elsewhere, a partnership between the Sheppey Sunday League and local housing charity Amicus Horizon is also exploring the potential of football to engage young people and to contribute to wider social development. This particular initiative

A partnership between the Sheppey Sunday League and local housing charity Amicus Horizon is exploring the potential of football to engage young people and to contribute to wider social development.

seeks to provide young people with opportunities such as refereeing courses which are intended to support personal development. The wider evidence outlined in section one also highlights the potential for football-related interventions to contribute to long-term behaviour change in individuals 'at risk' of developing anti-social or criminal behaviours. In this respect, one local authority representative did express a view that sport, including local football provision, may have the potential to contribute to a wider intervention programme and thus help to deliver social policy outcomes.

PART TWO - CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES

...that might be faced in making the local case for football

- *Reduction in local authority funding and internal local authority resource constraints.*
- *Pressure on local authority departments to meet internal income generation targets.*
- *Variations in local authorities' policies in relation to asset transfer.*
- *The 'duty of care' of local authorities to only enter into agreements with 'informed partners'.*
- *Lack of capacity, or perceived lack of capacity, among clubs and leagues.*
- *Previous negative experiences in local authorities of asset transfer or management partnerships with community organisations.*

Part one shows that different local authorities can be receptive to different messages that can be used to make the local case for football, and that there are examples of clubs and leagues that have had some success with such messages. However, the representatives of local authorities interviewed during this work also identified a number of challenges that can hamper local provision partnerships, particular those that involve formal arrangements for asset transfer or management. These challenges are briefly outlined below.

(a) Reduction in local authority funding and internal local authority resource constraints.

Local authority representatives interviewed during this work noted that they are facing increasing resource constraints and internal staffing pressure – something that the wider political and financial environment suggests is not unique to these particular authorities. In particular, support and subsidies for local clubs and organisations was identified as being under particular threat.

(b) Pressure on local authority departments to meet internal income generation targets.

Many local authority departments at District Council level have internal income generation targets which may be negatively affected by the transfer of assets to local community groups

(despite the fact that the arrangement might generate a cost saving in other areas like grounds maintenance).

(c) Variations in local authorities' policies in relation to asset transfer.

There is some variation across District Councils regarding policies for asset transfer, with some policies making it difficult for some local authorities to enter into associated partnership arrangements. For example, in some local authorities lease agreements of 25 years or more are currently categorised as 'asset disposal', and as such they invoke a fairly extended process which can include full public consultation. However, this constraint is not universal, and forthcoming legislation around issues like 'community right to buy' may result in changes.

(d) The 'duty of care' of local authorities to only enter into agreements with 'informed partners'.

As public sector organisations, local authorities have a duty of care to potential community partners to ensure that such potential partners are fully informed of the financial, legal and logistical implications of any formal agreements involving asset transfer or the management of local facilities. This challenge is related to the issues of community capacity and perceived community capacity noted in (e).

(e) Lack of capacity, or perceived lack of capacity, among clubs and leagues.

Local authorities expressed some concern about the extent to which local football clubs or leagues would have the organisational skills and professional knowledge, and be able to deliver the service standards required for effective partnership arrangements involving asset transfer or the management of local facilities. Such a lack of capacity may be real or perceived, but in either case is a potential obstacle to provision partnerships.

(f) Previous negative experiences in local authorities of asset transfer or management partnerships with community organisations.

One local authority mentioned previous negative experiences of asset transfer and management arrangements in which local community organisations had sought or obtained asset transfer and management responsibilities but were then unable to finalise contractual arrangements or failed to meet service delivery standards resulting in resource implications for the local authority. This is obviously related to the issue of perceived community capacity noted in (e).

