

sportscotland

Council Meeting

Minutes of the Council Board Meeting held at the **sportscotland** National Centre Inverclyde on Tuesday 25 June at 09:00

Present

Members

Ms M Campbell, Chair
Mr A Bain
Mr T Mistry
Ms S Sandilands
Mr S Sweeney
Mr A Watt

In Attendance

Council Officers

Mr F Dunlop
Ms R Barrington
Mr C Burn
Ms J Lynn
Mr D McKay
Mr D Williamson
Mr B Wyllie
Ms L Cook

Scottish Government

Mr A Sinclair
Mr N Taylor

Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Business

1 Apologies for Absence

➤ *Mr C Grant, Mr S Lindsay, Mr D McDonald, Ms H Ousta and Ms K U'ren.*

2 Declarations of Interest

➤ *None.*

3 Minutes of Meeting held on 30 April 2024

➤ *The minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 April 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record.*

4 Matters Arising

None.

5 Chairs Opening Remarks

The Chair expressed that she is pleased to be appointed and thanked everyone for their comments and support which is greatly appreciated.

The Chair announce that Mr Watt will become the Vice Chair. The Chair also announced the Mr Bain will become the Chair of the Trust Company Board.

The Chair noted that we will work with the Public Appointments team to recruit four new Board members in the Autumn, for them to start in 2025, more detail will be covered later in the agenda.

6 Executive Management Report

Mr Dunlop updated on the most recent meeting with the Minister during which the previous Chair, Mr Young, expressed his frustrations with mixed messaging around the Government's commitment to double the budget, the Minister empathised and understood the frustrations. The Minister thanked Mr Young for his contributions to sport and **sportscotland** over his time as Chair of **sportscotland**.

Mr Dunlop updated on Scottish Government funding, referencing the link to the Grant in Aid letter and on the National Lottery income which Allwyn are now forecasting to remain flat for two years before growth is realised.

Mr Dunlop updated the Board on the latest developments with Cricket Scotland and the investigations into racism in cricket. The Board discussed the complexity of the situation, the need to continue to support Cricket Scotland to deliver against the wide range of recommendations and at the same time were encouraged to hear that Cricket Scotland would be launching a new strategy in the coming month.

Mr Dunlop updated on the Park of Keir project including ongoing discussions with the Murray Play Foundation. Mr Dunlop expected that a paper would be brought to the next Board meeting.

Mr Burn updated on discussions with UK Sport who have committed £1 million in principle over the next four-year cycle to support our work with performance athletes. Mr Burn explained we will continue to work with UK Sport with a focus on coaching which is an area of work that staff in the performance team have been making good progress with.

Mr Burn updated on the latest discussions with Commonwealth Games Scotland on the proposals for a 2026 Games, Mr Burn explained that CGS have communicated with all member bodies, explaining the rationale and process to consider which sports are part of the 2026 proposal and which are not. Mr Sinclair added that dialogue continues with the Commonwealth Game Foundation, Commonwealth Games Scotland and the local council to assess the opportunity.

Mr Burn highlighted that the Scottish Funding Council have given Scottish Student Sport notice of their intention to withdraw funding. SSS are exploring how to reshape the organisation and officers are supporting these conversations.

Ms Barrington updated that we are reviewing our approach to the sustainability plan. The work will take account of the previous paper brought to Board and the latest thinking in this space. Ms Barrington asked Board members to contact her if they would like to be involved.

Ms Barrington highlighted that the strategic workforce review will go out to tender in the next month. The review will consider the future skills required by **sportscotland** and identify current gaps.

Ms Barrington updated that we are currently exploring how to operationalise the 35 hour working week which will start in October.

Ms Barrington updated on the office estate, noting that Caledonia House will be on the market soon and that transition plans are ongoing with the resident SGBs with the aim of closing Caledonia House by the end of the calendar year.

Ms Barrington highlighted that following feedback from the Board we have attempted to reduce the content of the papers which can be seen in the Quarter four report which has been broken down to exceptions with further details available in links.

➤ *The Board noted the Executive Management Report.*

For Decision

7 Board Annual Programme of Work

Mr Dunlop noted that this paper should have come to the April Board meeting on the back of a suggestion made during the internal audit process a few years ago. It provides an overview with a plan for the year ahead and shows the business planning process of reporting and review.

The Chair asked that a proactive approach to Board development was built into the planner.

➤ *The Board approved the Board Annual Programme of work.*

8 Delegated Signing Authority

Mr Dunlop introduced the paper and explained that we have been operating with wet signatures which posed challenges and logistical issues. The paper outlines using electronic signatures and bringing Ms Barrington and Mr Burn in as signatories to streamline the process.

➤ *The Board approved the Delegated Signing Authority paper.*

For Discussion

9 Long term planning update

Mr McKay introduced the paper which brings together the plans and sets the overall context for both positive and negative scenarios. The work is a continuation of our new ideas theme which the Board have discussed on a number of occasions and the outcome of today's discussion will help inform ongoing discussions with the Scottish Government and the business planning process.

The Board discussed the range of ideas and projects including if or how they could be prioritised. Mr Dunlop explained that at this stage we had developed ideas which addressed the three macro challenges that the sector was facing; facilities, workforce and cost barriers, but that they had not yet been prioritised. The Board discussed the importance of volunteers and that support to the voluntary sector to continue to deliver club and community sport was essential, particularly given the cuts to the professional workforce and to public investment.

The Board discussed the proposal to help subsidise access to sport for young people. It was recognised that this would be a significant benefit but the operationalisation of this could be challenging, including how to manage and support subsidised club access.

