

sportscotland

Council Meeting

Minutes of the Council Board Meeting held at the **sportscotland** National Centre Inverclyde on Tuesday 27 August at 09:00

Present

Members

Ms M Campbell, Chair
Mr A Bain
Mr C Grant
Mr S Lindsay
Mr D McDonald
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 M Cowan
Mr M Drummond
Ms J Lynn
Mr J Lunn
Ms L Cook

Scottish Government

Mr A Sinclair

UK Sport

Ms K Grainger

EKOS

Mr B McLaren (for item 8)

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Business

1 Apologies for Absence

➤ *Ms H Ousta.*

2 Declarations of Interest

➤ *None.*

3 Minutes of Meeting held on 25 June 2024

➤ *The minutes of the Board meeting held on 25 June 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.*

4 Matters Arising

None.

5 Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Ms Grainger and expressed her appreciation for her attendance. Ms Munday the CEO of UK Sport will present at the October Board meeting.

The Chair congratulated Team GB and in particular the Scottish athletes on excellent performances in Paris. The Chair also congratulated the wider staff team, coaches, volunteers, family and friends who all make a significant contribution to athlete performances.

The Chair thanked all the Board members for their participation in the Board reviews and for their feedback. The main consensus was that the Board is working well, and Board members have a positive experience, there was also a range of suggestions that will be built into both inductions of new members and Board meetings in the coming months.

6 Executive Management Report

Mr Dunlop updated on the recent meeting between the Chair, Mr Foggo and Mr Sinclair which had discussed the pressures and priorities faced by the Scottish Government. Mr Foggo will attend the October Board meeting.

Mr Dunlop updated that Jillian Gibson has now been appointed as the Policy Manager with a responsibility for sport and leisure at COSLA. This is part of the new partnership agreement between COSLA and **sportscotland** which is in response previous Board discussions about local political influence. Mr Dunlop suggested that COSLA are invited to present to the Board in the new year.

Mr Lunn updated on the UK Sport led System Master Planning, confirming that UK Sport CEO, Sally Munday, would present more information when she attended the October Board meeting. Mr Lunn went on to update the Board on a range of SGB challenges, concluding that expectations on SGBs continue to build and pressures on SGB CEOs and Boards are ever increasing. The Board recognised the correlation between challenges with SGBs and complaints / FOI requests.

Ms Barrington updated that the scope for a **sportscotland** strategic workforce review is in the final stages of development with the final step being a discussion with the People Development Committee before going to market.

Ms Barrington updated on the sale of Caledonia House, with offers expected and a closing date of mid-October. The sale of Cumbrae is still progressing but is subject to planning permissions. Ms Barrington also brought the Board up to date with two live litigations.

Ms Barrington thanked the Board for reviewing the skills matrix, the advert will be live in the coming weeks and Board are asked to share with their networks as widely as possible.

The Board discussed the potential for in year savings and asked how these would be managed. Mr Dunlop confirmed that the SMT have implemented a managed process for recruitment and that this can be strengthened as required, he also explained that the Q2 budget review process would be used to give an accurate picture of commitments, spend and potential savings.

➤ *The Board noted the Executive Management Report.*

7 Katherine Grainger, Chair, UK Sport

Ms Grainger thanked the Chair and the Board for the opportunity to join the meeting. She explained that she would cover three areas, which would include, performance sport, government / political engagement and finish with some insight on system master planning which Ms Munday would build on at the October meeting.

Ms Grainger started by sharing her views about the Paris games which she described as one of the best Games she had attended and congratulated the organising committee and the country on delivering a great games. From a UK Sport perspective, the medal range that was set out was based on realistic delivery, 65 medals were delivered which was top quarter. Public money was invested across eighteen sports, this breadth is important to reach wider areas of the country. Finally, 'winning well' was the basis of the UK Sport strategy and Ms Grainger was pleased to see sports delivering medals in line with this essential commitment.

Ms Grainger described the positive opportunity that the Olympics had presented to host a range of Ministers and Civil Servants and for them to see firsthand the impact of investing in performance sport. Ms Grainger explained the process of confirming investment for the next cycle and the four year commitment that was required. A similar approach will be taken during the Paralympic Games.