PART THREE - SUPPORT MECHANISMS

SUPPORT MECHANISMS

...that KCFA might provide to support local football provision partnerships

- *Development of a county-specific and football-specific toolkit on asset transfer.*
- *Awareness raising events on responsibilities and implications of asset transfer.*
- *Provision of a direct legal and financial advice service to small clubs and leagues that do not have the potential to develop such capacity themselves.*
- *Capacity-building training and support to larger clubs and leagues to identify and train individuals within the club or league to develop professional legal and financial skills.*
- *In circumstances where it may make the difference between a partnership taking place and not taking place, underwrite or guarantee the terms of an asset transfer or lease.*
- *Encouragement for clubs and leagues to identify 'liaison officers': individuals with the skillset, or the potential to develop the skillset, to liaise with local authorities and other potential provision partners.*
- *Provision of training and support for liaison officers, and the establishment and support of a county network of liaison officers.*
- *Laying the ground for liaison officers, by making the wider case for football among county opinion formers, and by encouraging and facilitating introductions for liaison officers.*

The first three of the six challenges that might be faced in making the local case for football outlined in part two (a-c) are issues about which there is little that clubs, leagues or KCFA can do. However, there does appear to be a role for KCFA in helping clubs and leagues to overcome the latter three challenges (d-f). Furthermore, the impact and nature of challenges (a)-(c) are likely to change over time, and some of the support mechanisms suggested below in relation to developing organisational capacity and professional skills will help clubs, leagues and, indeed, KCFA to be ready to respond as these challenges change and evolve over time.

NEED	<i>...to raise awareness among clubs and leagues about the responsibilities and implications of the transfer of assets and/or management responsibilities.</i> <i>response to challenge (d)</i>
SUPPORT MECHANISMS	<i>- Development of a county-specific and football-specific toolkit on asset transfer.</i> <i>- Awareness raising events on responsibilities and implications of asset transfer.</i>

Clubs and leagues need to be fully aware of the roles and responsibilities that are likely to be involved in the partnership arrangements they may seek with public sector organisations which include, but are not limited to: expected standards of ‘caretaker’ and maintenance service delivery; legal responsibilities involved in leaseholder arrangements for facilities; organisational structures required to establish provision partnerships; the full implications of what may happen if things go wrong, including the possibility of personal liability.

This knowledge is crucial to ensuring that partnership arrangements are approached from an informed basis, and to give confidence to local authorities that they are negotiating with an ‘informed partner’. There is a clear role for KCFA in developing such knowledge among clubs and leagues that may, now or in the future, seek such a provision partnership.

NEED	<i>...to ensure that the financial and legal competencies exist to effectively pursue formal provision partnership arrangements.</i>	<i>response to challenge (e)</i>
SUPPORT MECHANISMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Provision of a direct legal and financial advice service to small clubs and leagues that do not have the potential to develop such capacity themselves.</i> - <i>Capacity-building training and support to larger clubs and leagues to identify and train individuals within the club or league to develop professional legal and financial skills.</i> - <i>In circumstances where it may make the difference between a partnership taking place and not taking place, underwrite or guarantee the terms of an asset transfer or lease.</i> 	

Creating awareness of the range of responsibilities and requirements of assuming greater responsibility for local assets will only help clubs and leagues to determine whether it is appropriate for them to pursue partnership arrangements. Once this decision has been taken, the subsequent process will involve the negotiation and agreement of a variety of legal and financial undertakings, the parameters of which clubs and leagues need to be very clear on. Professional capacities in these areas will help to ensure that providers are aware of their resultant contractual, financial and legal obligations, partner expectations and the implications of non-delivery on both sides. It may also improve the negotiating position of clubs and leagues in relation to their partners.

In small clubs and leagues with a simple management structure, where there is likely to be limited organisational capacity or financial resources, KCFA could provide dedicated legal or accountancy support. For larger clubs and leagues with a more developed management structure, the role for KCFA could be to encourage professional development by, for example, highlighting the need for legal competencies on club and league management committees, and instilling confidence in the club’s or league’s internal capacity to engage with these issues, possibly through the provision of mentors. These measures will elevate the professional competences of clubs and leagues which will also have a spin-off benefit in relation to challenge (f).

In some circumstances, where local authorities or other partners are not prepared to enter into an agreement with a club due to concerns over capacity, KCFA could guarantee or underwrite a lease or asset transfer. This would most likely involve a guarantee of continued service provision, and ownership of financial and legal liability.

NEED	<i>...to increase the actual and perceived professional capacity of clubs and leagues to engage in trusted relationships with local authorities and other potential provision partners.</i>	<i>reponse to challenges (e) and (f)</i>
SUPPORT MECHANISMS	<i>- Encouragement for clubs and leagues to identify 'liaison officers': individuals with the skillset, or the potential to develop the skillset, to liaise with local authorities and other potential provision partners.</i> <i>- Provision of training and support for liaison officers, and the establishment and support of a county network of liaison officers.</i> <i>- Laying the ground for liaison officers, by making the wider case for football among county opinion formers, and by encouraging and facilitating introductions.</i>	

Even where the case for developing provision partnerships with clubs and leagues is recognised by a local authority, local authorities can lack confidence in the ability of clubs and leagues to both engage meaningfully in negotiations over the establishment of such partnerships and to deliver the requirements of such partnerships once established. This may discourage local authorities and other potential partners from investing staff time and authority resources in exploring provision partnerships.

