

Doncaster LDP Process Learning: October 2018 to March 2019

Thank-you for the opportunity of bringing together our latest process learning from the LDP in Doncaster. We are really excited about what we have achieved and remain completely focused on changing the social norm towards physical activity of our residents in Doncaster. We value the partnership with Sport England and the freedom and flexibility it is providing us to challenge the orthodox and resolutely focus on individuals in our target communities.

We are responding to the guidance circulated to us from Sport England on the 11th February to address the following:

1. What has been happening / what are you doing and observing?
2. So what? What is changing / happening / different as a result of what has been going on?
3. Why that matters and why something is significant – how it is shaping where pilots go next, how it is making sure that residents and communities are being better served, how its working towards outcomes etc.
4. What has been learned and what this means for:
 - a. What pilots will do next?
 - b. Others – the bits that are transferable to other places / contexts.

This report has been pulled together with partners in a number of different ways throughout March 2019. It comprises of the following elements:

1. Covering report
2. Doncaster LDP Investment Plan (presented to Sport England for decision in February 2019)
3. Doncaster LDP journey 2018 and 2019 – our one page summaries of our journey thus far
4. Video of facilitated workshop session held on Wednesday 15th March to support the development of this process
5. Themed issues arising from workshops and from the LDP governance structures
6. Graphic illustration based on the themed issues

This set of resources has been developed with the assistance of the following:

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Nick Cavill	Director	CFE Ltd and Nick Cavill Associates
Sarah Smizz	Artist	Smizz.com
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Background

This second process learning report has a different backdrop to the first. The original process learning followed the confirmation that Doncaster had been successful in its application to Sport England and was a period during which the Pilot had begun to take its first strides. This process learning reflects a period in which partners have moved into implementation. The lessons from this period are of specific interest to all partners who are considering how to develop their approach to asset based community development and whole system change.

Detail

Our analysis identified a number of themes to report against. This first section summarises partners and stakeholders thoughts, feelings and outlook. The second section looks at more

operational process learning from the core LDP team. Both should be read in conjunction with the 5 and 6 (themed issues and graphic illustration)

Part 1 – Partners and Stakeholders Process Learning

Theme 1 – Framing and communicating the messages about what we're doing and why (see video and graphic illustration 1)

Our previous reporting included the formative period when the LDP had been secured by Doncaster. At that time there was a lot of excitement about this as well as uncertainty about what this meant in practice. This last 6 months has been a period where many work streams have begun in earnest as such the learning illustrated below is based on 'real' work in practice rather than that in a theoretical sense. Throughout this document we refer to Get Doncaster Moving and the LDP, where LDP is one element of the overall delivery of GDM which is accountable for deploying the Physical Activity and Sport framework / Strategy.

We are listening carefully to what people say about the LDP and their work within the LDP. Following our initial development phase there is a clear and urgent imperative to prioritise work around communications. This is partly in response to the complexity of what we are trying to do (*"It took a few sessions to get my head around it"*) and partly because of the pervading culture and ways of working (*"We are facing challenges of explaining and then reiterating when old behaviours resurface"*).

We feel we need to pull together some clear, consistent lines about GDM/LDP (*"singing from the same hymn sheet"*); which will help centre conversations with stakeholders on common and known ground to ensure that the Pilot maintains its influence and is able to affect policy and organisational development. Equally we are beginning to get a sense of how messages to individual communities can be distributed via trusted channels *"different partners offer different routes of communication utilising channels effectively and not forgetting our own channels"*

Similarly, we also think we can simplify our messages for our communities as the LDP begins to deepen its relationship in specific communities and targeted groups. Our target communities won't be concerned about who they are working with, they will be more driven to be engaged by people they trust whoever they work for (*"we need to get better at hiding the wiring"*). We also need to respond to a lack of knowledge surfaced about physical activity and sport in our communities (*"I don't do physical activity but I do do Zumba"*). In the next phase, as we grow trusting relationships with our communities, we will need to test to see if there is a deficit of knowledge that will need to be addressed.

