
Coronavirus (COVID-19)

short term action plan 2020-21

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Sport for life

sportscotland
the national agency for sport

Introduction

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is disrupting society. There have been significant impacts on the sporting system.

One of the principles in Sport For Life is to be responsive. We adapt what we do based on what's happening round us. As the world around sport changes, the sporting system components and the way they interact also need to evolve.

With this context in mind we have put our [2019-21 business plan](#) to one side. We have developed this short term action plan to drive our work and our planning for a new business plan. We have new priorities and have reviewed our key activities, actions and budget to ensure they support our priorities.

We believe this will ensure we channel our time and investment in the best possible way to support the sporting system to deal with this crisis and recover.

Our principles

In delivering our short term action plan we will continue to be guided by the principles in Sport For Life:

- **Inclusive:** We understand the barriers people face and proactively address them so everyone has the opportunity to get involved in sport and physical activity.
- **Accountable:** We plan well, we measure our performance and we are accountable for delivering outcomes.
- **Responsive:** We adapt what we do based on how we're doing and what's happening around us.
- **Person-centred:** We listen to people and put their voices at the heart of our thinking.
- **Collaborative:** We develop and strengthen partnerships and collaborations across the public, voluntary and private sectors.
- **World class:** We do everything to the highest possible standard, while seeking to continuously improve.

Our strategic priorities

This section summarises the strategic priorities that are driving our short term action plan.

Supporting the sector to recover

Partnerships are a critical part of the sporting system. We will continue to gather information that helps us understand the impact this crisis is having on partners' operations and sustainability. This will help us design financial support measures and other types of support based on their needs.

Partners have responded positively to our commitment to make prompt investment payments in April/May and August/September 2020. Our flexible and simple approach is supporting the employment status of professionals across the sector. We will continue to collaborate with Scottish Government to ensure sport organisations can take advantage of UK and Scottish support packages available.

We are also providing leadership to partners to help them plan to deliver sport and physical activity responsibly and safely in line with government guidelines. Our system-based approach is helping progress plans for community sport alongside a return to training for performance athletes. As part of this process we are providing clear, coherent advice to the Scottish Government to help them make informed decisions about sport.

Supporting staff and ensuring business continuity

The health and wellbeing of our staff and staff in the wider sporting sector has been at the front of our thoughts and actions since this crisis unfolded.

We will continue to take a flexible and supportive approach to managing our work during this time to ensure our staff who have caring responsibilities or who need to self-isolate for health reasons have the support they need. We will continue to encourage colleagues to remain physically active within the guidelines. This will reduce the risk of infection and help our staff stay physically and mentally healthy.

We are continually updating and implementing our business continuity plans. This includes communicating regularly to help people stay connected while working from home and ensuring a robust ICT infrastructure that supports staff to work in the most efficient and effective way at home. We will also plan for the transition back to office-based working, but the current default position is to continue to work from home. Our office capacity will be reviewed as part of our business planning.

Supporting society

The sport and physical activity sector makes a significant contribution to society. During this crisis we must continue to ensure communities across Scotland reap the benefits of sport and physical activity.

We recognise the risk that lockdown restrictions may have a damaging impact on some people's physical activity levels and their mental health. We aim to show leadership to support people to be physically active within government guidelines.

Sport can play a key role in helping rebuild communities as we move through and out of this crisis. This can be through local clubs, community sport organisations or sport in schools. It

can help reduce loneliness and make people feel more connected to their community. This is why we will continue to be flexible about our investment to ensure professional staff in the sporting system can respond to local needs and help rebuild communities across Scotland.

Our environments

Within the environments we have developed new actions and reprioritised existing actions from our 2019-21 business plan to ensure we deliver against the strategic priorities. Our priority actions are the actions we have developed to support our strategic priorities and respond to COVID-19.

We will continue to develop a number of existing activities that will help lay the foundations for sport to come back stronger. We may do these differently as a result of COVID-19 and we will manage our time and spending on these activities closely.

During this plan we will also begin to review our major programmes along with our approach and investment principles. The aim is to further embed the Sport For Life principles and ensure what we do is supporting and adding value to our partners across the system, helping them to recover over the long term.

Schools and education

Local authorities and local partners

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- provide strategic leadership to the sport and leisure sector through and out of the pandemic. This will involve collaborating with a wide range of local and national partners, including Scottish Government, COSLA, SOLACE, VOCAL, Community Leisure UK, Scottish governing bodies of sport (SGBs) and Public Health Scotland.
- hold strategic conversations with local authorities to understand both the impact of COVID-19 on local sport and the impact their recovery plans will have on local sport. We will seek to understand the:
 - impact on local policy and finance for sport and leisure.
 - implications for leisure centres and access to the school estate for community organisations.
 - impact on the local sport and leisure workforce.
 - potential for clubs and community organisations to play a role in owning or managing local facilities.
- support local recovery planning and provide flexible financial support to local authorities to protect the workforce we invest in.

