

SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES

First Meeting 2013

Minutes of Board Meeting held on Tuesday 5 February 2013 in the House of Sport, Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5LA.

PRESENT

In the Chair: B Henning

Members: D O'Connor
S McCullough
G Campbell
R Mallon
P Turnbull
M Cowan
P Cummings
B Delaney
J O'Neill
J D'Arcy (conference call)

In Attendance: J Tully, Chief Executive, WPFG (part)
J Davis, WPFG (part)
C Watson (DCAL)

Acting Chief Executive: N Harkness

Staff in Attendance: S Ogle
A Sloan
J News
L Beattie

1 **APOLOGIES**

Barry McAuley

2 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chair asked everyone individually if they had any interests to declare. There were no declarations of interest declared.

3 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 December 2012, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed by the Chair.

4 **MATTERS ARISING**

4.1 Action Sheet

An Action Sheet from the previous Meeting had been sent to Members. The Acting Chief Executive reported on Action 7 and advised that a response had been received on the Business Plan the previous day from DCAL and work would be done to incorporate DCAL's comments into a revised Business Plan for members consideration.

ACTION 1: Incorporate DCAL's comments on the Business Plan into a revised Business Plan for consideration by Members.

Members commented on the timescale / target completion date for the Human Resources Manager to review Human Resource Policies and Procedures. The Acting Chief Executive advised that there is a detailed timetable of work and that December 2013 was for completion of all work in relation to this project.

ACTION 2: Detailed timetable of the Human Resources Policies review to be circulated to Members.

The Acting Chief Executive advised Members that positive work is ongoing with Bready Cricket Club and that the Club appear content with Sport NI efforts.

Members asked for further information on a number of the Action Points and were advised that this further information was available in the Executive Team Report. It was agreed that it would be helpful if there was a further column added to Action Sheet to provide a cross reference for Members to make connection to where further information was available.

ACTION 3: Add column to Action Sheet attached to the Board Minutes to enable cross referencing to other information within their pack

4.2 Executive Summary of Board Papers

The Acting Chief Executive advised Members that this was a new document and advised that the idea had come out of CIPFA Training and that the Chairman felt it would be a useful document for a short snapshot of papers being presented to the Board.

Members agreed that the Executive Summary paper was very useful. It was suggested that it would be helpful if it could be shown somehow on the Executive Summary which papers are for decision by the Board and which are for information.

ACTION 4: Identify which papers are for decision and which papers are for comment in Executive Summary of Board Papers

4.3 Background reading

The Acting Chief Executive advised Members that there had also been a new section set up on Sharepoint to provide Members with background information relating to individual papers. Members confirmed that they found this helpful.

5 **CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

5.1 Frequency of Board Meetings / Proposed use of Workshops

The Chair advised that he would welcome Members' views on the frequency of Board meetings. Members agreed that two month intervals for Board meetings is appropriate but felt that it would be useful to have workshops where Board Members could have Strategic input to Policy Development. It was noted that there is a meeting to discuss, the future Committee structure on 15 February.

It was agreed that the Executive Team would propose a schedule of workshops to take place over the next year and that this would be circulated to Members within the next two weeks. Members noted the need to keep space in the schedule for emerging matters.

ACTION 5: A proposed schedule of workshops to take place over the next year.

6. **PRESENTATION FROM WORLD POLICE FIRE GAMES**

Mr J Tully, Chief Executive of WPFGB and Mr J Davis, Sports Delivery Manager, of the WPFGB provided the Board with an overview presentation on 2013 World Police and Fire Games.

Members noted that the 2013 Games will take place for 10 days from 1 – 10 August 2013. It is estimated that 10,000 athletes will attend with up to 15,000 additional friends and family also attending. There will be over 70 countries represented in over 65 sporting events which will take place at over 40 different locations. There will be 3,500 volunteers involved in the event.

It was noted that the event is the third largest competitive multi-sport sport event in the World.

Members enquired as to how registration was going for the Games and noted that to date 4,000 people have already registered to take part in the Games.

Members enquired regarding the process of venue selection for the events and noted that there had been an open and transparent process which had been measured against set criteria.

