

# **sportscotland**

## **Council Meeting**

Minutes of the Council Board Meeting held at the **sportscotland** National Centre Inverclyde on Tuesday 24 February 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  
Ms G Treasurer  
Mr S Sweeney  
Mr A Watt

### **In Attendance**

#### **Council Officers**

Mr F Dunlop  
Mr C Burn  
Ms A Langley  
Mr M Drummond  
Ms J Lynn  
Ms F Wernham  
Ms A Wyllie  
Ms L Cook

### **Scottish Government**

Mr A Sinclair

## Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## Business

### 1 Apologies for Absence

➤ *None.*

### 2 Declarations of Interest

➤ *None.*

### 3 Minutes of Meeting held on 9 December 2025

➤ *The minutes of the Board meeting held on 9 December 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.*

### 4 Matters Arising

None.

### 5 Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair expressed appreciation and thanks to Mr Sinclair and his team for their support and guidance on an ongoing basis. The Chair recognised the positive uplift in the draft Scottish Budget and the opportunity that this now presented.

The Chair updated on her trip to the Milan and Cortina Winter Olympics where she had met a number of athletes, families and officials, the Chair expressed congratulations to the team and all the support staff.

The Chair updated on her recent meeting with Mr Watt and representatives from COSLA. The meeting focussed on the COSLA manifesto and the white paper on sport and leisure which COSLA have now drafted and which will be released ahead of the election.

The Chair discussed Public Service Reform, including a Chairs group that she has now joined.

### 6 Executive Management Report

Mr Dunlop reflected on the draft budget announcement and the positive message that this sends to the sector, particularly SGBs. Mr Dunlop acknowledged that this additional money will have little impact on the pressures being felt by local partners, nor does it come anywhere close to addressing the gaps in capital funding to support the sport and leisure estate.

Mr Dunlop referred to the annual MSP survey which shows **sportscotland** in a very positive light, this is testament to the work of the team and our partners. He recognised that with a prediction of around 50% turnover of MSPs in the May elections the work almost starts over.

Mr Dunlop updated on a good response to his letter to all Local Authority CEOs, offering a meeting to discuss current opportunities and threats to sport and leisure. These meetings will happen over the next few months, and an update summary will be brought back to Board.

The Board asked for an update on the estates review. Mr Dunlop responded that discussions have focused on publishing the report after the election and that in the meantime we have been

discussing the themes from within the report with senior staff in the local authorities. The Board asked for more information on our role as a statutory consultee on planning applications, Mr Burn replied that our role is when there is a proposed loss of playing field.

Mr Burn updated on SGB Coalition and the process to appoint an independent consultant to help find a way forward with SGBs and the SSA.

Mr Burn highlighted the system master planning update in the paper and asked Board members reach out if they would like to discuss further.

Mr Burn updated on the Commonwealth Games, including Scotland House and the Kings Baton relay. The Board discussed ticketing, volunteering and the opportunity to engage the public with the Games.

➤ *The Board noted the Executive Management Report.*

## **For Discussion**

### **7 Active Schools**

The Chair introduced the topic and commented on the previous nights presentations which provided an excellent insight to the development and delivery of the programme in Fife and Aberdeen.

Ms Wyllie summarised where we were with the research, the timeline over the next couple of months and the key themes from the reports and discussions to date.

The Board recognised the excellent work that had been presented by colleagues from Aberdeen and Fife and in particular the way Active Schools was integrated into wider service provision and how it had then levered additional investment. The Board asked if these examples were typical across all LAs. Ms Wyllie explained there was excellent practice across the country but that different authorities have taken different approaches as to where and how they embed the Active Schools team, Ms Wyllie explained this is in keeping with our principles of local leadership and supporting what works best in each area. Ms Wernham explained that other factors like local plans for sport and leisure and the wider local leadership are all factors.

The Board held an extensive discussion on the balance between a targeted programme versus a universal approach and whether a more targeted programme could help address less active young people. Ms Wyllie explained that all Active Schools teams have a balanced approach which is based on the needs of the individual schools and demographic, the reality is that they cannot do everything, there are growing examples and discussions around the utilisation of the workforce and how this can and should be more aligned to less active schools / clusters with a lighter touch on those schools and clusters with higher activity levels.

The Board discussed the changing profile of volunteers, how positive it was to see young volunteers playing such a significant role but also understanding the challenges with this. Ms Wyllie explained the strong link between our young people leadership programmes and the support and training provided, she also explained how there are some examples of paid coaches and the importance of protecting the co-ordinators from becoming deliverers.