We reflected how powerful personal messages were; having used short videos to reflect real life experiences in this phase (<https://getdoncastermoving.org/testimonials>). Currently the videos have proved influential for communicating with stakeholders but we also feel that we want to have relatable content and resources as we deepen our work with our communities (*"people like me"*).

Theme 2 – relationships and partnerships (see video and graphic illustration 2)

What is becoming increasingly apparent is that relationships and partnerships are developing and that this ‘feels’ different to traditional partnership working in Doncaster. Partners value getting together (“*we value space to connect, contribute and be kept informed*”) and we are committed to continuing to support this (see Governance issues in Part 2).

We are mindful of the bonds between organisations in pursuit of the GDM/LDP and whether they support our joint endeavour or point to potential fractures (“*Is the trust between organisations temporary or long-lasting?*”) Are organisational cultures conflicting with their buy-in to the GDM/LDP way of working; our view is that we need to closely watch this going forwards in the next phase of development.

We also need to continue to grow our sphere of influence. Capturing business, for example, through workplace would enable a different reach to our target communities. As we look at our target communities deeply we should always look at the places where they spend their time including at work.

Finally, we are conscious that we need to continue to review our GDM Board and how different stakeholders can play a developing role to become involved and maintain their involvement in the emerging work. Equally, how we continue to involve Doncaster communities in development and decision making.

Theme 3 – working with communities is an iterative process, and we don’t always know where it will take us next (see video and graphic illustration 3)

This period saw the first wave of insight work based in our local communities; this reinforced what had been the local narrative for some time. The local communities in Doncaster are distinct and different (“*all communities are different in relation to physical activity so we need to be working differently with each community*”)

Existing community engagement and development programmes were in place in Doncaster and over this period initial discussions have consolidated on the basis that their respective approaches were mutually beneficial and routed in the same outcomes (“*realisation that Well North and LDP gave the opportunity for a joint enterprise*”). Both approaches are “*measured, thorough and reasoned, working with and through the community groups because of the amount and level of input those communities have [with their residents]*”

Interestingly the benefit of working through trusted local community groups is proving valuable to our insight partners who found it “*relatively successful and easy*” working with and through community groups because of the amount and level of input these communities can have in reaching our target audience.

Building 'Community Explorers' into our insight work and supporting their development needs has been a key feature of this phase of the LDP. They provide a real voice of lived experiences and have "*wide reach to the voice of our target groups*". They are passionate about working with us in their communities; they are leaders within their settings and have a skill set to influence and be champions for physical activity.

The last 6 months have also seen a wider recognition "*that communities are the solution to many of the problems*" [partners are aiming to tackle corporately as key fundamental challenges in the place]. While this presents an opportunity to join up, influence and embed sustainability, there is a "*multitude of complex and different approaches going on, making it difficult to understand how and where the biggest difference can be made through the LDP. We need to find those who care for the community and work with them*" We therefore need to continually take a strategic look at where corporate approaches are developing and emerging and make value judgements about which elements we align LDP too.

Theme 4 – Systems mapping and systems thinking is challenging us and the experts (see video and graphic illustration 4)

We have been working to visualise the local physical activity systems through systems mapping for almost 12 months. We continue to be inquisitive about how systems mapping can help our journey and "*we are challenging ourselves and our experts about what it means for us in Doncaster. We are being asked to think big, but this has been difficult at times because it is easier to identify barriers not solutions*". The value of the tool to date has principally been to illustrate the connections between physical activity and influencing other agencies agendas. But, we are now starting to use the tool to explore how individual areas or themes can be further developed, moving from a review tool to something which helps shape action. Equally, the use of the tool has emphasised to partners that this isn't about money per se; more fundamentally about acknowledging the shape of the system and how we need to work in a connected way to deliver shared outcomes.