Members enquired how the accommodation situation is being handled and noted that the WPFGB have a preferred agent (Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau) set up for competitors and friends and family to use as this will help ensure prices are not over inflated.

It was noted that competitors pay a flat entry fee to participate in Games and then have a further fee to pay depending on the sport they are participating in. Members queried if there is provision for disabled athletes to participate within the Games and noted that there is not.

Mr J Tully advised that he hopes the legacy of the Games will be in relation to volunteering, sports equipment available, a Schools programme, and the role of the services in society.

Mr T Jolly thanked Sport NI for all its help to date and also for staff members presently seconded to the Games.

Members advised that there could be legacy opportunity for an event toolkit coming from the Games.

ACTION 6: Discuss with WPFG the idea of a Sports Event Toolkit as a legacy opportunity from the Games

7 **GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Members received Paper SNI/13/2.

Mr P Turnbull advised Members that the final meeting of the Governance Review group would be taking place on 8 February 2013 and then the Chair, and Members of the Audit & Risk Management Committee would be meeting with the Permanent Secretary to close out the Governance Review.

Mr P Turnbull advised that a practical approach had been taken to this and that once all the emerging findings have been addressed the project team can be stood down.

G Campbell left the meeting

The Acting Chief Executive advised that DCAL had recently issued a revised Management Statement Financial Memorandum and requested comments from SNI.

8 **EXECUTIVE TEAM REPORT**

Members received Paper SNI/13/3 which updates Members on key activities and actions undertaken by the Management Team since the last update.

8.1 Human Resources update

Members noted that work is ongoing and thanked the Human Resources Manager for the work undertaken with regard to the CEO post.

8.2 SINI Business Case

Members noted that this has been with the Department since July 2012 and has not as yet been approved. The Acting Chief Executive advised Members that it is critical that this happens soon due to the fact there is less than 14 months funding remaining in the ongoing Lottery award.

The Acting Chief Executive advised that SNI are proposing to prepare the Business Case in house with advice from UK Sport, as independent adviser. UK Sport has confirmed that it will undertake this role with no expense to Sport NI. This proposal would mean work could commence immediately without any requirement for approval to use Consultants. It was noted that DCAL has been asked to consider this approach and that a decision is still awaited.

As Sport NI is only one of the two shareholders in SINI then it would be appropriate to advise the other shareholder, UUJ, about the proposed new arrangements to prepare a Business Plan to consider the future options for

SINI. It was agreed that the Chair of SNI would write to the Vice Chancellor of UUJ and his letter would invite comments from UUJ. It was also agreed that the Chair would write to Chair of SINI advising that if the above plan proceeds the view of SINI Board will be sought.

ACTION 7: Chair to write to Dr O Brown as Chair of SINI and Professor R Barnett as Member of SINI to update them on the Business Case in respect of the future of SINI

The Acting Chief Executive advised that he had met with Mr E Mullan, UUJ and made him aware of situation and that he had a further meeting planned with him again next week ensuring UUJ input into the Business case.

Members noted that the Department are aware of the situation as it has been discussed at Accountability meetings.

The Board agreed that the Executive Team should continue to press DCAL for a decision and keep the Board updated on progress.

ACTION 8: Executive to continue to press DCAL for progress on a decision in relation to approval to proceed with the SINI Business Case

8.3 Value For Money Review

Members noted that Department approval is required for consultancy expenditure over £10,000. Terms of Reference and Business Case were submitted to Department for the Value for Money Review in August 2012 and approval is still outstanding.

In order to progress this review the Executive Team is proposing the scope of the Review is reduced and the budget capped at £10,000. This is considered feasible given other work being undertaken as part of Governance Review, Grant Management Review and Stakeholder Survey.

This approach has been raised with the Department and a decision is awaited. Following discussion the Board agreed the Executive Team should continue to press for progress on a decision and keep the Board up-to-date.

ACTION 9: Executive to continue to press DCAL for progress on a decision in relation to approval to proceed with the Value for Money Review

8.4 Recognition of Sporting Activities and Governing Bodies of Sport

Members noted that this section of the Executive Team Report requires a decision. It was noted that the recommendation is that authority for recognition and de-recognition of sporting activities and governing bodies of sport be delegated from Members to the Executive Team of Sport Northern Ireland.

