

sportscotland

Council Meeting

Minutes of the Council Board Meeting held at the **sportscotland** National Centre Inverclyde on Tuesday 12 December 2023 at 09:00

Present

Members

Mr M Young, Chair
Mr A Bain
Ms M Campbell
Mr C Grant
Mr S Lindsay
Mr T Mistry
Mr S Sweeney
Ms K U'ren
Mr A Watt

In Attendance

Council Officers

Mr F Dunlop
Ms R Barrington
Mr C Burn
Mr N Cobb
Mr M Cowan
Mr B Fleeting
Mr J Lunn
Mrs J Lynn
Mr D McKay
Mr P Reid
Mr D Williamson
Mr B Wyllie
Mr S Roberts
Ms L Cook

Scottish Government

Mr A Sinclair
Mr R Foggo

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Business

1 Apologies for Absence

➤ *Ms H Ousta, Ms S Sandilands and Mr D McDonald*

2 Declarations of Interest

➤ *None.*

3 Minutes of Meeting held on 24 October 2023

➤ *The minutes of the Board meeting held on 24 October 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.*

4 Matters Arising

Mr Cowan provided an update on TSIT. He explained the challenges with capital projects generally and he updated on the progress being made with the live projects and the ongoing conversations with the LTA and Scottish Tennis on future projects.

5 Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair commented on the Scottish Sports Awards, how successful the evening and the new format was and the Chair reflected on the outstanding achievements and contributions from across the sporting system.

The Chair discussed a number of live UK issues, including the development of a new Event Strategy by UK Sport and the development of sport.org to support smaller performance programmes through economies of scale. The Board asked how this will affect the governance of organisations and whether there is a funding implication that **sportscotland** needs to consider. Mr Lunn responded that each organisation should retain their own governance and at this stage there is no request for investment, however it is very early days.

6 Executive Management Report

Mr Dunlop announced that the annual review meeting with the Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport has been rescheduled for the end of January.

Mr Dunlop provided an update on the recent Active Scotland Leadership Group meeting which focused on refreshing the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework. One of **sportscotland's** concerns remains around the accountability to the outcomes from across organisations.

Mr Dunlop noted that conversations with COSLA which are linked to previous Board discussions on local influence are ongoing. A meeting is scheduled later this week to explore this topic further with Board members and a paper will be brought to the February Board.

Mr Dunlop highlighted the recognition of British Biathlon which is detailed in appendix two of the paper.

➤ *The Board noted the Executive Management Report.*

7 **Richard Foggo, Director of Population Health, Scottish Government - Priorities and challenges for Population Health**

The Chair welcomed Mr Foggo who apologised for being unable to attend the previous Board.

Mr Foggo commented that there will be difficult times ahead, he commended **sportscotland** on the leadership provided to the sector during Covid-19 but explained the impacts and consequences of the pandemic will be long lasting.

Mr Foggo gave an overview of the economic outlook one week ahead of the Scottish Governments budget announcement. He explained the significant pressures facing the public sector and the need for public sector reform. Mr Foggo advised that additional monies will be very hard to find in this current climate, but he did acknowledge that the Scottish Governments commitment to double the budget in sport and physical activity remained. Mr Foggo finished by reassuring the Board that both he and Mr Sinclair remain focussed on working with **sportscotland** to deal with the challenges and changes ahead.

The Chair thanked Mr Foggo for his frankness. He went on to commented that while we would continue to make the case for investment into sport and physical activity there was also a need to recognise that we cannot continue to be asked to do more with less. He also explained the extremely difficult position **sportscotland** is in from a planning perspective and how this then impacts on our partners.

Mr Foggo and Board members discussed the value of preventative spend, recognising the difficulty when monies would need to be taken from existing treatment budgets and how this is not a straightforward or simple solution.

The Board asked Mr Foggo his views on the challenges being faced at a local level and the difficult decision being made. Mr Foggo recognised the pressures and the impact of local cuts for sport and physical activity. He reflected on the increasingly difficult decisions that need to be made about how monies are prioritised.

