

THE SPORTS COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES

CONFIDENTIAL

Second Meeting 2007

Held on Tuesday 3 April 2007 in Malone House, Barnett Demesne,
Belfast BT9 5PB

PRESENT

In the Chair:	E D Saunders
Members:	O Brown G Carson J Gallagher A Hamill M Muldoon M Murphy B McCargo H McCaughey J Rodgers A Strong
Chief Executive:	E McCartan
Staff in Attendance:	N Harkness S Ogle A Sloan E Bailey J Crooks (for item 5.5) J News (for item 7.1) A Bunt (for item 7.2) C McGurk (for item 7.3 - item 7.6) R McCormick (for item 8.6) P Donnelly (for item 8.8)

1 **APOLOGIES**

Ms H Brady, Mr J Campbell, Ms M Cusdin and Mr C Logue

2 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

- 2.1 The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and asked the Chief Executive to provide an update on the Renewing Communities Investment Programme. The Chief Executive advised Members that Sports Council for Northern Ireland (SCNI) representatives had met with a range of bodies including Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL), Department of Social Development (DSD) and the Department of Education (DE) in an attempt to determine an agreed way

forward. The result of this was that the programme would be delivered by the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) and that the monies identified would be maintained within sport and physical activity sector.

Cllr J Rodgers joined the meeting.

Dr A Hamill joined the meeting.

2.2 ICC World Cup Cricket

The Chairman and the Chief Executive circulated a report entitled "An Update on the Visit of the Chairman and the Chief Executive of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland to the ICC World Cup in Jamaica". They took Members through this in detail, highlighting the success of the Irish Team, the role that SCNI played in it, the role of the Sports Institute (SINI), and an overview of the tournament.

Members commended the Team on their exceptional performance and further commended the Chair and Chief Executive on their report.

Mr A Strong joined the meeting.

2.3 The Vice-Chairman reported on his recent involvements on behalf of SCNI. These included a meeting of the All-Island Committee; a Plenary Session meeting of the British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body in Dublin, when along with the Director of the Participation Committee, he delivered a presentation on sport; the opening of the refurbished Queen's University Belfast Physical Education Centre; and the presentation of an award to the Silverbridge GAA Club. He also reported that he had undertaken an interview for the position of Chair of SCNI.

2.4 Coaching Northern Ireland

The Chief Executive reported on recent meetings with CNI to discuss the way forward. It had been agreed that a review of the organisation would be carried out at a cost of £10,000. Members approved this expenditure.

3 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2007, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed. It was noted that Cllr J Rodgers had been shown as present when in fact he had not attended.

4 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

5 **CORRESPONDENCE**

5.1 Northern Ireland Athletic Federation

Members noted letter dated 26 February 2007 which thanked SCNI for the very generous grant aid to enable the Irish Indoor Athletic Championships to be held at the Odyssey Arena on 17 and 18 February 2007.

5.2 British-Irish Inter-Parliamentary Body

Members noted letter dated 12 March 2007 which thanked the Vice-Chairman, Mr N Harkness and Mr J News for the excellent presentations and contributions to the debate during the recent Plenary Session of the Body in Dublin.

5.3 Northern Ireland Cricket Association

Members noted e-mail dated 14 March 2007 from Mr Gavin Craig, Chairman. It thanked the Chairman and Chief Executive for the expression of support and encouragement for Irish Cricket. It also thanked SCNI for the steps taken so willingly to help prepare the team.

5.4 ITF Taekwon-Do Northern Ireland

Members noted letter dated 22 February 2007 to Dr O Brown thanking her for meeting the President and the Executive Director of the International Taekwon-Do Federation. Both officials had been very impressed with Northern Ireland and with the interest and openness with which they were greeted.

5.5 Staffing Committee

Mrs J Crooks reported on the meeting that had taken place earlier in the day. The agenda had included items on recruitment and selection, pay award, and the Chief Executive's bonus.

Ms M Muldoon joined the meeting.

The Chairman informed Members that this was Mrs Crooks last Council meeting. He expressed the good wishes of Members on her retirement and extended best wishes to her and her husband for the future. Opportunity would be taken on another occasion to honour the major contribution that she had made over 13 years to the Sports Council for Northern Ireland. That contribution had been invaluable; and she had steered the human resource management of the organisation in the right direction, always with professional and friendly advice.

The Chief Executive, on behalf of management, said that SCNI had been very well served by Mrs Crooks. Her expertise, loyalty, enthusiasm, commitment and ability to organise was deeply appreciated.

6 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman asked everyone individually if they had any interest to declare. No interest was declared.

7 **PARTICIPATION UNIT**

7.1 Leave No Trace Programme

Members considered Paper SC/07/47 which provided an overview and background to the principles of the Leave No Trace Programme in Ireland; the findings of the Section 75 screening process; and a proposal that Members

approve the Programme as a policy document.

Members agreed that this was an excellent paper and that it looked at the broad issue of sustainable development, starting with the countryside.

After discussion Members approved the recommendations.

7.2 Women and Girls in Sport

Members considered Paper SC/07/48. It provided information on the development of positive action initiatives aimed at increasing participation in sport among women and girls.

Dr M Murphy joined the meeting.