Members agreed that they are not content to delegate authority to the Executive Team as these decisions can be contentious especially within Northern Ireland.

Members therefore agreed that the Board of SNI would retain the decision making authority for the recognition and de-recognition of sporting activities and governing bodies.

The Director of Performance advised that there is a decision to be made on de-recognition of a sport. He confirmed that a decision is important and it was agreed that the paper should be circulated to Members on Sharepoint and Members should be able to see all others comments.

ACTION 10: Paper on de-recognition to be circulated to Members electronically for decision

8.5 50m Swimming Pool

The Acting Chief Executive advised Members that an issue had arisen with regard to disability access to the 50m pool in relation to the design of lifts which are not the correct dimensions for athlete wheelchairs. Members noted that the Chair and DCAL had already been advised of the issue. Members noted that there are possible solutions to the problem.

The Acting Chief Executive advised that he had a planned meeting regarding the issue with DSNI and also had arranged a meeting with North Down to try and resolve the situation.

ACTION 11: Executive to keep Board updated on the Disability Access issue in relation to the 50m pool

8.6 Additional in Year Budget

Members queried how projects are selected for additional investment such as midnight soccer or Park Run.

D O'Connor left meeting because of a conflict of interest with North Belfast Play Forum (Midnight Street Soccer)

Members were advised that DCAL had sought proposals for additional spend especially on projects in areas of high social need. SNI recommended projects that had previously been in contact with the organisation and that were in a state of readiness. DCAL had then prioritised the projects and advised officers which project were approved for additional budget.

D O'Connor returned to the meeting

Members discussed that moving forward there needs to be a robust process as to how projects are identified and selected for funding. The Acting Chief Executive advised Members that it is not normally how projects are handled but there are occasions when SNI are required to come up with projects for additional funding in a short time period.

It was agreed that these funding opportunities could be a topic for a workshop with Board Members for discussion.

ACTION 12: Consider Additional Funding as a topic of Board workshops

8.7 Issues Log

In relation to the St Colman's College Project Mr P Turnbull advised that Members should be made aware of the upcoming NIAO report regarding the project.

The Acting Chief Executive said he had met with NIAO and advised members that the NIAO findings were broadly similar to previous comments relating to partnerships, project changes and business case issues. SNI had been given the opportunity to provide further information and that this had been done.

The next step in the process is that the report will be sent to the Department who will release it to Sport NI who will then have a further opportunity to respond.

The Acting Chief Executive also advised Members regarding the Northern Ireland Judo Federation issue that this had been handed over to the Internal Auditor and that allegations were being investigated. He advised of additional claims regarding defamatory remarks allegedly made by a former employee of Sport NI. He further confirmed that, to the best of his knowledge, no SNI funding decisions were influenced by the remarks or sentiments alleged.

M Cowan left meeting

9 **QUARTER 3 BUSINESS PLAN REPORT**

Members received Paper SNI/13/4 providing Members with the Quarter 3 Business plan update showing how the organisation is performing against its KPIs.

The table shows that 52 (91%) are on target to be achieved, 2 (4%) are likely to be achieved but with some uncertainty 3(5%) are unlikely to be achieved.

The Director of Sport Management Services took Members through the document. Members were concerned that two KPIs will not be met related to work on Safety Certificates – the reason given for this not being met is due to the Officer being diverted to undertake work on the three stadia projects on the request of the DCAL stadium team.

Members queried if there is an action plan in place to rectify this issue. The Acting Chief Executive advised Members that a part-time officer has been appointed and will take on certain areas of work freeing up the Officer to focus more time on Safety Certificate Work.

Members asked the Acting Chief Executive to provide them with an urgent recovery plan / proposal on how this issue is being dealt with.

ACTION 13: Executive to develop a plan to address work shortfall in relation to Safety at Sports Grounds

Members approved the Quarter 3 Business Plan

10 **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR 9 MONTHS TO 31 DECEMBER 2012**

Members received Paper SNI/13/5 which provides Members with Management

Accounts in respect of Exchequer and Lottery accounts. It was noted that Lottery spend target will not be met during the year due to Awards for Sport not taking place and decommitments on Active Communities and staff costs being reduced due to vacancies. Members noted that the Lottery account is not year end sensitive and underspends can carry forward to future years. The Exchequer budget is expected to be balanced at the year end.