Overall we are looking forward to the next phase of this work where we will bring top-down systems mapping together with bottom-up community approaches. We need to look at the balance between both to deploy our resources effectively to lead to sustained change.

Theme 5 – Our approach has been bold, different and brave (see video and graphic illustration 5)

Our investment principles and values have helped us to stay true and consistent to how we want to work. This enables us to hold our collective line and deflect spurious proposals which stakeholders sometime offer as 'the solution' to assisting inactive populations.

A significant shift has been noticed in the last 6 months; "*there is a feeling that the LDP has accelerated a move from a deficit based approach [i.e. our communities are inactive] to asset-based approach [i.e. we will invest in our communities to become active].*" This is

likely to consolidate but we will need to reflect on how to integrate our communities into decision making to truly secure sustainable and representative change.

This way of working feels genuinely different to those involved *“it’s nothing like anything I’ve ever been involved in before”* and *“it feels different from what’s been done previously, because we are taking our time to understand before we act. It feels like much greater than a project and we are able to make a genuine difference through our work”*. This is a good early sign but we need to continue to consolidate this way of working.

We continue to question our approach *“are we doing things right [making decisions, in an organised way, through the existing infrastructure] or doing the right thing [reacting to community needs]?”* We need to continue to assess the balance between enabling change at pace in our communities and delivering effective management of the LDP process.

Our approach is being recognised and validated by non-sport bodies. Our insight partners (Sheffield Hallam University) were awarded ‘best poster’ for the phase 1 findings of the community insight work at The Behavioural Science and Public Health Network conference.

Theme 6 – There is a feeling of pride and ambition about what we can achieve in Doncaster (see video and graphic illustration 6)

Stakeholders are noticing a difference in their own attitudes, a significant shift away from ‘it will never happen’. They see that *“things are changing here, a palpable shift of belief that change is possible and evidence that it really is”*. Relationships are described as positive, powerful and that people are less guarded about their organisational ‘rights’. These are all good endorsement of the approach of the LDP to date. Stakeholders in related but different sectors are also remarking that they are hearing more from their participants about being more physically active. We know that we need to hear the same reaction from potential participants as the insight work moves to a co-creation space in Phases 3 and 4.

The vision for the LDP is giving something positive and powerful to hold onto *“we are holding on to our long-term vision and it sits with us throughout and at the forefront”*. We need to keep the vision and our values at the heart of what we do going forwards into the next phase of our work.

Theme 7 – Balancing long-lasting change and wanting to see delivery on the ground (see video and graphic illustration 7)

Some partners have identified frustration around pace of delivery and impact on the ground. This has tended to be from partners who see their delivery offer as the opportune one to invest in. But we are resolute with the approach; *“it’s never wasted time when you take time to understand things”* We want to take a thorough approach based on evidence where communities inform the change they want to see rather than ‘off-the shelf’ opportunities which may not provide a compelling offer.

We are, however, conscious of the need to balance delivery on the ground alongside changes which will deliver long-lasting change. *“What we know is that we have big plans but it is about finding stones that roll and keep them rolling”*

Theme 8 – GDM/LDP Staff Resource (see video and graphic illustration 8)

Both GDM and LDP have provided additional staff resource to deploy against their individual outcomes and objectives in this period. The additional capacity has led to a number of benefits including it has *“given us the ability to spend time on key relationships and ‘going with things’ to see what happens as a result”*. Stakeholders identify the opportunity to build relationships across the Council better e.g. transport and active travel. We need to continue to build on this shared working, using the systems mapping to help prioritise those areas where we test appetite first.

The core LDP team continue to point to working at pace and with little time to lift their heads as the LDP grows. We need to protect time for our Business Change Managers better. Working alongside the LDP Programme Manager and Sport England Pilot Manager, we need to find the time to push the LDP forward.

