

THE SPORTS COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES

CONFIDENTIAL

First Meeting 2007

Held on Tuesday 6 February 2007 in the City of Lisburn Salto, National Gymnastics Centre, Warren Park, Lisburn BT28 1LW

PRESENT

In the Chair: E D Saunders

Members: H Brady
O Brown
G Carson
M Cusdin
J Gallagher
A Hamill
M Murphy
B McCargo
H McCaughey
A Strong

Chief Executive: E McCartan

Staff in Attendance: N Harkness
S Ogle
A Sloan
R McCormick
J Crooks
J News
A Campbell
E Bailey

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mr C Logue, Miss M Muldoon, Cllr J Rodgers.

2 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

2.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He congratulated Dr Marie Murphy on the tremendous facilities at Salto Gymnasium and thanked her and Mr Tony Byrne for the hospitality provided for the meeting.

2.2 The Chairman updated Members on the All Island Group meeting on 12 December 2006. Members noted that the next meeting would take place on 20 February.

2.3 The Chairman referred to the end of the current four-year period of Council

membership on 30 June. He put on record his thanks to Members for the support that Council had given to him and for their confidence, trust and commitment.

Members shared with each other their concerns about the selection and recruitment process, as they understood it, for both Chair and Council; in particular the ambiguity concerning the length/number of terms a Member, Chair or Vice-Chair could serve. They concluded that, in their opinion, based on the information received, that it was in theory possible for a person to serve ten years as a Member, ten years as a Vice-Chair and ten years as a Chair, totalling some thirty years. They believed that this was at odds with the principle inherent in Nolan and Cadbury.

Members enquired from the Chair as to the position he found himself in and the Chairman provided an explanation. In light of their interpretation of the communications between DCAL and themselves Council unanimously proposed and agreed that the Chair should be encouraged to remain in post for the remainder of his ten-year cycle. The Vice-Chair, in accordance with best practice of openness and transparency, declared that he had applied for the position of Chair.

Mr A Strong joined the meeting.

3 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Meeting held on 5 December 2006, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed.

4 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

5 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

6 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman asked everyone individually if they had any interest to declare. Dr O Brown and Mr H McCaughey declared an interest in SINI.

7 **PARTICIPATION UNIT**

7.1 **Building Sport Programme**

Members considered a business case for Corpus Christi Youth Centre (Paper SC/07/16).

Members heard that the applicants had failed to show they have ability to deliver the project or associated programmes thereafter. There were weaknesses in the sports development plan, technical and financial areas; and SCNI needed to be reassured that the applicants could understand and address these to ensure that a facility of the proposed scale is sustainable and create income which can in turn be ploughed back in to sports development programmes.

After discussion Members approved the recommendation to reject the business case report. It was agreed that the SCNI development officer gives detailed feedback to the applicant with the capital team manager, and liaises with the relevant agencies in the locale to help the applicant build capacity to deliver change.

7.2 Report of Delegated Decisions

Members received an update on recent delegated decisions in respect of award adjustments and Awards for All decisions (Paper SC/07/17).

7.3 National Parks in Northern Ireland

Members received Paper SC/07/26 for information. This provided an overview and background to the development of a National Park in Northern Ireland and information regarding the development of the proposal for the first National Park in Mourne.

The Chairman thanked the author, Mr Mike McClure, for an excellent paper.

7.4 Developing Physical Literacy in Northern Ireland

Members considered Paper SC/07/27 which provided background information to Sports Council on the development of physical literacy in Northern Ireland; discussed the definition and measurement of physical literacy; and identified next steps in the base-lining, measurement and development of physical literacy.

Members noted the definition of physical literacy proposed within the draft Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2007-2017 and the proposed development of a Physical Literacy framework.

Members suggested some strengthening of the paper and that a copy be sent to the Minister.

The Chairman thanked the author, Ms Danielle Lavery.

7.5 Bain Report: The Independent Strategic Review of Education in Northern Ireland

Members received Paper SC/07/28 which advised of ongoing discussions with the Department of Education in relation to sports provision in schools with particular reference to the findings of the Bain Report.

SCNI had made written submissions to Professor Bain and Members were pleased to note that those concerns that had been expressed for some time by SCNI regarding the provision of sports facilities in the schools' estate had been noted by Professor Bain who included a number of recommendations on this issue in his Independent Strategic Review of Education published in December 2006. They also noted the ongoing discussions between SCNI officers and the Department of Education.

7.6 2012 Pre-Games Training Camps Assessment Procedures

Members considered Paper SC/07/29 which sought Council approval for the process to be adopted for considering applications from venue owners in Northern Ireland for inclusion in the London Organising Committee for Olympic Games (LOCOG) promotional documentation for distribution to International Olympic Committee (IOC) members in Beijing.

Members noted that LOCOG will take a decision based on advice from the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure and Sports Council for Northern Ireland. As requested by the Permanent Secretary of DCAL, SCNI will act as the Regional Co-ordinator for Northern Ireland. Officers will prepare a report on all applications to be considered by the Facilities Committee of SCNI; and Committee recommendations will be forwarded to LOCOG for further consideration.

Members approved the proposed process.

7.7 The Elite Olympic/Paralympic Facilities Programme

Members considered Paper SC/07/30 and a tabled Annex to the paper. The paper updated Members on the agreed governance, resources, process and programme developments with the Elite Olympic/Paralympic Facilities Programme.

The paper was presented by Mrs A Campbell who is now managing this programme. Mrs Campbell described how the design of the programme would comply with Government requirements relating to the Office of Government Commerce's (OGC) Achieving Excellence Guides and Gateway Process.