Members raised queries regarding the grant to Bann/Portora rowing clubs which are identified as a Ministerial Priority. Members asked their concern be noted as there appeared to be no process to ensure equal access to such opportunities nor a transparent prioritisation process.

Members queried the negative variance in relation to income under Service Level Agreements and the Director of Sport Management Services advised that this is explained in the notes and it relates to changes to the recharge to WPFG.

S McCullough left the meeting

J O'Neill left the meeting

11 NATIONAL LOTTERY DISTRIBUTION FUND POLICY

Members received Paper SNI/13/6 which provided Members with an updated Policy on how the NLDF balance will reduce over the five year period to 31 March 2018.

The Director of Sport Management Services advised that this policy was based on the best estimate of Sport Northern Ireland's plans over the next five years. He emphasised that as the new Corporate Plan is developed this will change these estimates.

Members queried why the target for 2012/12 had not been achieved and were advised by the Director of Sport Management Services that this has arisen due to decommitments in grants, the Awards for Sport Programme not taking place in 12/13 and underspends in the Lottery salaries budget.

Members approved the NLDF Policy up to 2017/18

12 RISK REGISTER

Members received Paper SNI/13/7, which had previously been scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Management Committee, and advises Members of key risks affecting the achievement of the organisations' objectives and actions being taken to mitigate against those risks

It was noted that there have been no new risks identified since the last review of the Risk Register. Five of the nine risks have a medium rating and the remaining four have a low rating.

Members reviewed and approved the Risk Register.

13 QUARTERLY ASSURANCE STATEMENT

Members received Paper SNI/13/8 which provides Members with the Chief Executive's assessment of the Organisation's system of internal controls,

governance and risk management.

Of the 43 statements reported against 38 of these were yes with three being partly and 2 being no. The no responses relate to:

- the non-achievement of business KPIs and
- the implementation of NIAO audit recommendations.

Members noted that priority one recommendations are not considered cleared until audit is completed the following year. There were three priority one items the previous year therefore this must be ticked as no.

Members advised that they found a lot of the issues reported in the Quarterly Assurance Statement are also reported in the Executive Team Report and asked if it was necessary to receive it every quarter. The Director of Management Services advised that it is key part of corporate governance arrangements between DCAL and SNI.

Members approved the quarterly statement and noted that it had already been submitted to DCAL.

14

EVENTS PROGRAMME

Members received Paper SNI/13/9. The purpose of the paper was to provide Members with an overview of the rationale/need for a sports specific events programme which supports improved athlete performance and pathway development.

The Acting Director of Participation advised that this was to be a one year exchequer funded pilot programme with grant investment of £250,000. It was noted that this programme would contribute to the achievement of Sports Matters target PE 20 (World Class Sporting System).

A number of risks were noted within the programme as it is a one year pilot such as short lead in time may mean opportunity for 'summer' sports to bid would be limited as these events are likely to have been allocated.

Members were advised that given the timeline the programme needs to be launched in the next two weeks to allow applicants the opportunity to apply and ensure full spend of the proposed budget. It was also noted that SNI may need to launch the programme before formal approval is received from DCAL of our draft Business Plan. The Acting Chief Executive has advised DCAL of this risk.

Members queried why the Business case was for £297,000 and the grant investment was for £250,000. The Acting Director of Participation and Places advised that £297,000 is total budget but that this figure accounts for staff and that the grant investment will be £250,000.

Members advised that they felt this programme would have more impact if it was for a longer term with a more strategic approach. Discussion also took place with regard to the funding being too late for sports events in 2013/14.

Members agreed with the programme proceeding on approval from DCAL if the draft Business Plan has not been approved. The strategic focus of the programme and budget were approved. Risks and proposed mitigation were

noted.

