

sportscotland

Council Meeting

Minutes of the Council Board Meeting held at the **sportscotland** National Centre Inverclyde on Tuesday 24 June at 09:00

Present

Members

Ms M Campbell, Chair
Mr A Bain
Ms M Connolly
Ms J Gotts
Mr A Kerr
Mr S Lindsay
Mr T McDaid
Mr T Mistry
Ms H Ousta
Mr S Sweeney
Mr A Watt

In Attendance

Council Officers

Mr F Dunlop
Ms R Steven
Mr C Burn
Ms J Lynn
Mr M Cowan
Ms L Cook

Scottish Government

Mr A Sinclair

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Business

1 Apologies for Absence

➤ *Ms G Treasurer.*

2 Declarations of Interest

➤ *None.*

3 Minutes of Meeting held on 29 April 2025

➤ *The minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 April 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.*

4 Matters Arising

Mr Dunlop updated on the ongoing discussions with tennis and cricket.

5 Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair updated on a recent meeting with representatives of the SGBs, Neil Gray, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care and Maree Todd the Minister for Drugs, Alcohol and Sport. The meeting was a good opportunity for the SGBs to explain the financial pressures that they face and the impact on their organisations and members.

The Board discussed the importance of each of these conversations and opportunities to clearly communicate the pressure that the sport sector is under. The Board went on to discuss the recent Public Sector Reform announcements and pending strategy.

The Chair updated that UK Sport has appointed a new Chair, Nick Webborn, who was previously the Chair for the British Paralympic Association. Nick has already expressed his desired to hold a UK Sport Board meeting in Scotland (and other Home Countries), the Chair expressed that this is a good sign of his intent around collaboration.

The Chair noted that she attended the Young Scot Awards last week and recognised that sport was featured heavily and highlighted the strong partnership between Young Scot and **sportscotland**.

6 Executive Management Report

Mr Dunlop updated on the recent National Leadership Group for physical activity in sport meeting. The meeting brings together representatives from local and national organisations that have a responsibility or role to play in physical activity. Mr Dunlop went on to update that there are now thirteen local partners using the new framework and that Glasgow has recently launched its new strategy which used the framework for guidance.

Mr Dunlop noted that the Health and Sport Committee meeting is taking place this morning and **sportscotland** will be represented by Mrs Wyllie who leads on Active Schools work and will provide an update on participation of sport and represent the work we do.

Mr Burn highlighted the Senior Leaders in Sport Forum which is taking place in Stirling. The forum will focus on sector wide messaging and influencing.

Mr Burn highlighted that the Island Games are being held in Orkney next month, this is an exciting opportunity and will be attended by Mr Dunlop and the Chair.

Mr Burn updated on the Safe Sport report which has been led by UK / English governing bodies, but with consultation with Scottish Bodies. He explained that the home country sports councils have agreed to work together with governing bodies to look at a consistent approach to safe sport. Mr Dunlop will sit on the steering group.

Mr Burn explained that the Judo programme has now transferred to Judo Scotland.

Mr Burn noted that Research Scotland have been appointed to conduct the Active Schools review, and we will bring back the report at the end of the year.

Mr Burn gave an overview of a range of changes in SGBs.

The Board discussed the messaging and influencing from across the sector and the importance of providing leadership with the aim of achieving a consistent message. The Board acknowledged the challenges in achieving this but were clear that we must work through these for the greater good.

Ms Steven provided an overview of the strategic workforce review, the impact of voluntary severance and the ongoing good day at work monitoring. Ms Steven confirmed that the senior team will continue to work with the People Development Committee and ultimately bring a report back to the Board at either the October or December meeting.

The Board discussed the changes and the importance of staying connected to staff feedback while recognising that a period of change will be difficult for some staff.

Ms Steven updated on the road traffic accident and was pleased to announce that all three people are recuperating well and discussing return to work plans.

Ms Steven updated on the position with Caledonia House and Cumbræ. Ms Steven went on to confirm a review and options appraisal will now take place with Templeton and Stirling offices, the process will consider the needs of our staff and the sector and consider the financials around both offices.

Ms Steven asked Board members to save the date for the Scottish Sports Awards on the 15th December.

➤ *The Board noted the Executive Management Report.*

For Decision

7 Board Annual Programme of work

Ms Steven introduced the paper noting that it provides an overview of topics that will be covered at future Board meetings. Over the last year we have reviewed each of the environments then pulled together overall strategy but this year we plan to take a horizontal approach and consider the 'enablers'.

The Board discussed the balance of work across meetings and whether a change to the sequence or number of Board meetings was required. It was agreed that this should be discussed further over the autumn period and Board members were asked to share thoughts.

- *The Board approved the Board annual programme of work.*

For Discussion

8 Facilities Review

8.1 Overview of other capital projects and commitments

8.2 (TSIT / Cycling Fund / Strategic Projects)

Mr Cowan referenced the Board paper which gave background information to the capital commitments across a range of programmes. Mr Cowan explained that he would be happy to discuss any element of this with Board members but the focus of the presentation was on the national facilities review.

