

sportscotland

Council Meeting

Minutes of the Council Board Meeting held at the **sportscotland** National Centre Inverclyde on Tuesday 29 October at 09:00

Present

Members

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

In Attendance

Council Officers

Mr F Dunlop
Ms R Barrington
Mr C Burn
Mr B Fleeting
Mr J Lunn
Mr P Reid
Mr A Smith
Ms L Cook

Scottish Government

Mr A Sinclair
Mr R Foggo

UK Sport

Ms S Munday

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Business

1 Apologies for Absence

➤ *Mr A Bain, Mr D McDonald and Ms H Ousta.*

2 Declarations of Interest

➤ *None.*

3 Minutes of Meeting held on 27 August 2024

➤ *The minutes of the Board meeting held on 27 August 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.*

4 Matters Arising

Mr Dunlop updated on the conversations with Judy Murray, the LTA and Tennis Scotland regarding legacy projects.

5 Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair highlighted the recent Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games where Scottish athletes won twenty medals across seven sports. The Chair expressed congratulations and celebrations to all the athletes and team involved.

The Chair also expressed her delight that the Commonwealth Games has been approved for Glasgow in 2026, recognising the disappointment for some sports and athletes that will not be involved.

The Chair updated that she has now attended her first UK Sport Board meeting, she updated on work streams including system master planning and Sport Org.

The Chair highlighted the high levels of engagement with Ministers during Women and Girls Sport week and thanked everyone that helped to make it happen as it was great to see the level of connection, understanding and enthusiasm from the Ministers.

The Chair updated that the recruitment process for new Board members is underway with a very healthy response to date. Interviews are planned for December.

6 Executive Management Report

Mr Dunlop informed the Board that Mr Sinclair has issued a Letter requesting in year savings, as a result of this we have carried out the following actions: the managed recruitment which was in place has now moved to a recruitment freeze with the exception of essential operational posts and through the quarter two review process we have put in place a more thorough review of non-committed spend. These actions alongside the proceeds of sale from Caledonia House will allow for a balanced budget to be achieved. Mr Dunlop went on to stress that the key issue is for next year and beyond and working towards a budget which is sustainable.

Mr Burn updated on the COSLA partnership which was in response to the Boards discussions around local influence. Jillian Gibson has now been appointed and the first meeting of the COSLA Special Interest Group to look at sport and leisure provision is taking place at the same time as the Board meeting.

Mr Burn updated on the following staffing changes to Scottish Governing Bodies; Alan McMillan as, the recruitment process is ongoing; Mr Lunn been appointed as CEO of Scottish Swimming and will start on 6th January. Mr Burn thanked Mr Lunn for the significant contribution he has made while working for sportscotland and the Board wished him the best in his new role. Mr Burn explained that he is working with the team to consider options for restructure and will bring an update to Board in December.

Ms Barrington provided an update on the recent busy quarter and highlighted the HR teams implementation of the 35 hour working week which has been well received and successful. The Good day at work survey is due to be sent out shortly and it will be interesting to review the results and get an overview of how people are feeling. In line with the strategy of reducing the overall estate the facilities team has been reduced. Ms Barrington announced that an offer has been accepted for Caledonia House and we hope to have the sale completed by Christmas. We have also given notice in Inverness where we were hiring space at the Nature Scot building, we will rent meeting rooms when required and review this in quarter four. We are currently working with the Commonwealth Games project team and providing them with office space in Templeton. Two live litigations are in progress and there no major updates regarding them. The quarterly report continues to evolve and we have now moved the comms report into that, Ms Barrington asked the Board for feedback as we continue to evolve.

The Board commented that there looks to be a lot of people updates related to staff capacity coming up in the next six to eighteen months, whilst the People Development Committee look at these changes it was suggested that updates should also be brought to the Board.

➤ *The Board noted the Executive Management Report.*

7 **Richard Foggo, Director of Population Health, Scottish Government**

The Chair welcomed Mr Foggo to the meeting.

Mr Foggo expressed thanks on behalf of the Scottish Government for the work that sportscotland continues to carry out, he went on to congratulation all those involved in the Paris Olympic and Paralympic success.

Mr Foggo discussed the work led by **sportscotland** on political engagement and the importance of this to ensure Ministers are given opportunities to see first hand the impact of investing in sport.

Mr Foggo explained the health inequalities and the challenges that Scotland continues to face. He went on to discuss the good work done to develop the Physical Activity for Health framework and the importance of collaborative working across sectors if there is to be a population health impact. Mr Foggo confirmed that this work does not change the Ministerial Guidance letter and that **sportscotland** must continue to focus on Sport for Life and supporting and developing the sports sector.

The Chair thanked Mr Foggo and invited questions.

The Board discussed the opportunities around the Commonwealth Games. Mr Foggo clarified that the delivery costs for the event should not be supported by the public purse but that support for Team Scotland should be supported in the usual way.

The Board discussed recent reports from Public Health Scotland that around three thousand people die a year due lack of physical activity. Mr Foggo replied that the Active Scotland team

and subsequent ASOF and PAFH frameworks have been developed to address these challenges. He went on to explain the difficulty in getting those who are inactive or least active to be active. Mr Foggo discussed the view often shared that Scotland has world class policy documents, but the challenge is translating policy into action and change.

The Board shared the significant pressures that partners are facing and the fatigue in the sector, recognising that aspiration and ambition remains high but the reality of budgets and resources mean implementation and delivery is challenging. Mr Foggo recognised these challenges and agreed that we must stay focussed on what we can deliver and the impact that we are making, noting that it was significant.

