

The Scottish Sports Council Trust Company

SSCT(BM)4/2023

Company No. SC137068

Charity No. SC020175

Minutes – 9 November 2023

Minutes of the Directors' meeting of the Scottish Sports Council Trust Company (the "**Company**") held on 9 November 2023 at The Inverclyde National Training Centre and via conference call on Microsoft Teams.

Present

Ms Maureen Campbell, Chair ("**Ms Campbell**")

Mr Mark Gaffney, Director ("**Mr Gaffney**")

Ms Kirstie Hepburn, Director ("**Ms Hepburn**")

Mr Iain Houston, Director ("**Mr Houston**")

Ms Susan Sandilands, Director ("**Ms Sandilands**")

In Attendance

Ms Rachel Barrington, Director of Operations ("**Ms Barrington**")

Mr Neville Cobb, Head of Finance and Governance ("**Mr Cobb**")

Ms Jo Dixon, Head of Human Resources, ("**Ms Dixon**")

Mr Forbes Dunlop, Chief Executive Officer ("**Mr Dunlop**")

Mr Steve English, Booking & Administration Supervisor, Glenmore Lodge National Centre ("**Mr English**")

Mr Barry Fleeting, Head of Centre, Inverclyde National Sports Centre ("**Mr Fleeting**")

Ms Pauline Kerr, Business Development Manager, Inverclyde ("**Ms Kerr**")

Ms Isla McCay, Communications Officer, Glenmore Lodge National Centre ("**Ms McCay**")

Ms Heather Morning, Chief Instructor, Glenmore Lodge National Centre ("**Ms Morning**")

Mr Shaun Roberts, Principal, Glenmore Lodge National Centre ("**Mr Roberts**")

Mr Simon Taaffe, Financial Controller ("**Mr Taaffe**")

Ms Victoria Smith, Communications Project Manager, Glenmore Lodge National Centre ("**Ms Smith**")

Ms Abi Wood, Legal Officer, ("**Ms Wood**")

Secretariat

Ms Siobhan Harkin, Legal & Procurement Administrator ("**Ms Harkin**")

Apologies

Mr Robin Strang, Director (**“Mr Strang”**)

Chair

Ms Maureen Campbell presided as Chair (the **“Chair”**) of the meeting as per Article 18 of the Company’s Articles of Association (the **“Articles”**).

1. Notice, Quorum and Apologies

The Chair reported that due notice of the meeting had been given and that a quorum was present, as per Article 34 of the Articles. Ms Hepburn attended the meeting on teams intermittently.

2. Interests in Proposed Transactions and Arrangements with the Company

The Directors present confirmed that they had no direct or indirect declarations of interest to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the requirements of section 177 of the Companies Act 2006 (the **“Act”**) and Article 40 of the Articles of Association. It was noted that the Directors were entitled to attend and vote at this meeting and to be counted in the quorum.

3. Chair – sportscotland Update

The Chair noted that, in relation to the previous **sportscotland** Board meeting, there was a presentation from the Scottish Football Association which gave a good understanding of what is happening in football clubs and the communities in Scotland. The Chair noted that this was Mr Craig Burn, Director of Sport and Ms Rachel Barrington, Director of Operations first **sportscotland** Board meeting. Mr Phil Reid gave a presentation at the Board meeting around the performance landscape and some of the challenges they have at present on performance planning and long-term planning. A presentation was given on Corporate Parent Responsibility and a discussion around what this means for **sportscotland** and how we take this responsibility seriously. An update on the Q2 performance report was given and there was a discussion around challenges, cost of living, Local Authority financial pressures and the impacted on our targets and achievements going forward.

THE BOARD NOTED the contents of the Chair’s update.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

THE BOARD APPROVED the minutes of the previous meeting.

5. Matters Arising

Mr Fleeting noted that action 5.4 regarding a paper on supported groups at the National Centre of Inverclyde will come to the next Trust Company Board meeting in February 2024.

