

# **sportscotland**

## **Council Meeting**

Minutes of the Council Board Meeting held at the **sportscotland** National Centre Inverclyde on Wednesday 23 February 2022 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 F Dunlop  
Mr M Whittingham  
Mr N Cobb  
Mr B Fleeting  
Mr J Lunn  
Mrs J Lynn  
Mrs A Wyllie  
Miss L Cook

#### **Scottish Government**

Mr A Sinclair  
Mr M Kellet

#### **Guest speakers**

Mr P Reddish  
Mr Q Sheikh

## Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## Supplementary item

The Chair introduced Mr Qasim Sheikh, a former Scottish International Cricketer and Mr Paul Reddish who has a background in volunteering. The Chair invited Mr Sheikh and Mr Reddish to share their experiences and views on racism in Scottish Cricket with the Board.

Mr Reddish shared a range of examples and experiences during his time on the Cricket Scotland Board and through his ongoing relationship with the sport and those playing and administering the sport. Mr Reddish discussed his views of the review into racism in Scottish Cricket and the associated communication from Cricket Scotland.

Mr Young thanked Mr Reddish and noted that his presentation showed passion and determination and that the unacceptable behaviours have been bravely called out.

Mr Sheikh described his experiences in Cricket, he explained that his motivation was to make the sport more inclusive at all levels, to educate those leading and running the sport and ultimately for the next generation of young players to have a positive experience playing the game.

Mr Sheikh acknowledged the support from **sportscotland**, initially listening and then acting to set up the review. He recognised there was some way to go but remained positive that change for the better can happen.

The Board thanked both presenters and discussed issues of leadership and governance and the impact that this can have on the culture within a sport. The Board specifically thanked Mr Sheikh for his courage to raise issues and apologised to him for the treatment that he had received in cricket.

The Board asked if there were any thoughts or ideas on how to improve participation and encourage anybody from any background to get involved? Mr Sheikh suggested education was key so that people can understand other cultures, values and beliefs. Mr Sheikh discussed an example of how a greater understanding of Ramadan would help players and team mates alike. Mr Reddish added that equality impact assessments, education and proactively looking at all interventions to explore if there are any aspects within a programme that unintentionally excludes any group, would all help.

Mr Kellet thanked both presenters for sharing their experiences and views and asked what more could and should be done to support? Mr Sheikh suggested that more acknowledgment and support from Scottish Ministers would be welcome.

Mr Sheikh concluded the discussion by reminding the Board that this was not just a cricket problem but a wider society problem and that any findings and recommendations from the review into racism in Scottish Cricket should be considered across all sport.

The Chair thanked Mr Reddish and Mr Sheikh for attending the Board and sharing their experiences and views.

*Mr Reddish and Mr Sheikh left the meeting.*

The Board reflected on the discussion with Mr Reddish and Mr Sheikh, acknowledging the complexity of issues and challenges which had been raised.

Mr Dunlop reassured the Board that mechanisms have been put in place to manage the different issues which are being raised through the review. This approach is allowing the review to focus on racism but ensuring other issues can be captured and managed appropriately through other organisations or channels.

## **Business**

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

➤ *Mr C Grant, Ms C Bain and Mr S Harris.*

### **2 Declarations of Interest**

➤ *None.*

### **3 Minutes of Meeting held on 15 December 2021**

➤ *The minutes of the Board meeting held on 15 December 2021 were approved as a true and accurate record.*

### **4 Matters Arising**

Mr Young updated on the opening of Meadowbank as he was invited by the City of Edinburgh Council to have a tour.

### **5 Chairs Opening Remarks**

The Chair noted the excellent session with the Young People's Sports Panel on the previous evening and commented on how fantastic it was to hear their opinions and listen to their positive hope for the future. The Chair expressed his thanks to the Young People's Sports Panel members.

The Chair updated that Mr Munro has been unable to attend meetings due to his work with UK Athletics and has decided to resign, the Chair expressed thanks on behalf on the Board to Mr Munro for his contributions and wished him well for the future.