Mr Cowan went on to give an overview of the national facilities review, the context, project timelines and some of the emerging themes.

The Board discussed some of the frustrations encountered in progressing this work. The Board went on to discuss the scale of the challenge ahead and how that could be presented and progressed, accepting hundreds of millions of pounds were required in the years ahead to maintain and replace the estate needed to maintain and grow participation, the Board also noted the challenges with decarbonisation and the cost of this on an aging estate.

The Board discussed the school estate and the role it is and will play in the future, while recognising it was not the sole solution and a significant community estate was also required.

Mr Cowan summarised that the report will express both the complexity and the cost of the problems, but that ultimately the solutions will need to be found through local and regional planning.

The Board thanked Mr Cowan for the helpful presentation and discussion, recognising the complexity of the project and the problem.

Mr Cowan will return to the Board once the report has been finalised to continue the conversation.

- *The Board noted the facilities review.*

9 National Lottery balance

Ms Steven introduced the paper which provides background to the utilisation of the national lottery monies and the management of the balance. The Board were asked to consider if the current approach remains appropriate or whether there were opportunities to manage the balance differently.

The Chair notified the new Board members that the Board had previously made a decision to utilise a percentage of the balance, while recognising the commitments to the various capital programmes and to holding a contingency.

Mr Lindsay, asked about the status of the underpin which has been put in place by the Scottish Government to protect against any sudden dips in lottery income. It was acknowledged that the underpin is unique to **sportscotland** and is as yet untested. In line with the government's annual budget cycle and confirmation of funding for **sportscotland** this is subject to annual reconfirmation."

The Board discussed the timelines associated with the capital commitments, while recognising this is the nature of capital projects, particularly when **sportscotland** is a relatively small percentage funder.

The Board agreed that in principle releasing money into the sector against business plan priorities was the right thing to do, but that close monitoring of the annual and medium term commitments and balance was essential.

The Board discussed the importance of very clear separation of lottery monies and Scottish Government money, specifically that any release of lottery money cannot be confused with the wider sector pressure and ask on the Scottish Government against their commitment to double the budget to sport and active living.

The Chair asked that further consideration is given by the management team and another paper brought back to the Board in August.

➤ *The Board noted the national lottery balance.*

10 Investment principles and process

Mr Burn introduced the paper, explaining that this was the start of a discussion with Board around our investment principles and process. He explained that we will also be speaking to our partners to get feedback with the ultimate goal of simplifying and streamlining our processes.

Mrs Lynn added that we should continue to invest against a four year plan with annual checks, but that the process for the annual checks needed to be much simpler for both partners and **sportscotland**.

The Board discussed simplifying the process, ensuring the correct scrutiny and management is in place but that it should not become overly burdensome for our staff or partners. The Board also emphasised the importance of strong relationships with our partners so that challenges and issues are shared early and met with a supportive response.

The Board discussed the number of partners that **sportscotland** invests in, whether that remained the right number and if we were always clear about the outcomes that our investment was delivering against for all our partners. Mr Burn explained that these sorts of discussions would naturally flow from this work.

Mrs Lynn added that we would pilot some changes to the investment process this autumn with the intention of reviewing the principles, process and adopting a new or refreshed system for next years investment cycle.

➤ *The Board noted the investment principles and process.*

11 Cricket Scotland lessons learnt

The Chair introduced the agenda item, explaining that in discussion with the Minister she had agreed that one of the new Board members would be asked to look at lessons learnt over the last three years with cricket. The Chair explained that this was not a review of the specific issues within cricket but a review of the role **sportscotland** had played. The Chair explained that she had asked Ms Gotts to lead this work.

Ms Gotts provided an overview of the paper, highlighting important issues around roles and responsibilities; the importance of robust policies and procedures; ongoing education and training; and the use of best practice and reaching out with the sport sector for help as appropriate.

The Board discussed the changes that had been made across the last three years, the ongoing discussion around sports regulation and the additional expert resource which has been made

available to SGBs. The Board emphasised the importance of supporting SGBs to have the correct policies in place.

The Chair thanked Ms Gotts for her work.

➤ *The Board noted the cricket lessons learnt review.*

For Information

12 Corporate Estate Annual report

Noted and taken as read.

13 Quarter 4: 2024-2025 progress report

Noted and taken as read.

14 25/26 quarter 1 draft report

Ms Steven gave an overview of the report, recognising that we are in a year of transition which will be supported by some external expertise to help redefine our planning, monitoring and reporting frameworks. Ms Steven encouraged the Board to continue to feedback on both content and format of the quarterly reports.

Noted and taken as read.

15 Trust Company Board meeting draft minutes

Noted and taken as read.

16 Audit and Risk Committee meeting draft minutes

Noted and taken as read.

17 People Committee meeting draft minutes

Noted and taken as read.

18 Any Other Business

The Chair noted that the next meeting will be held at Glenmore Lodge with the Trust Company Board meeting the day before and a joint discussion on the Monday night planned. Ms Cook will be in touch with details nearer the time.

19 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 August 2025 (Glenmore Lodge)

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