The development of ongoing relationships between clubs and leagues and local authorities (or other partners such as schools) which encourage trust and familiarity, and which build confidence in negotiating and delivery capacity, offer a means of meeting this challenge. Furthermore, such ongoing relationships may also help clubs and leagues make both the wider case, and the more specific local case, for football.

There is a clear role for KCFA to help and encourage clubs and leagues to identify individuals within their management committees (or to join their management committees) who have the skillset, or have the desire and potential to develop the skillset, to become responsible for liaising between the club or league and local authorities (and other potential provision partners). Such 'liaison officers' should be equipped with the skills to network with local authorities and other partners to make the wider case, and the more specific local case, for football, thus both promoting the potential of football provision and building confidence in the professional capacity of clubs and leagues. As well as encouraging the establishment of liaison officers, KCFA should provide support and training, including holding specific training events, which would also help to develop a network of liaison officers to encourage mutual support and the sharing of experience. KCFA could also encourage smaller clubs or leagues with limited capacity to come together to share a liaison officer, or to 'buddy' with a larger club or league with a more developed organisational capacity.

A further role for KCFA should be to 'lay the ground' for the development of local relationships by seeking to use its profile and influence with potential partners and opinion formers such as local authority members, to make the wider case for football and to promote the increasing capacity of their clubs and leagues. KCFA should also identify and provide opportunities (such as networking events) at which introductions and contacts between local authorities (and other potential provision partners) and club and league liaison officers can be encouraged and facilitated.

3) SUPPORTING THE LOCAL CASE FOR FOOTBALL

This section outlines a support framework for clubs, leagues and the KCFA to make the local case for football and secure provision partnerships (part one), and details some of the risks and rewards in doing so (part two).

PART ONE - SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

Figure one outlines a framework that brings together the insights presented in the first two sections of this report to provide a resource for clubs, leagues and the KCFA in making and supporting the local case for football, and securing local provision partnership agreements.

The framework shows that there are two levels of local authority* – Parish Council and District Council – that a club or league may seek to engage with, which tend to have different concerns and interests. District Councils are likely to have wider social policy concerns, whilst a smaller Parish Council is likely to be more concerned with direct provision for its Parishoners and the deterrence of vandalism and minor criminality.

For clubs and leagues, the key differences relate to their organisational structure and the associated potential to expand capacity in areas relating to legal and financial affairs and direct liaison with local authorities. Although this will vary on a continuum, the framework provides illustrations at either end of this continuum.


The framework matches the outcomes, messages, processes, challenges and support mechanisms discussed in sections one and two to four potential partnerships:

- ***Partnership between a club or league with a small and simple structure and a Parish Council***
Outcomes and messages relating to direct community provision are likely to be most salient here, derived from processes in which the development of local community pride in football provision deters anti-social behaviour. Challenges are likely to be linked to the capacity of a small club or league to provide extensive provision or to enter into a formal agreement, so support is likely to be required in negotiating more informal agreements that are not too onerous for the club or league.
- ***Partnership between a club or league with a large and complex structure and a Parish Council***
Outcomes and messages relating to community cohesion, respect and pride, together with the possibility that a competent football provider can ease the burden of service provision for small Parish Councils, may be persuasive here. Football provision can be promoted as contributing to a strong community, thus both diverting participants from anti-social behaviour and deterring minor criminality. Challenges are likely to include the need for clubs and leagues to initiate negotiations with Parishes, who may have little resource to pro-actively do so themselves, and the support required from KCFA is likely to include awareness raising about the process of developing asset management agreements and capacity building and training in legal and financial skills.

* While we recognise that other partners (e.g., schools) may be involved, the majority of partnerships are likely to be with local authorities.

