

sportscotland

Council Meeting

Minutes of the Council Board Meeting held at the National Centre Inverclyde on Wednesday 27 October 2021 at 09:00

Present

Members

Mr M Young, Chair
Mr D Cameron
Ms M Campbell
Mr S Lindsay
Prof C Mahoney
Mrs S Sandilands
Ms K U'ren
Mr G Walker
Mrs F Wood

In Attendance

Council Officers

Mr S Harris
Mr F Dunlop
Mr M Whittingham
Mr N Cobb
Mr M Dingwall-Smith
Mr B Fleeting
Mr J Lunn
Mrs J Lynn
Mr S Roberts
Mr S Taaffe
Miss L Cook

Scottish Government

Ms M Todd MSP
Mr A Sinclair

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Business

1 Apologies for Absence

➤ *Mr C Grant, Mr M Munro and Ms C Bain.*

2 Declarations of Interest

➤ *None.*

3 Minutes of Meeting held on 25 August 2021

➤ *The minutes of the Board meeting held on 25 August 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.*

4 Matters Arising

None.

5 Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and commented on how nice it was to be able to meet face to face again. He reflected on the previous evening discussion and the opportunities presented with the Cycling World Championships in 2023 and more generally around an active Scotland. In addition there are real opportunities to develop a partnership with Transport Scotland as a priority.

The Chair updated on various political meetings, including discussions with the Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport and the Cabinet Secretary for Health. Discussions have confirmed the Scottish Government's commitment to the importance of physical activity and sport and the plans to increase investment over the term of this parliament.

The Chair also noted a new Secretary of State for DCMS and that Sport England have appointed Chris Boardman as their new Chair.

Finally, the Chair highlighted some changes at UK Athletics which have resulted in former **sportscotland** board member and Scottish Athletics chair Ian Beattie becoming UKA Chair and Mr Munro acting up as CEO.

6 Executive Management Report

Mr Harris updated that communications with the Scottish Government have been enhanced and thanked Mr Sinclair for his support. Mr Harris updated that the Scottish Government are scheduled to announce the budget on the 9 December.

Mr Harris recognised that local authorities continue to be under significant budget pressure. Leisure trusts are being supported to continue operations, but challenges remain, particularly in the medium to longer term.

Mr Harris updated on the Get into Summer fund which was used to help local partners maintain and sustain activity and proved to be a very useful resource. There had been excellent

feedback on the additional resources being provided by **sportscotland** and Partnership Managers are reporting how well local partners had used the resources.

Mr Harris noted that discussions have taken place with Enable regarding a new partnership. Enable have a national remit and network and discussions will continue to see where we could work together. Mr Harris went on to explain that we are also exploring our partnership with Scottish Disability Sport to see how this can be enhanced.

Mr Harris finished by highlighted the National Centre Inverclyde has been shortlisted for the Andrew Doolan Best building award which is testament to how well the building has been designed.

The Board asked for more information on the levelling up fund. Mr Harris noted that the SFA were in touch to seek operational advice during each stage of the funding process. The Board asked if there were any challenges with receiving funding from the UK Government. Mr Harris noted that while there were challenges **sportscotland** was taking a practical approach to support the SFA in making the best use of resources available.

The Board noted that Sport England have published an audit report which shows a drop off in activity levels and asked if we have produced a similar report. Mr Sinclair noted that the Health Survey is due to be carried out soon and Mr Harris noted that **sportscotland** will review the results, but it is likely that there will be a similar drop in activity levels in Scotland.

➤ *The Board noted the Executive Management Report.*

For Discussion

7 Business Plan 2021 onwards

Mr Harris introduced the paper and noted that the format remains consistent and highlights certain areas of work with more details available in the appendices. Mr Harris highlighted that work with local partners is going well and provided an example of his recent visit to Inverness where he met with Steve Walsh, CEO Highlife Highland along with Highland Council Councillors and discussed improving the physical infrastructure and strengthening the partnership.

Mrs Lynn updated that work with targeted authorities is ongoing and although progress varies. Mr Harris added that Scottish Governing Bodies have provided feedback that they are keen to work together alongside **sportscotland** in in-depth projects.

