

Subject:	Together an Active Future Project	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	22 nd October 2025
Report of:	Director of Economic Development	Portfolio Holder:	Communities, Housing, Health and Wellbeing
Key Decision:	☒ Forward Plan ☒	General Exception ☐	Special Urgency ☐
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet agrees to accept funding from Blackburn with Darwen Council for the Deepening phase of the Together an Active Future (TaAF) programme, subject to the grant funding agreement.
- 1.2 Approve the continuation of the current delivery model delivered via Rossendale Leisure Trust.
- 1.3 Delegate authority to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Lead members for Resources and Communities Housing and Health to agree future amendments to the Deepening phase scope and resource allocation.
- 1.4 Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to sign all necessary grant funding and legal agreements.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- To outline the next phase of the TaAF programme (2026–2028) known as “Deepening” and seek approval for the funding and delivery approach for Rossendale.
- To confirm the Council’s participation in the Deepening phase and approve the acceptance of the £112,500 place-based resource allocated to the Council.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 TaAF Overview and Transition to Deepening

TaAF is a Sport England-funded whole-system initiative that has sought to increase physical activity and health wellbeing across Pennine Lancashire. Following the Pathfinder and Accelerator phases (2017–2025), the programme enters a new Deepening phase which will cover the period from January 2026 to March 2028. The Deepening phase is designed to sustain and build on the impact of earlier investment through a focus on effective workstreams, strengthening systems leadership, enhancing collaboration, and embedding sustainable practices into Rossendale.

3.2 Deepening Phase Investment and Structure

- Each of the six Pennine Lancashire localities will receive £112,500 to deliver a place-based Deepening programme.
- Three priority themes for deeper investment have been identified:
 - Active Environments
 - Education Settings (Schools and Islamic Faith)
 - Primary Care
- These are supported by enabling functions including:
 - Programme teams
 - Systems leadership development and capacity building

- Evaluation and continuous learning

These functions are intrinsically linked with our Sports and Physical Activity Strategy and Health Plan.

3.3 Rossendale's role

Rossendale will continue to be an active contributor to the Deepening phase. The population health board of system stakeholders will remain central to governance, with strategic oversight by the TaAF partnership and operational delivery by Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT), pending updated funding agreements.

3.4 The board, which is a collective of leaders within sport, health, community, and physical activity will ensure the objectives and priorities of the Deepening phase are delivered.



3.5 The presentation included in the background paper highlights progress to date the main highlights of which are:

- Walk Rossendale – over 50 walk leaders trained in Rossendale, 14 weekly walks, 4 weekly park walks
- Rossendale Health and Wellbeing plan 2022 developed in collaboration with Rossendale Connected
- Rossendale ParkRun launched in 2024
- Rossendale has secured £1 million capital investment from the Football Foundation for its first 3G football pitch
- Balance bike sessions launched summer 2024 for children and young people

Spend proposal: £112k over two years

Year 1 and year 2

Strategic oversight (CEO RLT)	£2,000
Strategic lead (RLT)	£25,000
Strengthening Networks (Events)	£5,000
Developing Leadership	£5,000
Supporting Deepening Delivery	£10,000
Sustaining Peer Learning	£5,000
Total	£50,000
January to March 2026 spend	£6,000
Total	£56,000

4. GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY APPROACH

4.1 The Council will act as the initial recipient of the £112,500 funding from Blackburn with Darwen Council (the accountable body for TaAF), and enter into a back-to-back agreement with RLT to draw down and manage funds in line with the agreement with Blackburn with Darwen Council.

- 4.2 The population health board with representatives from RBC, RLT, Primary Care Networks, and Councils for Voluntary Services will provide oversight and co-design priorities that connect Rossendale's local assets with the Deepening phase's strategic aims.

5. RISK

- 5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendations in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- There is a risk that RLT could become unable to continue leading the project. In order to manage this risk, it is proposed that funds are drawn down in accordance with the funding agreement and passported to the trust. In the event of RLT becoming unable to continue, RBC would work directly with the network to complete the project through the Communities team.
- All financial risks will be managed through the funding agreement with Blackburn with Darwen and in turn RLT.
- There are no other specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 The total place-based allocation for Rossendale is £112,500 to cover the period January 2026 to March 2028. There is no negative impact to the Council's MTFS. Funds will be drawn down quarterly by RLT in line with a delivery and monitoring agreement.

7. LEGAL

- 7.1 Legal and financial due diligence will be conducted upon receipt of the updated Letter of Variation and funding agreement from Blackburn with Darwen Council.
- 7.2 All legal agreements will be updated and amended to reflect this continuation of service.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The programme aligns with local and national policy aims for public health, wellbeing, and physical activity. It will maintain a focus on reducing inequalities and supporting inactive residents and those with poor mental wellbeing.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

- 9.1 The Deepening phase of TaAF presents an opportunity to consolidate the successes of earlier phases while embedding place-based systems change. The report recommends proceeding with the proposed funding model and delivery arrangement.

Background Papers

Document

Place of Inspection

Together an Active Future Deepening
Together an Active Future success to date pres.

<https://togetherahealthierfuture.org.uk/together-active-future>