THE BOARD NOTED the update.

6. Quarter 2 Report 2023 - 24

6.1. Trust Company Financial overview for Quarter 2 2023-24.

Mr Cobb highlighted a mistake in point 4 where it stated that Glenmore Lodge is £118k below budget, the number should read £108k.

Mr Taaffe presented the paper to the Board and highlighted that in the finance report page 13 of the pack as at Q2, there has been reasonable trading compared to the prior year, and we are ahead of budget at Inverclyde but behind budget at Glenmore Lodge. Mr Taaffe noted that:

- The pay award is still to be finalised, implemented and accounted for with most of the positive variance against the budget on the overall investment being consumed by this.
- Meetings have been held with the National Centres to discuss a refresh of the budget for the second half of the year.

Mr Taaffe highlighted point 9 shows the summary of changes to the budget at Q2:

- Inverclyde investment is unchanged, with positive variance against trading income.
- Cumbrae costs will continue until sale process is complete.
- Glenmore Lodge investment is increased by £110k due to negative training income variance.

Overall investment level has been kept unchanged by **sportscotland** reducing the capital investment by £125k to offset the trading variance. The allocation is set out in point 16.

THE BOARD NOTED the contents of Mr Taaffe's report.

6.2. Inverclyde – Q2 2023 - 24

Mr Fleeting presented the Q2 report and informed the Committee that income was better than expected. Mr Fleeting highlighted plans to replace the gymnastic roof in September 2023 has been delayed until December which will cause less disruption to the Centre. **sportscotland** had discounted gymnastics and the sports hall income in September. Mr Fleeting noted that there were 73 residential groups in Q2 and 7 different local authority schools utilised the

National Centre. From August – October 2023 they recorded 65% Occupancy. When looking ahead to February 2024 they are looking at a 67% occupancy rate. Mr Fleeting said that 14 different sports across clubs and sports used the centre. GB Rugby 7's continues to use Inverclyde for their preparation for the Paris Olympic Games. The development of the sports hall has meant that Basketball Scotland are also able to use the facilities. Mr Fleeting noted that feedback from the sports highlighted issues with laundry facilities. The centre has put a laundry facility into an old storeroom to solve the issue which they will monitor. Mr Fleeting talked about the positive feedback from the supported groups using the centre which had been mentioned in the paper.

Mr Fleeting said school bookings for the academic year are full. Mr Fleeting mentioned that the Fitness numbers are steady but noted some challenges around recruitment of fitness instructors.

Mr Fleeting noted point 19 regarding the accident claim which has now been settled. He said that it has been a really challenging process and thanked the Finance and Legal team for their support.

Mr Fleeting informed the Board that the purchasers for Cumbrae National Sports Training Centre withdrew their offer but Galbraith's who are working on **sportscotland's** behalf are assessing two offers on the table at the moment.

Mr Fleeting presented the Q2 reporting slides to the Board and highlighted key points:

- Business areas are fairly fixed.
- Customer feedback from South Ayrshire HSCP
- Highlighting the impact we have on the young people we work with.
- Customer feedback from North Ayrshire active schools, they work really closely with **sportscotland** and the value this has.

Mr Fleeting asked the Board If there is any more information or data we can gather to record impact. The Board questioned if we could ask what happens to the children and young people after they attend the centre, what impact on their longer-term sport and physical activity has it had? Could we have a follow up one month and one year on to see if anything has come from their visit?

The Board congratulated Mr Fleeting and the team on their Accessible Sports Venue Award received recently at the first Variety Club Disability Sports Awards in Leeds.

The Board asked if we have had any negative or detrimental media coverage regarding the litigation claim and is there any lessons learned around the incident? Mr Fleeting noted that

there has been no media coverage. He emphasised that there has been a lot of changes since 2017 and noted that they now have:

- CCTV coverage
- Robust health and safety process in place
- Incident reporting and the managing of that process.
- How we escalate issues.