The Chair updated that the interview process for recruiting new Board members has now been completed. Mr Sinclair noted that we will be appointing six new Board members, four of which will start their term at the next Board meeting.

The Chair expressed congratulations to the Scottish Curlers for winning gold and silver at the Winter Olympics. A discussion on winter sports will take place at the next UK Sport Board meeting.

### **6 Executive Management Report**

Mr Dunlop updated on the regular meetings with the Minister where **sportscotland** continue to receive positive feedback and have the opportunity to raise the challenges the sector faces. The annual review with the Minister took place at the end of last year and was also positive.

Mr Dunlop noted a range of policy consultations, he explained that sportscotland always look for the opportunity to raise the importance of sport and physical activity through these consultations.

Mr Dunlop updated that the Lottery fourth licence will be appointed in March and the new licence will commence in two years' time. The Scottish Government continue to indicate that they would like to move towards four year budgeting, this is something that sportscotland would support as it helps with longer term planning.

Mr Dunlop updated on partnership working with COSLA, the contribution of sport and physical activity paper which was previously shared with the board has now been taken to the four COSLA Boards and Leaders group and has been positively received and is being taken as a priority. There has been great support provided from officers in COSLA.

➤ *The Board noted the Executive Management Report.*

## 7 Public Health Priorities

The Chair introduced Mr Kellet, who thanked the Board for the opportunity to present and noted that sport is also an important part of his own personal life. Mr Kellet's role in Government covers five divisions, including: Active Scotland Division, Covid High Risk division, Health Protection Division (sponsors Public Health Scotland), Drugs Policy, Health and Improvement Division.

Mr Kellet updated that the Public Health Priorities framework has been refreshed as a result of Covid-19 and expressed his thanks to **sportscotland** for all the extraordinary work done as a Board and officers to support the Covid response. Protecting sporting assets during the pandemic needed to be top priority which we have largely managed to do so Mr Kellet expressed his thanks to **sportscotland** again.

Mr Kellet updated that the Strategic framework was published yesterday with a clear focus in the new framework on reducing inequalities and health inequalities as a key priority. The other key publication is the Covid Recovery Strategy. There is a focus on climate, children and young people and the goal is to create a Scotland where everyone can flourish.

Mr Kellet noted that the Government are exploring how they can double investment in sport and physical activity with a focus on young people and in particular young people living in poverty. This includes a focus on active travel and how to get people walking, running and cycling more. Mr Kellet linked the major events and in particular the UCI Cycling World Championships and explained how important it is to use these events to promote and drive the wider sport and physical activity agendas.

The Board thanked Mr Kellet for his overview of the various policy areas and acknowledged that it is good to receive the positive feedback about the work of **sportscotland** and good working relationship with the Active Scotland team.

The Board discussed the need to influence other parts of government on the importance of sport and physical activity and the impact it can have on a range of political priorities. Mr Kellet recognised this challenge and committed to working with **sportscotland** and the Active Scotland Team to continue to influence wider agendas.

The Chair thanked Mr Kellet for his presentation.

## For Discussion

### 8 2022 onwards business plan update

Mr Dunlop reflected on the presentation from Mr Kellet and the connection that our new business plan will make to the political priorities around young people, poverty and inclusion. Mr Dunlop explained that the paper is a continuation of the business planning process which started in October 2021 and will continue to feature at all Board meetings as part of our dynamic business planning process.

Mr Dunlop talked about the challenges associated with developing new streams of work with partners and that we were constantly reminded that working in this way means working at the pace of our partners. While this can be unpredictable the team are convinced that it is an essential approach if we are to address the challenges around inclusion.

Mrs Lynn updated on the progress made over the last six months with the five identified local authorities. Mrs Lynn provided an example of work carried out in Craigshill (West Lothian) and hoped that through this to really learn what partners needs are. Staff time has really focused on work with local partners and will continue to bring updates to the Board. Work is being done to ensure Governing Bodies and Local partners can work together.