Theme 9 – New challenges emerging (see video and graphic illustration 9)

The last 6 months has reinforced the need to take a specific look at how we support Children and Young People to be active in Doncaster. Sport England quantitative data for Doncaster illustrates the scale of the challenge we need to address and Doncaster Council’s own data (Pupil Lifestyle Survey) corroborates this. This will become a significant stream of work for us over the next period. While there are a large number of opportunities for children and young people we question whether there is sufficient collaboration in the space currently.

Theme 10 – Growth of ideas (see video and graphic illustration 10)

The last period has seen a significant shift in our insight work in local communities. This has developed momentum and is now aligned with Well Doncaster (a national programme responding to the Due North report on north-south divide into health inequalities). Support, challenge and ideas from Well Doncaster has helped to accelerate this area of our work. We feel we need to keep channels open in order to grow our reach and impact in Doncaster and beyond.

Theme 11 – Leadership (see video)

We continue to try and ensure that the method of working brings community expertise in and at all levels. The last 6 months has seen the establishment of the LDP Advisory Group;

this has provided a direct community perspective into the direction of travel of the LDP and a welcome challenge. The level of debate and passion from practitioners feels real and is helping to grow the grass roots of the approach. The group is chaired by Yorkshire Sport Foundation and this is working well; nonetheless we would ideally like more local ownership and we are conscious that this needs to continue to develop over the next period.

Part 2 – LDP Core Team Learning

Many of the points mentioned above also had significant resonance for the LDP Core Team (Clare Henry, Andy Maddox, Jodie Bridger, Simon Noble (all Doncaster Council) and Melissa Bennett and Russell Turner (both Sport England))

In addition we wanted to raise the following points of learning:

Developing the Sport England Investment Plan - submission (currently with SE for decision) has proved challenging but has enabled us to develop and tell our own story. This self-reflection has benefitted our developing narrative of what we have learnt and what we will prioritise first. An unintended consequence is that this is proving a really useful document to help us tell our stakeholders what we've been doing and why.

Governance - the emerging LDP Advisory group is proving a very useful check and challenge with community orientated stakeholders. We do see this as a first step to making sure that decision making is reflective of the community we are trying to help. The development of the Advisory Group has provided a further touch point to the GDM Network and Summit, which allow space for ideas and connections to develop.

Working across LDPs – there is a gathering sense of joint work which has moved beyond information exchange and theoretical exposition to something more fundamental – sharing ideas, knowledge and innovations. Doncaster colleagues are engaged with a number of LDP pilots.

LDP Community of Learning – there have been two sessions of the 12 LDP's Pilots and SE staff in November 2018 and February 2019. The February session was very beneficial – the pitch of it felt positive, the content appropriate and an environment where pilots were truly engaged and engaging.

Procurement and contract management – we continue to work within the local procurement frameworks to ensure 'fit and proper' processes. This does, however, suck capacity from the existing team. We also recognise that as the LDP develops and the portfolio of contracted work grows, we need to invest time to ensure contracts are managed and align with existing work in Doncaster. Finding alternative ways of working has become a significant priority.

Working with Sport England – the LDP is fully benefitting from the local presence and strong working relationship with our Local Pilot Manager and Strategic Lead. The balance and quality of the contact time within the team feels right, and has helped to maintain the

pace and quality of our work. We would like to explore how we can engage expertise from other Sport England directorates, when specific themes emerge (e.g. marketing and communications).

Assets within the team - recruitment of LDP Programme Manager and Data Analyst has brought a specific set of skills and competencies that has added value to the development of the Pilot. It is proving an effective way of continuing to build momentum.

Appendix 1

Glossary

GDM = Get Doncaster Moving

GDM Board – Governance Board responsible for delivery of ‘Get Doncaster Moving – Physical Activity and Sport Framework / Strategy)

Well Doncaster – this is one of ten ‘Well North’ pilots. A programme created following the Due North report into health inequalities in the North of England.