The Board asked if we have any other sports who could use the centre the way GB Rugby 7's have. Mr Fleeting noted that we have 37 sports engaged with the National Centre.

THE BOARD NOTED the contents of Mr Fleeting's report.

6.3. Glenmore Lodge – Q2 2023 – 24

Mr Roberts presented the executive summary and noted that Q1 was a positive start to the year but he did highlight challenges ahead with Q2. Mr Roberts noted that Glenmore Lodge income is up 20% from the previous year. Item 5 Conference and Events has been very successful and their best year yet. Mr Roberts highlighted that in Para 6 the majority of the bookings in April and May 2023 were booked before the price rises for the year were implemented. He believes the price increase has had a negative effect on bookings. Para 11 notes that the sector is very flat this year against a forecast and budget that assumed some continued growth. He highlighted that their throughput and income is similar to last year but is not achieving budgeted growth in programmed courses. Glenmore Lodge are seeing a different behaviour from the customer with forward orders behind on previous years.

Q2 Budget Refresh P8 onwards within report, Mr Roberts highlighted some of the changes they have made to maximise any short term opportunities for additional income. Glenmore Lodge ran residential courses at 30% discount for a short period which got a modest response. Mr Roberts informed the Board that the Chief Instructor and the team have weekly and monthly meetings to look at the programmes ahead and if the opportunity arises they will change something to get an increased financial return. Ms Morning shared a live example of many weeks ahead to maximise income and staff deployment. Ms Morning emphasised that all contract staff are fully deployed within the programme before Glenmore Lodge engage freelance workers. Mr Roberts noted that we need to continue to support the sector as a National Centre and that our support around SGBs remains strong.

Mr Roberts mentioned the website accommodation module in Para 23. This is ongoing with a lot of coding to be implemented and noted that this will get the Glenmore Lodge Customer

Journey in a better place. This ongoing work is having an impact on the current booking process.

Mr Roberts informed the Board that Glenmore Lodge has a new full time Facilities Manager called Mr Chris Douglas.

Mr Roberts highlighted Para 31 regarding the avalanche incident in February 2023 and noted the positive work Glenmore Lodge are doing against the recommendations that came out of the investigation report. Mr Roberts will bring a paper to the Board which will lay out the significant changes. Mr Roberts attended a Mountain Training UK & Ireland Board meeting and was asked to lead a group defining good practice for incident investigations and learning. Mr Dunlop updated the Board on the independent review of the avalanche incident. The review is to see if anything else could be added to the recommendations. Mr Dunlop noted that the report will add value to the work already done. The Board asked when the work would be completed? Mr Dunlop said that all the information should be gathered by the beginning of next year.

The Board acknowledged that needing additional resources in the current climate isn't a good position for Glenmore Lodge to be in. Some serious decisions need to be made on how to utilise resources and what difficult decisions we might be asked to make as a Board to accommodate this.

The Board asked who Glenmore Lodge price check against when doing the review? Who are we up against and what are other National Centres offering? Mr Roberts noted that it depends on what discipline you are looking at. Our advantage is that Glenmore Lodge is Scotland's outdoor training centre with world leading expertise. We price check against Plas y Brenin who have the same suit of qualifications, as well as other market providers for key courses. The Board asked how do you get the reputational bolt on to the qualifications? Mr Roberts noted that unless the SGBs express this then Glenmore Lodge can't.

The Board asked what is the purpose of the National Centre and is it time for us to evolve? Is our audience and market changing? Mr Roberts noted that this is part of the long-term plan to discuss our delivery for the future and points of engagement. Our winter mountains aren't the same as in the 90s regarding snow fall. This is a heightened risk management conversation in the sector and we are meeting with others to discuss this. The Board asked about the costs which are fixed and how do we get more throughput? Mr Roberts noted that it's not about Glenmore Lodge occupying a bigger footprint. We need to look at the conferencing and events area and find synergy between all our income streams. Mr Roberts emphasised that Glenmore Lodge does need investment to be more of an accessible venue.