Mr Lunn updated on the work to support Governing Bodies, he gave examples of additional resources that are required to support safeguarding and the support we are providing from the inhouse team around IT and Cyber security. Mr Lunn reflected on the growing challenges and expectations being placed on governing bodies and the need to continue to support them through expert resource.

Mr Lunn updated on the progress around school swimming and water safety. The partner group has met and discussed different models and approaches. Further work will be done to refine the thinking and agree a model and approach.

Mr Cobb provided an update on the budget and highlighted a number of areas of expenditure that were deprioritised due to COVID -19. He explained that the Programme for Government additional resources are now becoming clearer and will be built into the April Board paper.

Mr Fleeting presented on the work of the National Centres, he highlighted how they connect to the **sportscotland** business plan and explained the work that is being done to look at how people return to the Centre. Mr Fleeting also highlighted the National Centres commitment to the EDI Strategy.

The Board asked about the approach to investing in local partners and whether this would be programme budget or staffing. Mr Dunlop noted that there will be a conversation with each local partner on what will help to make the biggest impact and so there is potential for investment in both posts and programmes. Mr Fleeting noted that we are trying to focus conversations on impact rather than money to make the best use of what is here and work with the best groups that will have most impact.

The Board commented that they were struck by the statement around Community Sports Hubs that there is a risk that a third require support and may not return to operation. Mrs Lynn noted that some Community Sports Hub have really excelled and their communities have benefited but some of them have not been able to get back to where they were before the pandemic and there is an issue with the volunteer workforce returning. We have people in the local areas working to support the CSHs but we do recognise that some may not return. The Chair asked that further updates are brought to the next meeting.

The Board noted that previously there were ten identified local partners but we are now down to five due to a lack of partner capacity and asked how big a risk is this, what impact will it have

and what can we do to help. Mr Dunlop noted that the capacity we need from local partners is at a senior level and it is critical to help move this forward. Moving from ten to five is the right thing to do at the moment but we will add and flex and aim to work with all 32 local authorities over time. Mrs Lynn noted the risk with trying to do too much and it is the same for local partners we need to focus on the areas that will have the greatest impact. The Board supported the idea of focus and growing our approach across other local partners as we learn and as their capacity to work with us increases.

The Board noted the work with colleges and asked why this did not also include universities. Mr Dunlop explained that the paper focussed on new areas of work and that our work with universities is ongoing and that there is scope for this to develop further. Mr Whittingham noted the importance of the universities in delivering high performance programmes. The Board asked for an update on Winning Students. Mr Dunlop noted that discussions were ongoing but that we needed to see some commitment from the Funding Council and that it would not be right for **sportscotland** to pick up the cost of this programme without that ongoing commitment.

The Board asked about the increases in energy costs and the likely impact. Mr Dunlop noted that several partners have flagged the issue but we are not sure we fully understand the impact at the moment.

The Board noted that the budget does not seem to look at the underpin and asked if there was an uncertainty that might inhibit our capacity to plan. Mr Cobb noted the underpin will be triggered at £27.4 million but the Gambling Commission have advised that the Lottery will not drop below that for the next three to four years. Mr Sinclair noted that the underpin is still available.

The Chair thanked everyone for the updates.

➤ *The Board noted the 2022 onward business plan update.*

## **9 Quarter 3: 2021 – 2022 progress update**

Mr Dunlop noted that actions are refined throughout the year and some variations have been highlighted in the finance table but overall the report provides a good overview of work being done by the staff team.

The Board asked for clarification on the support costs mentioned on page 87 under finance overhead savings, Mr Cobb noted that they are continuous VAT savings.

The Board asked what the terms are for the completed lease extensions mentioned in point 32 and if we committed long term? Mr Dunlop noted that leases have been extended to January 2023, for a year now we have held a regular meeting with tenants and asked them to think about their medium to long term needs and we will do a piece of work in the autumn to consider the options for Caledonia House.