The Chair recognised that there is an interesting 18 months ahead with Scottish elections due in May 2026 and the need for the sector to be joined up and consistent with how it presents itself in that time and into the Commonwealth Games in the summer of 2026.

The Chair thanked Mr Foggo for presenting to the Board.

➤ *The Board noted Mr Foggo's presentation.*

For Decision

8 Investment process and principles policy

Mr Lunn presented an overview of the investment process which is flexible and does not take a one size fits all approach. The Chair asked about the turnover of organisational health and how can the Board get a sense of when an SGB is heading into difficult waters. Mr Lunn responded that we get a hint of this through formalities like policies and checking compliant safety standards. We are also heavily reliant on relationships and SGBs feeding back to Partnership Managers, we take people at face value and operate on the basis that we want people to be open and honest with us rather than attempt to catch them out, but this is dependent on relationships and not all sports operate the same.

The Board congratulated Mr Lunn on his new appointment to Scottish Swimming and commented that over the years his work has been comprehensive, and the transparency has allowed for healthy debates. Mr Lunn reflected on the changes that he has seen over the years, with expectations growing on SGBs. Mr Reid noted that conversations used to be focused on investment but over time he has seen a shift to conversations about what support we can provide to sports to help them deliver on outcomes and that change is welcome.

The Board discussed the different sizes and responsibilities of sports and the need to take a proportionate approach in how we manage these. Mr Lunn agreed and explained how the management of a range of smaller sports is now undertaken. The Board went on to discuss shared services, Mr Lunn explained that we already invest significant monies in shared services and that we will continue that conversation with sports who are generally open to the idea.

The Chair asked about sports that will have a one year agreement. Mr Lunn explained a couple of examples of why that would be the case.

The Board referred to the previous strategic sessions with Rugby and Football where we discussed a different type of relationship and asked for an update on that? Mr Lunn responded that we have moved to a national partner relationship where we are looking at the broader aspects in relation to government engagement and working collaboratively on things like communication and strategic engagement. Mr Dunlop added that the change in relationship has moved more with Football and will hopefully progress with Rugby when their new CEO starts in January.

➤ *The Board noted the Investment process and principles policy.*

For Discussion

9 Sport for Life – Performance Sport

Mr Reid presented an overview of the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games with reference to the support staff, the athletes and the results. Mr Smith presented on these results in the context of the last 10 / 15 years and the trends that we are seeing.

The Chair thanked Mr Reid and Mr Smith for their presentation.

The Board discussed the cost of supporting athletes and how this has risen over the years, they asked if there are other countries that we can compare to? Ms Munday explained the complexities of different sports and athletes at different stages of the pathway.

The Board asked for more information on the real terms decline in investment for SGB pathways and what this meant. Mr Smith explained this is the money that is invested in daily training environments, in competition programmes and in coaching. Ms Munday explained the iceberg model which UK Sport have developed which recognises that the small number of performance athletes only arrive if everything else under the water is in place. She went on to explain that UK Sport are considering their investment into performance coaching and that this is an area which requires more support.

The Chair welcomed the fresh thinking, and the data led analysis, she went on to express her view that we must retain an ambition to host world class programmes and athletes in Scotland and that as this work develops this ambition should be built in.

The Board concluded that the integration of all parts of the organisation against Sport for Life remains a priority and that we continue to develop the sporting system based on school and education, club and community sport and performance sport.

➤ *The Board noted the Sport for Life – Performance Sport presentation.*

10 Sport for Life – National Centres

Ms Barrington introduced the presentation recognising that the National Centres aren't an environment in the same manner as the other three but will present in same format. The presentation will build on the discussion from the December 2023 Board and will present what should be retained and what we would like to review. Mr Fleeting presented context on the National Centres and an overview of the financial outlook and areas of priority. Ms Barrington presented on financial outlook.

The Chair thanked Ms Barrington and Mr Fleeting for the presentation.

The Board commented on the value that the National Centres bring and the contribution they make to sport for life. They also recognised that some of the inclusion work and groups that have been subsidised to attend the centres are now under threat because of financial pressures. Mr Fleeting acknowledged this but also reassured that some of the relationships that have been established will be maintained and groups will continue to return, he went on to explain that type of work can also be restarted in and when resources are available.

The Board discussed the various client groups and reconfirmed that the priority is to support SGBs and their athletes and squads. Mr Fleeting explained the booking system which allowed for this prioritisation but also noted that for some sports there were more appropriate national centres.

The Board discussed the challenges faced by Glenmore Lodge with an aging estate. They went on to discuss the core business of Glenmore and the role it played, recognising the world class level of expertise around winter and mountain safety. Mr Dunlop added that they continue to play a leadership role in outdoor and adventure sport, bring that part of the sector together.

The Board concluded that it should have an annual discussion around the National Centres which should focus on the contribution they make to Sport for Life and let the Trust Company Board do their job.

➤ *The Board noted the Sport for Life – National Centres presentation.*

For Information

11 Quarter 2: 2024-2025 progress report

The Chair asked the Board to contact Ms Barrington with feedback on the report.

Noted and taken as read.

12 Scottish Women and Girls in Sport week

Noted and taken as read.

13 Economic Impact Research Report

Noted and taken as read.

14 People Development Committee meeting draft minutes

Noted and taken as read.

15 Any Other Business

The Chair thanked Ms Munday and Mr Foggo for attending and presenting.

16 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 9 and Tuesday 10 December 2024 (Inverclyde)

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