The Chair thanked the Board for their feedback and support of the proposals, noting the importance placed on volunteers and club sport. It was agreed that we would take forward these discussions with the Active Scotland team to agree next steps and report back to the next meeting.

➤ *The Board noted the Long term planning update.*

10 Sport for Life – Schools and Education

Ms Lynn introduced the paper and provided an update on progress and a sense of direction for the future, focusing on children and young adults. Ms Lynn described the key strands of work that sit in this environment and asked the Board for feedback on how they were positioned.

The board discussed the variation of programmes and investments, including the low direct costs but high staff costs associated with the Young Peoples Sports Panel and the Young Ambassadors conferences. The Board asked that a formula is created to allocate staff costs without creating a bureaucratic and time consuming approach.

The Board discussed the commitment to the work with colleges and agreed that to allow this work to be properly embedded and to realise its potential a four-year commitment should be made with a clear evaluation and management of the programme in place ahead of the end of the investment agreements.

The Board recognised that the work in this environment did reach a more diverse group of people and went on to discuss how the learning that we get from this can be embedded in a more sustainable way, including other partner organisations taking more of a lead role.

➤ *The Board noted the Sport for Life – Schools and Education paper.*

11 Board Skills Matrix

Ms Barrington introduced the paper and noted that the topic had been discussed at the People Development Committee. The paper outlines both the generic skills which are standard across public appointments and the specific skills required.

The Board discussed the future requirements and the best approach and process to attract a wide range of applicants. The Board discussed the approach and whether we should be very specific about each vacancy and the skill set and background required or adopt a broader approach which focussed on those with a rounder skill set and experience.

It was recognised that when taking into account those leaving the Board there would be gaps in, education, health, performance sport and governance. The Board also discussed the importance of attracting a broad range of diverse candidates who represent all aspects of Scottish society. It was acknowledged that it is not always possible to cover all aspects and that there are other ways to ensure engagement, for example the young people's sports panel.

Mr Sinclair explained that he will work with the Chair and public appointments colleagues to define the requirements and manage the process accordingly. He also acknowledged that previous processes have been very successful, receiving large numbers of applications.

The Chair thanked the Board for the good conversation and stressing the value of the importance of getting the right mix and good values and skills.

➤ *The Board noted the Board Skills Matrix.*

For Information

12 Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic preview

Mr Burn updated on changes that have occurred since the paper was written, including twenty one Scottish athletes have now been selected. Women's Rugby 7s and Cycling selections have taken place. Further announcements will follow in due course.

Mr Burn highlighted that a number of **sportscotland** staff are involved and that brings recognition and credibility.

Mr Dunlop reflected that daily updates on who is competing, followed by the results have been provided in the past and we will ensure that the Board are included in that circulation list. We will build on whatever we can to put the spotlight on the positives.

The Board asked how many athletes have progressed through the Scottish system and how many are still based in Scotland. Mr Burn did not know that detail, but it would be part of the final analysis which would be brought to the Board in October.

The Board wanted to pass its congratulations to the staff selected and involved in the Games. They asked about support for those staff, Mr Dunlop explained that all staff selected by the British Olympic Association, or the British Paralympic Association would have the full support of those organisations when at the Games and we had good connections and high confidence they would be well looked after,

Noted and taken as read.

13 Quarter 4: 2022-2023 progress report

Ms Barrington highlighted the new format for this report which focuses on exceptions and moves the more detailed updates into appendices. This paper will continue to be work in progress and Ms Barrington asked for feedback over the next few quarterly reports until it meets the needs of the Board.

Ms Barrington explained the financial exceptions are driven predominantly by facility delays and subsequent rephrasing's, phasing's and timings of payments tend to be the most common reason for financial exceptions. The Board asked if ultimately delays mean a decommitment of monies, Mr Burn explained that sometimes that is the case, but our approach is to work with partners to explore all solutions to deliver projects that have been approved.

The Board asked for an update on why the EQIA for the sports facility fund was taking more time than expected, Mr McKay explained this was down to staff time and prioritisation.

The Board asked about new ideas being delivered with integrity and if there is more information on why there has been a lack of progress with the focus groups? Mr Williamson responded that we were almost ready to deliver and then the group decided it would not run well during the summer period hence the delay. The Board discussed the challenges associated with direct delivery to community groups and questioned **sportscotland's** role in this. Mr Dunlop explained this is part of the new ideas approach of our EDI plan where we develop work through coproduction, learn from this and use the learning to impact on the system.

Noted and taken as read.

14 Communication update

The Board discussed the paper and in particular the approach to communications, considering who the audience is and who we are trying to reach and who we are not. Mr Dunlop commented that Ms McCheyne has presented the communication plan to a recent board meeting, if there is a need to consider this again, we should invite Ms McCheyne. The Chair agreed that would be a worthwhile discussion. Ms Barrington reminded the Board of the significant work behind the scenes that the communications team do to support partners manage their press, particularly covering sensitive and difficult issues.

Noted and taken as read.

15 Trust Company Board meeting draft minutes

The Chair highlighted a minor adjustment to the draft minutes, Ms Barrington will action.

Noted and taken as read.

16 Audit and Risk Committee meeting draft minutes

The Board discussed the number of staff attending meetings. The Chair explained this was similar at the Trust Board but that many of the staff were joining online for part of the meeting and/ or as part of their development and understanding, it was confirmed that only senior staff or those with a specific role travel to meetings.

Noted and taken as read.

17 People Development Committee meeting draft minutes

Noted and taken as read.

18 Any Other Business

None.

19 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 August 2024 (Inverclyde)

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