Members asked that Executive team bring proposal to next meeting to explore options for a longer term events programme

ACTION 14: Executive to bring proposal to extend timeframe regarding a longer term Events Programme to the next Board meeting

15

ACTIVE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

Members received Paper SNI/13/10. The purpose which was to provide Members with the rationale for small grants programme to support extra-curricular sports and physical recreation in schools. This programme would support the delivery of Sports Matters target PA6 of two hours more extra-curricular sport.

The programme proposes Exchequer Revenue funding of approximately £250,000 to enable children, young people to benefit from additional extra-curricular sport and physical activity especially in areas of high social need and groups who would not normally have access to these opportunities. Given the proposed timeline it is likely that successful projects would be delivered in the period September 2013 – March 2014.

Members noted that the timeframe in which the programme will operate will impose constraints on the nature of activities funded which may mean some schools feel constrained to apply for funding. Early engagement and support structures for potential applicants will hopefully help mitigate this risk.

It was also noted that this programme may raise expectation in a sector hungry for funding with 1,200 potential applicants and SNI only having potential funding for 50-65 projects. A robust assessment process will enable SNI to ensure that funding is targeted as those that demonstrate the greatest impact against projects objectives.

There is also a risk if the launch is delayed that opportunity for successful applicants to have projects in place for September 2013 may be missed with a negative impact on ability to spend proposed budget by March 2014.

Members again raised the issue that this is a one year pilot programme and suggested that it may have more impact if it was for a longer time period and if renewable awards of up to £10k per annum (depending on circumstances) could be written into programme.

Members agreed with programme proceeding on approval from DCAL if the draft Business Plan has not been approved. The strategic focus of programme and budget were approved along with the possibility of award values and time periods being increased and the risks were noted.

Members asked that Executive team to bring a proposal to next meeting to explore the opportunities to make this a longer term programme.

ACTION 15: Executive to bring a proposal to the next Board meeting to extend the time period of the Active Schools programme and increase grant amount

ACTION 16: Discuss and agree process with DCAL, to launch Events and Active Schools programmes, prior to formal DCAL approval of SNI draft Business Plan 2013-14

16 **COMMITTEE REPORT**

16.1 Report from Staffing Committee

The Chair of Staffing Committee advised that a timetable of Staffing Committee meetings had been set for the coming year. These would take place between Board meetings which would enable him to report to the Board meetings.

Members noted the work that would be undertaken during the year which would include a review of policies and procedures, terms and conditions, and the production of a new staff handbook.

The Chair of Staffing Committee advised that the policies would be brought for the Board to review and approve. He advised that this project was expected to be completed in December 2013.

The Board were also advised that work undertaken with regard to Chief Executive recruitment had now been completed and that the post would go to advertisement in the next week. Members noted that the job description, personnel specification and advertisement had been agreed with the Department.

16.2 Report for Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee advised Members that the Committee had been reconstituted and that work was ongoing against an agreed Audit Plan.

17 **PUBLICATIONS**

17.1 Pocket Guide Update

The Acting Chief Executive showed Members a mock up of what a Pocket Guide would look like when completed and advised that the purpose of this document would be for Board Members to have key points available in one small guide. Members noted that the guide is still being developed.

Members agreed that this would be a useful tool but enquired as to whether staff would be provided with similar guide as they felt it would be a useful guide for staff as well as Members. The Acting Chief Executive advised that the Pocket Guide would be given to all staff.

ACTION 17: When complete the Pocket guide to be circulated to all Board Members and staff

17.2 Roles and Responsibilities Diagram

Members noted that there had been some changes to the Strategic pyramid following workshop with CIPFA and were advised that this was being worked on by the Graphic designers.

The also noted that a communication plan regarding the implementation of the Government Review has been prepared.

18 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 9 April 2013 at 5 pm.

19. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair advised that any issues to be brought to the Board under Any Other Business should be provided to either the Secretary or the Chair 24 hours prior to the meeting. Matters that had not been advised of could not be dealt with at the meeting.

The Chair advised Members he had asked the Acting Chief Executive to prepare a paper providing evidence of Social Inclusion in all the work the organisation undertakes.

The Acting Chief Executive confirmed that a paper would be available at the next Board meeting.

ACTION 18: Executive to bring a paper to next Board meeting setting out how SNI's work contributes to Ministerial Priorities regarding social inclusion

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

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