The Board discussed the importance of continuing to raise sport and physical activity with national and local politicians and noted a further discussion at the February meeting was planned.

The Chair thanked Mr Foggo for being so open and honest and agreed that as an organisation we need to be aware and work out how we are going to weather the storms. As sport we are used to losing games or matches but then we think about how to come back and that is how we will deal with this. It is going to be very difficult, but we want to get into a constructive space with a set of objectives.

For Decision

8 **2023 – 2024 Budget update**

Mr Cobb provided an update following the Scottish Government Finance Forum where the numbers suggest a gap between income vs expenditure for next year and from the National Lottery Finance Forum where Camelot updated that recent performance has been weak which is suspected to be due to a lack of rollovers and the general cost of living crisis.

Mr Cobb highlighted some big in year movements in the budget, including the supplementary pay award. The impact of this will continue to be monitored and managed through the last quarter.

The Board discussed the Lottery balance utilisation. Mr Cobb reminded the Board that the Audit and Risk Committee had been tasked with developing a policy to manage this balance, the policy was being followed and would be supplemented with medium term financial planning work which is ongoing.

The Board asked for more information on the reclaimed monies from local and national partners. Mrs Lynn explained that this is a common occurrence and is directly related to any gaps in the posts that we invest in. Mr Lunn added that there is a similar situation with the SGBs as there is some turnover and it can take some time to take recruitment forward.

The Board asked if the Lottery underpin was triggered, where would that funding come from? Mr Foggo responded that it would be a challenge, as Scottish Government always want to honour their commitments, but they can only honour commitments that they can afford.

➤ *The Board approved the 2023 – 2024 Budget update paper.*

9 Business planning and budget development

Mr McKay provided an overview of the key themes within the business plan and updated on progress being made with the long term planning process since the last Board meeting.

The Chair highlighted that longer term planning is crucial and continuing to develop and change is going to be very important. Mr McKay added that one of our outputs is to explore what can be done differently or viewed through another lens.

More detailed papers on the long term planning and on the 24/25 business plan will come to the February 2024 meeting.

➤ *The Board approved the business planning and budget development paper.*

For Discussion

10 National Centres overview

Ms Campbell, Chair of the Trust Company Board introduced the paper, explaining the role of the Trust Company Board and giving reassurance that the Board is presented with and scrutinises the detailed operations of both of the National Centres. Ms Campbell updated that the Trust Company is currently recruiting new Board members and finished by reminding members that there will be an opportunity to visit Glenmore Lodge in the new year.

Mr Fleeting and Mr Roberts introduced the paper and presented an overview of the National Centres, how they operate and asked The Board what can the Trust Company and the National Centres do to improve their contribution to Sport for Life?

The Chair thanked Mr Fleeting and Mr Roberts for the presentation and commented that it is great to hear about the amount of activity going on in both centres.

The Board discussed the opportunities to raise additional monies from other sources and asked if the Charitable status was being maximised to do this. The Trust Company Chair agreed that opportunities lie in supported programmes that Inverclyde does, and Glenmore are beginning to do and that consideration should be given to how we attract additional investment to cover the subsidy for these.

The Board went on to discuss other sources of income, the Chair explained that there had been a working group set up to look at this previously and asked that the report from this work be shared with Board members.

The Board commented that the extent of partnerships mapping is really impressive and asked where they originated from, if we approached them or they approached us? Mr Fleeting responded that from an EDI perspective we have really well developed plans with partners through Sports Development which allowed for initial conversations. We are continually trying to have these discussions but lots of partners are not in a position to commit as they do not have the required resources or a person to lead.

The Board commented that it is great to see an overview of the Trust Company and asked what challenges are being faced, what are the solutions and what is connected to long term planning. Mr Fleeting explained that the challenges will continue to revolve around investment and the ability to subsidise targeted groups.