Mr Cobb updated that the National Lottery continues to perform well and **sportscotland** has received a windfall from unclaimed scratch cards. Income has also been boosted by the Euromillions rollover, overall, the income is positive. Mr Cobb updated that the National Lottery's process to appoint a new licence holder is ongoing but has experienced further delays meaning the contingency time has now been fully utilised, increasing the risk that the new licence holder will not be appointed in time.

Mr Harris provided more detail on the **sportscotland** proposals that respond to the recently announced Programme for Government. There are significant areas of development contained in the proposals and further detail will be provided at the December Board.

A discussion was had on the tragic drowning incidents during the summer which resulted in a loss of lives and if there was a way to make learning to swim mandatory. Mr Sinclair noted that the school curriculum makes it hard to mandate learning to swim but that there was a commitment to work with Scottish Swimming and partners to enhance school swimming.

The Board recognised the Higher and Further education sector and their commitment and investment in sports and sports but also noted the opportunity to do more, particularly with the colleges.

The Board discussed the National Planning Framework and whether the provision of sport and sports facilities could or should be part of this. Mr Harris noted that it is open to interpretation, that there had been previous discussions on this and that it is something we will continue to monitor while at the same time use our strategic conversations with local partners to monitor plans and planning.

The Board commented on the positive impact facilities investments can have but projects tend to take longer than anticipated. Board members asked if there is anything we need to do differently to prevent or accommodate this? Mr Harris accepted that challenges exist with facility developments but due to the fact that the majority of facility projects are delivered by local authorities there are very few alternatives. Local authority budgets remain very tight and have been further impacted by Covid and the subsequent rise in the cost of building materials.

The Board endorsed the proposed areas of new and enhanced development.

➤ *The Board noted the Business Plan 2021 onwards*

Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Public Health, Women's Health and Sport joined the meeting.

The Chair welcomed the Minister to the meeting and thanked her for joining the Board.

The Minister thanked the Board for their dedication and efforts and explained that she is very passionate about sport and physical activity and is keen to work very closely with **sportscotland**. The Minister also thanked three Board members for agreeing to extend their term with the Board for an additional year. The Minister noted that the Chair had met the Cabinet Secretary for health where collaborations across portfolios was discussed. The Board asked how the Minister could help to ensure other Ministers and Government departments embrace the agenda to help change public behaviour and get the nation more active. The Minister expressed that she shares similar concerns and needs to speak to people whose views do not align, the role of the new Deputy First Minister is to bring people together which should help strengthen cross portfolio collaboration.

The Chair asked how **sportscotland** could help to convert people's views, the Minister talked about the importance of ongoing work with local partners to ensure long term planning is building in the needs of sport and physical activity, including across the school estate.

There was a discussion on the importance of sport and physical activity on mental health. The Minister agreed that on the wellbeing benefits and noted the partnership and work with SAMH.

The Board commented that the commitment to increased funding is encouraging and that if this was combined with multiyear agreements then this would also help. The Minister noted that the Government are trying to move to longer term investment cycles, but this is still work in progress given the uncertainty due to the impact of the pandemic.

The Board discussed the benefits of preventative spend. The Minister agreed that this is an important area and something that must be continually looked at, she highlighted the challenges of health inequalities impacting the poorest members in the community most.

The Board asked if there are any new partnerships we should look to form or should focus on. The Minister noted that there is no area which does not benefit from physical activity but would

suggest focusing on getting the current relationships right and creating impact rather than developing multiple new partnerships.

The Chair thanked the Minister for attending the Board meeting and having such a positive discussion. The Minister left the meeting.

8 Business Plan Quarter 2 report

Mr Dunlop introduced the paper and highlighted the environment reports, the work being done on people development and the engagement with the sector to help understanding and support as part of the recovery. The Chair commented on how good and clear the report was.

➤ *The Board noted the Business Plan Quarter 2 report.*

9 Investing in SGBs

Mr Lunn introduced the paper, provided an overview of the investment principles and process and noted that the review meetings have begun and are being held online.

The Board asked if performance and targets are still used following the pandemic. Mr Lunn noted that they are still useful and annual targets are in place but have been adapted slightly as the focus is on recovery and there is an awareness of circumstances which may impact the targets not being met on time.