THE BOARD NOTED the contents of Mr Roberts report.

Action: Mr Roberts will bring a paper to the Board regarding the significant changes made since the avalanche incident in February 2023.

7. Glenmore Lodge Programmed Courses Marketing and Sales:

Mr Roberts introduced the Programmed Courses Marketing and Sales paper and highlighted that communications and marketing fulfil a role across a broad spectrum for Glenmore Lodge. Ms Smith presented the presentation to the Board and noted that the strategic plan which was launched earlier this year created a 2-year action plan. The plan notes what our objectives are and how we propose to help meet the goals of the organisation. Glenmore Lodge's remit is a national outdoor training centre delivering skills and qualification courses which influences our choice of language and how we promote ourselves. Ms Smith noted that they are about developing independence verses tourism adventure experiences. The brand journey was changed a few years ago to Discover, Learn, Adventure and Qualify. A survey was done and the question on adventure was asked. This meant different things to different people. Ms Smith showed the marketing budget which is £86k and highlighted 41% spend on digital and social. Ms Smith highlighted the customer journey map and noted that last year we had to remove the ability to sell residential packages due to a change in software provider. The Board questioned why we removed this and what is making it difficult to get the booking module to work on the website. Ms Smith noted that the booking functionality didn't support the front-end functionality. Mr English informed the Board that the web provider Simply Zesty are building a platform which will include VAT implications, food and add on requirements. Mr Roberts noted that the whole website required recoding because of the migration. Ms Smith noted that the customer user website design and function is important and getting it right for the unique function of the centre. A sustainability ethos front and centre will add a value into our product will set us apart.

The Board asked how many times in a year would we have 80 customers signed on to a course verses 30 rooms available. Mr English noted that there is a lot of tailor-made courses using the rooms. It is always busier at weekends and in the winter months. There are 30 rooms in the main building and 43 in total across the estate. Mr Roberts noted that the update will hopefully be completed by the end of March 2024.

Ms Smith noted that we have technical support with Google Ads paid for and we also work with an agency called Attacat to support us with campaigns and SEO audit review. We also

optimise information on blog pages. Ms Smith noted that we had engaged Muckle Media PR agency in the summer to help us reach people who don't know what a National Centre is. Ms Smith noted that a CRM System would help us free up resource and centralise all the data. The Board asked that if we are producing leaders of tomorrow to lead in the outdoors how are they helping us in our journey? How well does the balance fit with the four themes and the income profile and the programme profile. Ms Smith noted that it is hard because we need the users to be the advocates for the National Centre but it isn't always in their interest to be.

Ms McCay gave an update on the social media output and the newsletter and how we plan and use it noting that at the end of each month insights are captured and reviewed. Mr English gave an update on how they monitor the courses throughout the year. Mr English noted that they have a lot of reactive increase and decrease of courses depending on the demand.

The Board asked is there anything that can be done with the pace of change in the web development? The Board would like **sportscotland** to support this development where possible.

The Board asked regarding EDI and if we could use visual images on the website to promote diversity and inclusion. Mr Roberts noted that they have some initiatives coming up with charities close to Glenmore Lodge and are also looking at having the first navigation course delivered in sign language. Mr Roberts highlighted that they would need to put more resource in place with the accommodation first. Ms Smith added that they do put out case studies and attend community events to promote Glenmore Lodge.

The Board asked regarding influencers and what type of influencers are Glenmore Lodge utilising to promote it. Ms Smith noted that the agency shortlisted people to promote more adventure into your life on a specific campaign basis. It's a new thing for Glenmore Lodge. The information predominantly goes out on Instagram. The Board asked how we shortlist influencers.. The Board asked regarding collaborative posts and having Glenmore Lodge tagged at the top noting that they have some great pictures which should be sharing constantly. Ms McCay will look into this.