The Board asked about staff retention in the organisation as a whole. Mr Dunlop noted that staff retention is very high and highlighted that there are pros and cons to that, he noted that there has been some positive turnover in the performance team. Mr Dunlop updated that recruitment has commenced in a number of areas of the business and there is not a shortage of quality candidates.

The Board asked about the impact of the pandemic on the Commonwealth Games. Mr Whittingham noted that the Birmingham Games are being treated as Covid games.

➤ *The Board noted the Quarter 3: 2021 – 2022 progress updated.*

## 10 High Performance – Major Games update

Mr Whittingham presented an update on the Winter Olympics and Paralympics and highlighted the importance of winter sports to Scotland's economy.

The Board noted the positive press activity around the curling programme being based in Stirling. Mr Whittingham noted the benefits to the programme from all partners working together to allow access and training for performance athletes during various stages of lock down. Mr Whittingham went on to note that there have been no positive cases reported from the Olympics and Paralympics or Winter Olympics and Paralympics.

Mr Whittingham provided an update on the Birmingham Commonwealth Games and noted that sports are RAG rated. There is current investment in twelve of the Birmingham sports, this includes new investment into wheelchair basketball and powerlifting and we are looking at investing in wrestling. Mr Whittingham expressed his thanks to the Communications team for getting the stories behind athletes and highlighted the issue of sustainability of the Commonwealth Games.

➤ *The Board noted the High Performance – Major Games update*

## For Decision

## 11 Investment in Scottish Governing Bodies

Mr Lunn introduced the paper and provided an overview of the figures and explained the reason behind any changes.

The Chair asked the Board to agree the investment in principle.

The Board asked what steps should we take when there is cause for concern with a Scottish Governing Body. Mr Lunn noted that Partnership Managers are invited to most Board meeting and have a relationship with the CEO. In the first instance any issues would be flagged by the Partnership Manager to the Lead Manager and escalated internally, we are mindful that we cannot take decisions for or manage partners but we can add conditions against investment agreements and in extreme cases remove investment. Mr Lunn noted this was a last resort and in the majority of cases we work with sports to manage concerns.

The Board asked for an update following the Rugby discussion at the February 2020 Board meeting as the level of funding is continuing at similar rate. Mr Lunn noted that the funding goes into development, as we do not invest in performance, the support goes to the regional level and coach education. The Board asked that a future discussion is had on the funding of the larger sports where significant commercial income is available.

➤ *The Board formally approved the Investment in Scottish Governing Bodies in principle.*

## 12 Investment in Scottish Local Authorities

Mrs Lynn introduced the paper which provides an update on the planning process and seeks approval for the investment for 2022/23. Mrs Lynn highlighted the inspiring work that Local Authorities, leisure trust and clubs are doing which shows real hope that the partners really want to make a difference. We have learned to be more flexible and adapt and we have made a commitment to be flexible and the feedback and value has been strong. Mrs Lynn noted that the drop in funding between 21/22 and 22/23 figures is due to the 'Get into Summer campaign'.

➤ *The Board formally approved the Investment in Scottish Local Authorities in principle.*

## For Information

### 13 Communications update

Noted and taken as read.

### 14 Trust Company Board meeting draft minutes

Mr Walker asked if Cumbrae has now shut, Mr Dunlop confirmed it has but security is still on site.

Noted and taken as read.

### 15 Any Other Business

The Chair noted that it will be the last meeting for Ms Wood, Mr Cameron and Mr Walker and expressed how much **sportscotland** appreciates and values their input alongside their other contributions like the Trust Company Board and other committees. Their constructive ideas and positive contributions to the Board have been invaluable. The Chair also thanked the members for the extension to term during Covid times, their commitment has been great.

### 16 Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 26 and Wednesday 27 April 2022 (Inverclyde)

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