Ms Grainger went on to explain the System Master Planning project and how this has been developed in response to feedback from governing bodies and the pressures they are facing. The project is based on shared services and efficiency across sports, it is now getting to the stage of committing to particular strands of work.

The Board discussed the importance of the wider stories behind the athletes and of trying to maximise the window of interest for our Olympic and Paralympic sports and athletes. Ms Grainger talked about the new sports and the potential that they offer. The Board then discussed the data, facts and figures that are needed alongside the stories and ultimately the impact of the inspirational performances on wider participation.

Ms Grainger concluded by emphasising the important role that we all have in influencing political leaders and decision makers on the impact of sport at all levels and that we should be confident and relentless in making the case.

➤ *The Board noted Ms Grainger's presentation.*

For Discussion

8 A review of culture, sport and leisure services in Scotland

The Chair welcomed Mr McLaren, Managing Director at EKOS.

Mr McLaren presented on the latest in a long series of studies reviewing the sector which contains over a decade's worth of robust data sets. Mr McLaren concluded his presentation by expressing the significant challenges which face the sector following years of real terms cuts. The Chair thanked Mr McLaren for his helpful presentation.

The Board discussed the concept of systematic failure across the sector and what that would look like, what it would mean and the likelihood of that happening. The Board recognised that all the data is suggesting further cuts and pressures will result in significant closures and that the impact will be felt the most by those living in poverty. Mr McLaren explained that local leaders are having these discussions and remain committed to finding solutions and protecting what they can, they also recognised the need for a strategic response to the challenge which could and should be cross boundaries.

The Chair asked for more information regarding the impact and position of the cultural sector. Mr McLaren replied that it has seen similar cuts and is in a similar place to the sport and leisure sector, he recognised that the potential for income generation in the sport and leisure sector was not always the same in the cultural sector.

The Board asked Mr McLaren for his views on the solutions and actions that are needed to help manage and mitigate the impact of long term cuts. Mr McLaren responded that it is about efficiencies, where measures can be found and being honest about what can and cannot be done. Clear priorities need to be established, continual consideration and work to address deprivation is needed and a recognition that Councils and ALEOs do not have to be the delivery agents. Mr McLaren went on to discuss the importance of community engagement and empowerment as part of the solution, concluding that the financial pressures will not go away anytime soon. The Board recognised the importance of community empowerment and the need to focus on best practice in this area.

The Board discussed with Mr McLaren the role of the private sector, recognising the important role of a mixed economy of provision.

The Board returned to the discussion around taking a strategic approach to solutions. Mr McLaren added that in many instances local decisions and approaches have a strong political weighting which is not always in the best interest of a balanced approach to service provision. He reemphasised his view that there is a reality that service provision is changing and cannot be maintained at the same level it has been in the past and therefore prioritising is essential, he also acknowledged that a rationalisation of facilitates is not always a bad thing and colocation of services should be developed further.

The Chair thanked Mr McLaren for his presentation and commented that it is good to see a crystallised accurate reflection of the story and we need to think about what we do next but the idea of a case study on what is working would be useful and to consider how to get a similar health check on the club sector.

➤ *The Board noted the review of culture, sport and leisure services in Scotland.*

9 Sport for Life – Club and community

Mr Burn, Ms Lynn and Mr Lunn gave an overview of the paper, highlighting the critical role of community clubs and organisations and the volunteers that run them. They updated on the investment into SGBs and other national partners and the long term trends of this investment.

The Chair opened the discussion by adding her views as to the importance of volunteers and the inspirational stories that we hear on a daily basis regarding the role they play.

The Board discussed the shared services, Mr Lunn explained that there is a total of around £1.5 million in this area which includes things like Children 1st, Expert Resource and centralised payroll functions. Mr Burn explained that we will bring together SGB CEOs and Chairs later in the year and that shared services will be a topic of conversation to get feedback on areas that further collaboration can take place.