The Board asked if a scorecard could be produced, as there are lots of things to be measured to help us tell the story and it could help monitor if we are on track and heading in the right direction? Mr Fleeting replied that we have measurement, which is reviewed at the Trust Company Board, he acknowledged this was not seamless and that he would discuss further options with colleagues in the Strategic Planning team.

The Chair asked Mr Foggo and Mr Sinclair how the Government would respond if there was further diversification of income through the Trust Company? Mr Foggo encouraged further exploration of the scenarios and testing of the proposition but anticipated that Ministers would appreciate the creativity, reach and vision.

➤ *The Board noted the National Centres overview.*

11 Colleges partnership update

Mr Wyllie presented an update on the progress made with the colleges partnership. A diverse group of coordinators has been recruited, bringing with them a wealth of knowledge from the third sector. As the work gets established the network is coming together to share and learn as a group, this is proving very valuable.

The Chair commented that it is a really good story and a great example of us reaching out and forming new partnerships.

The Board discussed the strand of work that focusses on work placements. Mr Wyllie noted that there is some good practice, often based on long standing relationships between college lecturers and local development staff. The work being done is to learn from and build on the good practice while removing the risk of this being around individual relationships.

➤ *The Board noted the Colleges partnership update.*

12 Local authority and SGB review

Mr Lunn introduced the paper which is the second paper of three in line with reviews with partners, it is a continuation from the last paper and will be built on in the February paper. There have been less reviews, a lot of turbulence and uncertainty but we have given sports assurances that we will continue to support and work with them, once we have clarity on the budget we will bring details back to the Board.

The Board reflected on the recent presentations from rugby and football and discussed how we plan to build on the openness from both sports to work together. Mr Lunn explained that we would follow up with both sports in the new year but the intention was to move from our traditional SGB investment agreement to a wider partnership agreement that we use with other national partners.

This new approach would include a focus on working together on the promotion of sport and physical activity.

Mrs Lynn presented the challenges and themes that LAs and Leisure Trusts are facing and noted that these are really well documented.

Mr Cowan updated on the review of the estate and highlighted that the first piece of work focused on the review of the swimming estate. 56% of pool provision is over thirty years old and we are anticipating a decade of challenge ahead to update and maintain this. We need to explore what demand looks like over time and how the estate evolves to meet this demand. Maintaining the status quo is not an option as we need to think about what we need and where.

Mrs Lynn highlighted that we continue to see reoccurring themes around poverty and reducing inequality which takes money but there is no additional investment available. We will continue to update the Board in February. The Chair commented that while challenging, it is really important that we maintain strong relationships with local partners. The Board discussed this point further, agreeing with the Chair and Mrs Lynn as to the importance of the relationships to make sure we are close to the pressures and challenges that are being faced locally and so that we can flex our investment and support accordingly.

The Board discussed the challenges faced keeping facilities open and how we were managing our time and focus to support these discussions. Mr Cowan gave a couple of examples of regional or nationally important facilities and how we work with SGBs and local partners to understand local demand versus regional and national demand. He explained this is a difficult process but that we need to continue to be part of these conversations.

The Chair commented that we cannot tackle everything and the issue with the strategic guidance letter is that we are expected to do more while budgets at a local and national level are decreasing.

Mr Lunn provided details on the cost of living increase against our staffing investment to partners. He explained that this would be looked at as part of the budgeting process between now and February and ultimately it would come down to affordability.

➤ *The Board noted the Local authority and SGB review.*

13 Performance Measurement Framework

Mr Williamson introduced the paper which summarises the main challenges and how we intend to tackle them. The Board acknowledged that the challenge of collecting EDI data is not specific to sport. They Board welcomed further updates as this work progresses.

➤ *The Board noted the Performance Measurement Framework paper.*

For Information

14 Communication update

Noted and taken as read.

15 Any Other Business

The Chair thanked Mr Foggo for his contribution and recognised that there are going to be challenges ahead but we have faced difficult times together in the past and we will come together and get through it, we will continue to make the case for sport as we believe in the impact it has on peoples lives.

16 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 February 2024 (Inverclyde)

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.