School sport

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- work with local partners to ensure Active Schools plays a key role in the recovery of school and community sport.

- work with local partners to ensure they adopt an inclusive approach for all children and young people.

Clubs and communities

SGB and other national partnerships

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- work with SGBs to support them to develop sport-specific guidance, recovery plans and revised activities including reviewing SGB structures and operations.
- support changes required to SGB programmes and activities in light of COVID-19, focusing on recovery, linked to the principles in Sport For Life.
- provide flexible financial support to SGBs through our existing investment and develop and deliver a targeted fund to support SGBs that require additional financial support.

Community sport

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- provide guidance, support and resources to partners, including professional staff, facility operators, coaches, volunteers and deliverers to help community sport hubs, clubs and community organisations return to sport and physical activity safely.
- work with partners to understand the impact of COVID-19 on club and community organisations and target our investment to help sport and leisure recovery.
- assess the contribution of our current programmes to ensure ongoing added value and integrated planning. This will include community sport hubs, direct club investment (DCI) and the Change Makers partnership.

We will also continue to:

- support and invest in the governance and management infrastructure of SGBs to create effective organisations.
- invest in a range of organisations to achieve outcomes for sport and physical activity, and wider outcomes for changing lives and young people.
- invest in and work through our partners to build the capability and capacity of club and community organisations so they can improve opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity.
- support, develop and deliver opportunities for continuous improvement in coaching and accessible coaching qualifications.

Performance sport

Performance sport programmes

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- develop and implement return to training plans that have athlete and staff welfare at the centre and ensure athletes and sports return to training safely and successfully.
- provide expert advice and support to the Scottish high performance system through best practice knowledge and understanding combined with new protocols and processes for risk assessment.

Performance operational services

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- deliver innovative expertise and support remotely to all SGBs and athletes to ensure we support them to work towards major Games.

To risk-manage the uncertainty of the international calendar and our system's response to it we have established a new Olympic 2021 and Beyond Group. This group will ensure regular communication with UK and international partners, monitor the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the performance system and international sporting calendar, and propose contingency plans at the appropriate time.

We will also continue to:

- deliver learning and development opportunities for internal and external people working in high performance sport.
- oversee and manage a Clean Sport System in Scotland.
- support and invest in governing body performance staff and programmes to develop performance pathways and help athletes progress and achieve on the world stage.

Making it happen

Making the most of our assets

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- use the learning from our staff wellbeing and engagement survey to review and improve support for staff and ensure they remain effective and healthy, while working from home for an extended period.
- begin preparatory work at an organisational level that allows staff, partners and customers to consider returning to the **sportscotland** estate safely, when guidance allows.
- provide HR support and advice in relation to COVID-19 and new legislation.
- provide expert support to our National Centre management team on the implementation and management of the furlough process.

We will continue to make the most of our people, places and tools by:

- ensuring we have suitable business continuity arrangements in place to avoid significant disruption in the event of major incidents.
- developing and maintaining a robust ICT infrastructure and supporting staff in all aspects of software development.

- reviewing and finalising the people development strategy and the underpinning work programmes and plans.

Delivering with integrity

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- support the organisation to develop a short term action plan to guide us, including an updated performance measurement framework based on the revised strategic priorities in light of COVID-19.
- develop scenario planning approaches to help our staff and the sector to plan for the uncertainty caused by COVID-19.

We will continue to do the things we need to do to be an excellent public body, including:

- ensuring appropriate cyber resilience measures are in place to protect our systems and data.
- ensuring good financial management and controls, and operational governance.
- providing a robust information governance framework.
- delivering routine performance reports to key stakeholders.
- delivering the planning and reporting requirements in our legislative responsibilities and strategic drivers.
- providing research support to help people use data to plan, deliver and contribute to the evidence base about sport.

Raising profile

To respond to COVID-19 we will:

- deliver targeted communications campaigns to respond directly to COVID-19, focusing on reassurance and joint ownership and responsibility about how we move as a sector to return to sport.
- increase the frequency of internal and external communications.

We will continue to help people understand and value us and sport by:

- creating digital content for key channels under our communication themes.
- creating proactive media opportunities and managing reactive media to ensure balanced coverage wherever possible.
- providing government with the information they need and informing government policy.

Performance measurement

We have reviewed our planned data collection and developed a new set of interim KPIs to help us understand how well we are delivering the short term action plan. These are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Revised performance measurement framework

Priority	Measure
Sector	Feedback from partners (SGBs and local partners): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial support • Recovery planning support Feedback from Scottish Government: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery planning support Impact of financial support and recovery planning support
Staff	Feedback from staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of support from managers • Extent to which managers have supported people to prioritise health and wellbeing • Extent to which managers have been flexible about working arrangements (including around caring responsibilities) • Effectiveness of internal communication • Robustness of ICT infrastructure
Society	Reach of our external communications on physical activity and sport Examples of how partners have been responsive to local needs