The Board acknowledged the wide variety in size and scale of SGBs and discussed how best to support them all, while ensuring our investment was meaningful and impactful. Mrs Lynn updated on the Club and Community review which found common themes for all sports and that we are working with sports to look at some of these common areas, for example data.

The Board asked if it is clear how we define success for clubs and communities and what are our ambitions; is it to maintain the current levels, given the clear messaging from the EKOS work are we being realistic about what is possible? Mr Burn noted that our investment supports about one million people and that while we want to continue to grow this number there are a range of factors which make this difficult, when EDI is overlayed it becomes more about targeted work than it does the overall number.

Mr Lunn noted that the Community Sports Hub legacy from the Commonwealth Games concept was around community engagement, and it is interesting to see how it has evolved. An EDI focus has been added and we now have good numbers and stories of impact.

The Board agreed that we should have clarity on what we are trying to achieve, we need to understand what is needed and decide how to position ourselves to enable us to develop. There are contradictory demands, and we need to have clarity on which are most important or we will not achieve changing the makeup of participation.

The Board discussed the investment into rugby and football and debated the merits of investing in these sports who have significant sources of other investment, while recognising football has a reach that no other sport is close to. Mr Dunlop reminded the Board of the change to the agreement with football and rugby and that we are working with them to be more aligned around our influencing work.

The Board recognised that through the business planning process we need to consider some more radical options to balance the budget in the years ahead, but even more so if we are to create some capacity to invest more in areas of work that offer the greatest return.

➤ *The Board noted the Sport for Life – Club and Community paper.*

For Decision

10 Park of Keir

Mr Cowan gave an update on the Park of Keir development, concluding that the Murray Play Foundation had made the decision to discontinue this project on this site. The Board acknowledged the decision and understood that discussions will continue with the Murray family on how best to recognise the Murray Legacy.

- *The Board approved the Park of Keir update.*

Finance:

- 11 **sportscotland Management Accounts 2023-24 Out-turn**
- 12 **sportscotland Group Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024**
- 13 **sportscotland Group Draft Auditors' Report and Letter of Representation**
- 14 **sportscotland Lottery Fund Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024**
- 15 **sportscotland Lottery Fund Draft Auditors' Report and Letter of Representation**

Mr Drummond presented an overview of all the finance papers.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee thanked Mr Drummond for bringing a different approach and providing a bridge by talking the Board through the papers with a clear explanation. Mr Lindsay went on to highlight that we have received a clean audit report, he explained changes which had been picked up this year which resulted in a restatement of last year's balance and changes to how dilapidation provision was now accounted for. Mr Lindsay acknowledged the importance of a robust audit, while maintaining a positive relationship with Audit Scotland.

Mr Lindsay finished by thanking members of the ARC and the staff team for their work in completing this year's accounts.

The Board all agreed to approve the finance papers.

- *The Board approved all of the Finance papers.*

For Information

- 16 **sportscotland Group and Lottery: Audit Scotland Annual Report to the Board and the Auditor General for Scotland for the year ended 31 March 2024**

Noted and taken as read.

- 17 **The Scottish Sports Council Trust Company Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024**

Noted and taken as read.

- 18 **The Scottish Sports Council Trust Company Wylie & Bisset Audit Findings for the year ended 31 March 2024**

Noted and taken as read.

19 Playing our Part 2023-24: Summary of progress – annual review

Noted and taken as read.

20 Quarter 1: 2024-2025 progress report

Noted and taken as read.

21 Communications update

Noted and taken as read.

22 Trust Company Board draft minutes

Noted and taken as read.

23 Audit and Risk Committee draft minutes

Noted and taken as read.

24 Any Other Business

The Chair asked for reflections on the Commonwealth Games discussion from the previous evening. The Board shared their appreciation for the very clear presentation from Mr Doig and Ms Hughes, and supported the revised model, recognising it was the best chance for a long term future for the Games. The Board recognised the significant work undertaken by Commonwealth Games Scotland and the importance of this work.

25 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 28 and Tuesday 29 October 2024 (Inverclyde)

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