**FIGURE ONE:
A SUPPORT FRAMEWORK TO MAKE THE LOCAL CASE FOR FOOTBALL
AND SECURE PROVISION PARTNERSHIPS**

LOCAL AUTHORITY

		Parish Council	District Council
<p>CLUB OR LEAGUE</p> 	<p>Small and simple structure with little potential to build capacity</p>	<p>OUTCOMES AND MESSAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football provision engages large numbers of young people in the community. Football provision can develop community pride and a positive profile for the Parish. Vandalism and petty criminality can be reduced. <p>PROCESSES AND CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local pride in provision deters anti-social behaviour. A small club may lack capacity for extensive provision. <p>SUPPORT MECHANISMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct support from KCFA to develop informal agreements with Parishes. Support from KCFA in facilitating introductions and making the wider case. 	<p>OUTCOMES AND MESSAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football provision can develop community pride and a positive profile for the area. Football provision can build respect within communities. Vandalism and petty criminality can be reduced. <p>PROCESSES AND CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football provision diverts participants from anti-social behaviour and pride in provision deters anti-social behaviour. A small club may lack, or may be perceived to lack, capacity to negotiate and deliver agreements. <p>SUPPORT MECHANISMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of direct legal and financial advice by KCFA. If appropriate, guarantee of lease or asset transfer agreement by KCFA. Support from KCFA in facilitating introductions and making the wider case.
	<p>Large and complex structure with good potential to build capacity</p>	<p>OUTCOMES AND MESSAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football provision can contribute to cross-generational community cohesion. Football provision can build respect within communities. A competent football provider can help Parishes deliver services efficiently. <p>PROCESSES AND CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football provision can divert participants from anti-social behaviour and deter minor criminality through development of community coherence and pride. Clubs and leagues may lack the capacity to initiate and negotiate provision partnerships with Parish Councils (that will be unlikely, themselves, to initiate discussions). <p>SUPPORT MECHANISMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raising of the process of asset transfer or management by KCFA. Support from KCFA for club or league to develop financial and legal capacity and skills. Encouragement from KCFA to establish and develop a 'liaison officer', and subsequent support for the liaison officer. 	<p>OUTCOMES AND MESSAGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local football provision can contribute to football-related interventions to help deliver a range of community and social goals. Reduction of youth crime and anti-social behaviour, reduction of physical inactivity, or promotion of health or other behaviour change can be achieved (matched to local authority priorities). <p>PROCESSES AND CHALLENGES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term social policy outcomes can be addressed by positive and sustainable social development interventions involving football. Local authorities may have concerns about the capacity of clubs and leagues to deliver outcomes, and the competence to enter into formal agreements. <p>SUPPORT MECHANISMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development by KCFA of a football and county specific asset transfer toolkit. Support from KCFA for club or league to develop financial and legal capacity and skills. Encouragement from KCFA to establish and develop a 'liaison officer', and subsequent support for the liaison officer.

- ***Partnership between a club or league with a small and simple structure and a District Council***
Outcomes and messages relating to the development of community pride and a positive profile for the local area through football provision, which may also be promoted as building respect within communities and reducing vandalism and petty criminality through diversion and deterrence effects may be most salient here. District Councils are likely to be more responsive to addressing a wider range of social policy issues, but smaller clubs and leagues may be limited in what they are able to claim to offer in this respect, and one of the challenges is that District Councils may be more concerned than local Parishes about the capacity of clubs to both negotiate and deliver the services required of provision partnership agreements. Apart from support in facilitating introductions and in generally making the wider case for football with opinion formers, support mechanisms might include the direct provision of financial and legal advice, or even the underwriting or guarantee of a lease or agreement by KCFA in some circumstances.

- ***Partnership between a club or league with a large and complex structure and a District Council***
Salient messages and outcomes here can be more ambitious, as larger clubs and leagues may be more able to contribute to football-related interventions targeting wider social policy goals and outcomes prioritised within District Councils. Depending on such priorities, messages may include football's potential contribution to interventions seeking to reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour, reduce physical inactivity, or effect health-related or other behaviour changes, though processes associated with long-term positive social development. Challenges may include concerns within local authorities about the real and perceived capacity of clubs or leagues to deliver a contribution to such extended goals, and their capacity to enter into more detailed asset transfer and service delivery agreements. As such, support mechanisms might include the development of a football and county specific asset transfer toolkit, support and training to build capacity in financial and legal competencies within clubs and leagues, and encouragement to establish 'liaison officers' and the development of a KCFA liaison officer support network.