The Chairman and Members congratulated Mrs Campbell on the intellect and skills that she applied to her work in this complex area; and also to her commitment to completing the work within the time limits imposed and with other conflicting work pressures. Members were also delighted to hear that the Sports Council for Northern Ireland has positioned itself as an example of best practice in this area.

The paper concluded that:

- SCNI is now the lead role in delivering the Elite Olympic/Paralympic Facilities Programme;
- the SIB has decided not to be involved in the programme;
- suitable resources for 2006/07 2007/08 (subject to business case) have been agreed by DCAL.
- SCNI will integrate OGC, Achieving excellence, Gateway Process into the programme design;
- risks are associated with the resources needed from 2008/09 onwards, which are subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review;
- risks also relate to the lack of revenue funding to address the "People Needs" referred to in the paper "London 2012: A Catalyst To Meet Northern Ireland's Sporting Needs".

After discussion Members approved the recommendations regarding their roles and responsibilities for the Elite Olympic/Paralympic Facilities Programme, which are summarised as follows:

- Facilities Committee to make recommendations to Council on key stage assessments (stage one – application; stage two – outline business case; stage three - full business case and procurement strategy; stage four – develop and construct);
- Sports Council to make recommendations to DCAL and DFP on key stage assessment;
- Facilities Committee and Sports Council to make recommendations and decisions on related capital investment policy, with regards to environmental sustainability; Achieving Excellence; Gateway etc.

8 **CORPORATE SERVICES UNIT**

8.1 Management Accounts

Members considered the Management Accounts for the nine-month period to 31 December 2006 (Paper SC/07/18) and approved their submission to the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure.

8.2 Policy on Special Bonus Scheme

Members considered Paper SC/07/19 which sought approval for the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's Policy and Procedure on the Special Bonus Scheme.

Members noted that the implementation of the policy and procedure would enhance the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's Human Resources policies, practices and procedures; and ensure they are in line with current best practice guidelines. In addition Members noted that this scheme is in line with the Northern Ireland Civil Service Bonus Scheme.

Members approved the policy and procedure on the special bonus scheme and delegated authority to officers should any amendments be necessary as a result of the Section 75 screening process.

8.3 Marketing

8.3.1 Press and Media Report

Members received an update on press and media coverage (Paper SC/07/20).

9. **PERFORMANCE UNIT**

9.1 Developing Talented Performers in Northern Ireland

Members considered Paper SC/07/21 which assessed the benefits and value of the Sports Council multi-sport event (Youth Games) to the development potentially talented athletes.

The Paper discussed the value of the event in the context of talent development and provided options for future development of athletes allied to LTAD and the proposed Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2007-2017.

Options presented were:

- Option 1 discussed continuing with the multi-sport event in a similar format.
- Option 2 discussed discontinuing the multi-sport event.
- Option 3 discussed offering governing bodies the opportunity to deliver their own competitive conclusion to the Regional Development Squad programme.

Members discussed the options and put forward a variety of views. They approved the recommendation that, having considered the need for change against a relatively poor performance picture at senior level and the views of the governing bodies of sport, option 3 was the preferred option. Members wanted the events to have a sense of celebrating and encouraging participation.

9.2 Appointment of Performance Managers

Members considered Paper SC/07/22 which sought approval to introduce rules regarding the appointment of Performance Managers within the Athlete Support Programme, to ensure that an individual is not appointed in circumstances where a "conflict of interest" will exist.

Members noted that the Performance Committee had supported this paper, also noting that it was in line with a recommendation made by the SCNI Appeals Panel in November 2006.

Dr Aidan Hamill left the meeting

Members approved the recommendations to introduce rules regarding the appointment of Performance Managers within the Athlete Support Programme, to ensure that an individual is not appointed as Performance Manager in circumstances where a "conflict of interest" will exist.

9.3 Governing Body Development Plans 2006/09

Members considered Paper SC/07/23 which sought approval for an amendment of the profile of funding to be vouched when making investment in Governing Body Plans 2006-09.

Members noted the rationale for changing the system of vouching Governing Body Plan claims and acknowledged that the revised system would benefit both the Council and the governing bodies. Members approved the recommendation.

9.4 SINI

Members received Paper SC/07/24 which updated them on recent developments regarding the Sports Institute.

9.5 Staffing Committee

The Human Resources Manger reported on the meeting of the Staffing committee earlier in the day and Members approved the decisions of that Committee.

It was noted that the Human Resource Manager would be retiring early within the coming months. The Chairman thanked Mrs Crooks for all the work she had done for Sports Council. There would be an appropriate opportunity in the not-too-distant future to acknowledge that work.

Mr H McCaughey left the meeting.

9.6 Delegated Decisions

Members received Paper SC/07/25 and noted decisions taken in accordance with Council policy.

10 **COMMITTEE REPORTS – FOR ADOPTION**

10.1 Northern Ireland Mountain and Cave Rescue Co-ordinating Committee

Members adopted the minutes of the Eight-First meeting held on 28 September 2006.

10.2 Lottery Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of the Eighty-Fourth meeting held on 22 November 2006.

10.3 Development Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of the Thirty-Second meeting held on 23 November 2006.

11 **PUBLICATIONS**

There were no publications.

12 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 3 April 2007.

13 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

13.1 Reference was made to a Lecture by Professor Fred Coalter at the University of Ulster at Jordanstown on Thursday 8 February.

13.2 Mr Harkness informed Members of a forthcoming review of the management of the Mountain in Northern Ireland under the chairmanship of Mr Joe Reynolds.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked Salto Gymnasium for hosting the meeting and providing lunch. He thanked Members for attendance and the meeting closed at 4 pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

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Upper Malone Road
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