THE BOARD NOTED the contents of the paper.

8. sportscotland Board Agenda, 12th December 2023, National Centres:

The Board highlighted that the National Centre is on the agenda for the next Board meeting as a substantive item. Mr Fleeting shared what they planned to take to the Board and asked the Board for their input. The Board suggested a presentation to highlight the success of the National Centre of Inverclyde and Glenmore Lodge, EDI success, showing value for money, long term capital investment for Glenmore Lodge, Corporate Strategy and user impact testimonies.

THE BOARD NOTED the contents of the report.

Action: Mr Fleeting and Mr Roberts to prepare paper and present to sportscotland December 2023 Board

9. Trust Company Board Skills Audit

Mr Dunlop presented the paper to the Board and noted that it is proposed that **sportscotland** goes out to recruit two more Board Directors to fill skills gaps on finance, commercial and IT data.

The Board noted that Ms Sandilands Board term will end in February 2025. It was suggested that we include some outdoor experience in the brief.

Mr Cobb advised that the Board requires a Vice Chair who is a non **sportscotland** Committee Member. The Chair asked the present Board Members to let her know if they are interested in the position.

THE BOARD APPROVED the contents of the report.

Actions: Board to recruit two new members and appoint a vice chair

10. sportscotland Annual Health and Safety Report 2022-23

Ms Dixon presented the report to the Board and highlighted that this is the first time the report has come to the Trust Company Board. This report is presented to the Audit & Risk Committee annually in August. Ms Dixon noted some work done since April 2023:

- Health and Safety Audit
- Rewritten and launched the Health and Safety Management System which consists of 19 policies and 14 documents.

- Re-established the Health and Safety Committee which includes Mr Fleeting and Mr Roberts.
- Established a Health & Safety Operational Group which will underpin the Health and Safety Committee.
- Policies cover the corporate and regional estate with the intention that the National Centres will transition over to the Organisational policies in the new financial year.
- Health & Safety training rolled out across the organisation.

Ms Dixon noted that **sportscotland** will go out to re tender for the Health & Safety advisory contract and that we plan to merge the Fire Risk Assessment, Generic Risk Assessments, Annual Audits and other pieces of work under one contract.

The Board highlighted that we need to make sure the National Centres activities are properly reflected in the narrative including the distinct nature of what is being provided at the National Centres. We need to make sure we aren't compromising our arrangements to fit into a national model that isn't recognising the operational nature of the Trust Company Estate. Ms Dixon noted that the risk assessments and activity led risk assessments will underpin each of the specific National Centres and the office spaces but will all feed into the overarching set of policies.

The Board asked regarding the 53% increase in absent monitoring and asked if this is due to inconsistencies before. Ms Dixon noted that this is due to the reporting which covered the pandemic and home working. The Board asked if they could have the relative percentages for each area of the business alongside the overall sickness percentage.

Mr Fleeting highlighted that Glenmore Lodge and the National Centre Inverclyde will go through a health and safety audit in December 2023. This will look at key policies and risk assessments which will help them align with **sportscotland** policies in the next financial year.

The Board noted the contents of the report.

Action: The Board asked if they could have the relative percentages for each area of the business alongside the overall sickness percentage.

Other

11. Any Other Business

The Chair informed the Board that Mr Strang has resigned from the Board due to having other commitments. The Board thanked Mr Strang for his work with the Trust Company over the years.

Mr Cobb noted that he hasn't received a quote from the insurance broker. The broker is having an issue trying to get an indicative view from any insurer.

The Board noted that Mr Dunlop will step back and Ms Barrington will now attend the Trust Board meetings. The Board thanked Mr Dunlop for attending the meetings and for his support.

12. Date of Next Meeting:

The next Trust Company Board meeting will be on the 8 February 2024 at the Inverclyde National Centre.