The Board discussed the contribution of Active Schools to the wider ambition for children and young people and suggested that we should explore this further, positioning Active Schools as a significant contribution but recognising that it fits into a wider infrastructure to support young people. The Board went on to discuss how Active Schools contributes to the Physical Activity for Health Framework and how the programme is best positioned in the future.

The Chair thanked Ms Wernham and Ms Wyllie for all the work they have done so far and suggested an extended Board session in April to allow for a further conversation which should then allow for a clear position and message to be shared with partners before the end of this term.

➤ *The Board noted the Active Schools presentation.*

## **8 Planning and Reporting Documents**

### **8.1. Business Planning documents 26/27**

Mr Drummond presented an overview of the planning cycle, the work to date and the next steps to bring a final draft Business Plan and budget to the April meeting.

The Board discussed the new format and asked about the process to develop and then report on a quarterly basis. Mr Drummond reflected on the development phase and that it had reminded the leadership group of the elements of our old planning process which were good and should be retained and helped focus on streamlining and making the process and plan more succinct, he finished by recognising the positive impact that Mr Bingham has made since his appointment as the Business Planning Manager. The Chair noted the difficult balance of providing the correct level of detail and went on to ask about the performance measurement framework. Mr Burn explained that we have used last year's framework as a starting point and will retain many of those measures while also considering new measures.

The Board recognised the progress that had been made, particularly referencing the 2-5 year environment plans which gave a good link between Sport for Life and the annual targets. They discussed the importance of reporting and the need for clear public reporting of the impact of the investment in sport.

The Board discussed the format for the final version, Mr Drummond assured the Board that final formatting and presentation will be considered ahead of the April meeting and making the plan public in May.

The Chair noted that the completed pack will be brought to the next meeting for approval.

### **8.2. Budget development 26/27**

Mr Drummond presented on the draft budget, including the approval process around new monies. Mr Sinclair explained that his team would work internally to ensure a smooth process, including new monies, allowing investment to flow through the usual channels and processes.

The Board discussed the positive impact of the new monies, the importance of this being invested in line with strategic priorities and monitored and reported to show impact. The Board went on to discuss the importance of continuing to prioritise and to deliver against the previous prioritisation exercise. Mr Dunlop reassured the Board that the Leadership Group has continued to track the previous work and will continue to monitor internal costs. The Board discussed the importance of workforce planning as part of business planning.

The Board asked for clarity on longer term / year three funding. Mr Sinclair explained that figures published for year three were at a high level and shown as part of the high level health spend. The Chair asked if this included delivering against the commitment of doubling the budget, Mr Sinclair confirmed figures were based on that trajectory but also reminded the Board of the potential for changes with a new government.

The Board asked about the risks associated with managing and investing the new monies. Mr Drummond explained that the majority of new monies would be invested in existing partners through existing processes, he went on to explain that there are internal groups considering different aspects of managing the new monies, with a project oversight group considering risks

and issues. Mr Burn shared some of the more detailed thinking around allocation versus application for different strands of funding, Mr Burn went on to explain the work with Commonwealth Games Scotland to understand need, phasing of investment and opportunities to maximise funding for the benefit of Team Scotland.

The Chair noted the proposal for a Board 'Sprint Session' at the end of March to give Board members more information before a final plan and budget is brought forward to the April meeting. The Board agreed that would be helpful.

### **8.3. LA and SGB investment**

Ms Lynn provided an update on the investment process and draft investment figures for LAs and SGBs, making it clear that the new monies had not yet been integrated into these figures.

Ms Lynn highlighted that we have recognised two new sports; Kabaddi and Pickleball where we have agreed to initial funding to invest in the growth of the sports.

Ms Lynn noted that LAs are now in the final year of our partnership agreements and we have completed meeting with 30 out of 32 LAs. One of the LAs have put the active schools team up for savings and that will be discussed at their Board meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> March.

➤ *The Board noted the Planning and Reporting Documents.*

## **For Information**

### **9 Q3 Business Plan Report**

Mr Dunlop introduced the paper which gives a more detailed report of the work across the organisation. The Board recognised the format and content is still under review as part of the new business planning approach but continued to enjoy reading about what was happening across the business.

### **10 Anti-Corruption Policy Update**

The Chair highlighted that this is an important policy in terms of responsibilities.

Noted and taken as read.

### **11 People Development Committee draft minutes**

The Chair highlighted that the Committee are now finding its feet and will continue to go from strength to strength.

Noted and taken as read.

### **12 Any Other Business**

Mr Burn provided an update on £50m investment into mountain biking, noting in particular the very positive cross portfolio working to support sport, tourism and business.

### **13 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 April 2026 (Inverclyde)**

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