PART TWO - RISKS AND REWARDS

There are a range of risks for clubs and leagues, and for the KCFA, in seeking to capitalise on the wider case for football to seek local provision partnership, asset transfer or service delivery agreements:

- *Clubs and leagues may be encouraged to enter into provision partnership agreements with requirements that are beyond their capacity to deliver.*
- *The legal, financial and service delivery requirements of asset transfer or management agreements may be daunting for volunteers, which may have an impact on volunteer recruitment and retention.*
- *Positive examples and successful arrangements negotiated by larger clubs and leagues may be de-motivating for smaller clubs and leagues who may feel they have to aspire to similar agreements.*

- *KCFA, as advocates and active supporters of both the wider case for football and of clubs and leagues entering into provision partnership agreements, may suffer reputational damage if the approach is not perceived to be successful.*
- *A high-profile failure or default on an asset transfer or management agreement may be likely to adversely affect the potential for all clubs and leagues throughout Kent to negotiate provision partnerships, or even sustain current agreements.*
- *The selection of individuals without the appropriate skillset, or the potential to develop the appropriate skillset, to act as liaison officers may damage the reputation of the football community in Kent with key opinion formers.*
- *There may be a lack of capacity, competence or inclination among the KCFA workforce and membership to undertake the kind of work necessary to contribute to football-related interventions.*

While the above risks are real, and may have real and far-reaching implications, there are also a range of rewards to be gained from seeking to capitalise on the wider case for football to seek local provision partnership, asset transfer or service delivery agreements:

Potential rewards for clubs and leagues...

- Greater access to local facilities, or access to better quality facilities.
- The possibility, albeit not currently widespread in Kent, that the provision of facility management or maintenance services by clubs or leagues may be offset against facility rental costs.
- Increased control over how and when clubs and leagues can use facilities.
- Greater stability and an increased confidence in a secure future.

Potential rewards for local authorities...

- More effective and cost-efficient management and use of local sport and recreation facilities.
- Safeguarding the future of local facilities as a resource for sport and recreation for the community.
- Enhanced delivery of a range of social and community policy goals.

Potential rewards for KCFA

- Securing and safeguarding football provision within Kent.
- Enhancing the appreciation of football's capacity to contribute to local communities.
- An enhanced reputation among key opinion formers as an innovative and valued partner in delivering wider community and social goals through football.

METHODOLOGICAL ANNEX

Rapid Evidence Review

The rapid evidence review of football intervention research and health and physical activity data commenced with exploratory searches of the SPORTDiscus electronic database and GoogleScholar. The date ranges for sources were set as 1990–2011 to ensure a sufficient, contemporary breadth of material. Specific contacts were also made with known commissioners of related research, relevant research units and consultants and academics engaged in related fields. Sources identified as representing key areas of research were also 'reference -mined' to identify additional sources.

In parallel to this process information was also collected on practice evidence from the FA, Premier League and other related organisations, projects at individual professional clubs, county FAs and local authority sites. Data from surveys such as the Health Survey for England, Active People and the last two PE and School Sport Surveys was also reviewed.

Following sifting for relevance from an initial return of 196 sources and an appraisal to determine whether any key areas of research were absent from the material collated, 39 sources were distributed to two project members for quality assessment to identify which should be included or excluded from further review. Where there was disagreement a third member also assessed the source. The criteria used for the filtering process required that sources would inter alia include findings specific to health and social policy outcomes of football / sport based programmes and draw conclusions relevant to the provision of football in the community via a club setting that were based primarily on primary empirical or secondary quantitative evidence or on a systematic review of research evidence. This filtering process resulted in a final list of 23 included sources.

Interviews with local football stakeholders

A series of semi-structured interviews were held with representatives of the following Kent based football providers:

1. Dartford Football Club
2. Medway Messenger Sunday League
3. Sheppey Sunday League
4. Medway Messenger Youth League
5. Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club

These providers were chosen for their ability to offer a perspective of providers of different sizes. Dartford FC represented an example of a large complex provider operating at a district level, whilst at the other end of the scale, Staplehurst Monarchs FC represented an example of a smaller and more locally focused provider which operates at the parish level.

In addition, representatives from two local authorities were interviewed, to provide the perspectives of both Officer and elected Member.

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