The Board queried if SGBs are experiencing issues with memberships recovery. Mr Lunn noted that we are currently gathering information but there appears to be encouraging signs of recovery although we are still very early in the process of data gathering and the responses are mixed across the sports. SGBs are exploring innovative methods to regain membership and utilising online connections but they face challenges with volunteers and facility access. The data gathered is being used to facilitate conversations so we can work together with the SGBs to find solutions.

The Board asked about financial help provided to SGBs on recovery. Mr Lunn noted that **sportscotland** have given help to challenged sports and will bring more details to the next Board meeting.

➤ *The Board noted the Investing in SGBs paper.*

10 Partnership with SAMH – progress report

Mrs Lynn updated on the progress made with the partnership with SAMH and noted that **sportscotland** has signed up for the Mental Health Charter. Mrs Lynn updated that a lot has been learned, the Young People's Sport Panel have been involved and we are currently exploring how to upskill the workforce.

The Board asked if there is any evidence or anecdotal comments on the success of the partnership. Mrs Lynn noted that the Active Schools team have fed back that they have really valued their sessions and have found them to make a significant difference.

➤ *The Board noted the Partnership with SAMH – progress report.*

11 Child Wellbeing and Protection in sport

Mr Lunn introduced the paper and noted that it builds on the paper which was brought to the April Board meeting. Mr Lunn noted that the title of the paper has changed from safeguarding to child wellbeing and protection. Children 1st have provided support to upskill the network.

The Board asked how Children 1st were selected to be the main support body. Mr Lunn noted that the procurement process was followed, and the contract is due to end next year when the new contract will go out to tender.

The Board asked how historic abuse cases are handled. Mr Lunn noted that they follow a different process and are dealt with by the police.

The Board asked if past cases are being studied to see if any lessons can be learned to attempt to prevent similar cases occurring in the future and how we can create a safe environment where people feel comfortable to come forward if they have suffered as a victim. Mr Lunn noted that the Safeguarding courses given to SGBs use real life case examples and CPD is being reviewed and modified to ensure it provides people with relevant information to handle or look for any cases and high profile cases hopefully encourage people to come forward.

➤ *The Board noted the Child Wellbeing and Protection in sport paper.*

12 Tokyo Olympic/ Paralympic Games final report

Mr Whittingham apologised that the report was issued late. Mr Whittingham thanked everyone involved for the success of Team GB at the Olympics and Paralympics and presented an overview of both events and the success of Team GB and it's Scottish athletes.

➤ *The Board noted the Covid-19 response and future actions.*

For Decision

Finance:

13 **sportscotland Group Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021**

14 **sportscotland Group Draft Auditors' Report and Letter of Representation**

15 **sportscotland Lottery Fund Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021**

16 **sportscotland Lottery Fund Draft Auditors' Report and Letter of Representation**

Mr Cobb introduced the papers and noted the delay in bringing the papers to Board were due to challenges which arose due to the pandemic. The audits were returned clean and there were no significant issues raised by the auditors.

Mr Lindsay provided detail from the Audit and Risk Committee meeting and noted that Covid did not impact the evidence provided. The Committee went through the report with rigour and recognise the effort made and thanked everyone for this.

The Committee recommended that the Accounts package should be approved by the Board and sign-off by the Chair and Chief Executive.

➤ *The Board formally approved the Group Annual Accounts and Letter of Representation and the Lottery Fund Annual Accounts and Letter of Representation.*

For Information

- 17 **sportscotland Group and Lottery: Audit Scotland Annual Report to the Board and the Auditor General for Scotland for the year ended 31 March 2021**
- Noted and taken as read.
- 18 **The Scottish Sports Council Trust Company Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021**
- Noted and taken as read.
- 19 **The Scottish Sports Council Trust Company Wylie & Bisset Audit Findings for the year ended 31 March 2021**
- Noted and taken as read.
- 20 **Communications update**
- Noted and taken as read.
- 21 **Audit and Risk Committee meeting draft minutes**
- Noted and taken as read.
- 22 **Any Other Business**
- None.
- 23 **Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 December 2021 (Inverclyde)
- There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.