The paper re-affirmed Sports Council's commitment to developing opportunities for under-represented groups, in particular women and girls. This builds on previous work which began in 1997 and, more recently, the development of a Sports Equity Policy (2003). The paper also provided information on the development of positive action initiatives aimed at increasing participation in sport among women and girls.

Members discussed the paper in depth and congratulated its author; however there followed a detailed discussion regarding the research and clarity of some of the 21 recommendations.

Dr Hamill confirmed that a detailed discussion of such issues had taken place at the Participation Committee including whether or not work developing opportunities should be targeted in a mainstream manner or through a separate programme.

Mr McCargo also confirmed that a previous version of this paper had been discussed in detail at the Performance Committee.

Mr Gallagher agreed that the sum total of recommendations was comprehensive but that a determination was required to think about sport not in terms of identity but rather of equality.

Members noted that the funding stream attached to the recommendations was within current funding applications regarding the Comprehensive Spending Review. Members were reassured that the measures proposed would be translated into the Corporate Plan once funding streams were confirmed.

The Chief Executive summed up by saying that Members' comments would be taken on board and would be integrated into future Corporate Plans.

7.3 Building Sport Stage II Decisions

Members considered Paper SC/07/49 which set out project assessment reports and the recommendations of the Participation Committee.

Members approved the assessment reports and recommendations of the Participation Committee.

7.4 NLDF Balance

Members considered Paper SC/07/50 which set out the proposed policy for managing the NLDF balance over the next two years. It focused on setting a target for the size of the NLDF balance for the next two financial years; the proposed measures to actively manage balances during this period; and the potential impact of the proposed NLDF Policy on existing and new funding programmes.

The Paper referred to the effects of the Olympic costs on Lottery funds and the potential crisis post-March 2009.

The Chairman informed Members that he was hoping to meet with the home country Chairmen regarding lost funding of £100 million; and it was noted that UK Sport had had their funding maintained to prepare athletes for the 2012 Olympics.

After discussion Members approved the recommendation to approve the policy targets.

7.5 Delegated Decisions

Members noted decisions taken in accordance with Council Policy (Paper SC/07/59).

7.6 Building Sport Project: Newpark Association

Members considered Paper SC/07/60 which set out the background and some difficulties encountered in moving the project forward. Members noted that the applicant had failed to take the opportunity during a staged approach to improve the sports development plan and demonstrate the capacity of the partner organisation to deliver the plan.

Members approved the recommendations of the Participation Committee that the sports development plan be rejected and that the application be withdrawn from the Building Sport process; and that the SCNI development officer gives detailed feedback to the applicant with the Building Sport team manger.

8 **CORPORATE SERVICES UNIT**

8.1 Management Accounts

Members considered the Management Accounts for the eleven-month period to 28 February 2007 (Paper SC/07/52) and approved their submission to the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure.

8.2 Fees and charges 2007-08

Members considered and approved the fees and charges in the House of Sport for 2007-08 (Paper SC/07/53).

8.3 Bank Mandate

Members considered and approved bank mandate and cheque signing arrangements (Paper SC/07/54). Members noted the requirement for the change following the re-branding of the corporate identity of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland and its change of name to Sport Northern Ireland.

Members were asked to return the paper to the Director of Corporate Services Unit.

8.4 Lottery and Exchequer Budget 2007-08

Members considered the Lottery and Exchequer Budget for 2007-08 together with supporting notes (Paper SC/07/55).

After discussion, during which Members discussed issues of funding for disability sports and women in sport programme, Gaelic soccer and rugby funding, Members approved the Budget.

Members also agreed that a letter be sent Mr David Hansen MP on the recent death of his father; and also to Mr Peter Robinson MLA, former Member of Sports Council for Northern Ireland, who is now Minister of Finance.

8.5 Risk Register

Members noted the Risk Register for the year ended 31 March 2007 which had been circulated for information (Paper SC/07/56).

8.6 Marketing

Members received an update on press and media coverage and noted the recent activities in Marketing and Communication (Paper SC/07/57).

Members also noted that the Sports Council for Northern Ireland would become Sport Northern Ireland with effect from 25 April 2007.

8.7 Policy for Payment of All Hours Worked Allowance

Members considered and approved the Policy and Procedure on "All Hours Worked Allowance" (Paper SC/07/58).

8.8 Draft Corporate Plan 2007-2010 and Business Plan 2007-2008

Members considered Paper SC/07/64.

Members heard that the draft plan presents the Sports Council's corporate objectives over the period 2007-2010 and its annual business plan and targets for 2007-08. The objectives will guide the deployment and management of resources, and provide a means of reporting performance on all investments against SMART Targets.

The Chairman thanked Mr P Donnelly for his presentation and noted that the plan would change with the Strategy for Sport and the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Dr A Hamill left the meeting.

Mr A Strong mentioned that sustainable development was not prominent in the Plan. The Director of Performance indicated that the way in which programmes were delivered contained considerable emphasis on sustainable development.

The Chairman thanked Members for their many comments about the Draft Corporate Plan and Business Plan which would now be passed to DCAL.

Mr J Gallagher congratulated Mr P Donnelly on this work. He noted that everything that came through to Members in committees and to Chairs of committees was excellent in terms of quality and it was a tribute to the Chairman and Chief Executive.

9 **PERFORMANCE UNIT**

9.1 Talent Identification and Development for Northern Ireland Athletes

Members considered Paper SC/07/61. This outlined current developments in talent identification and development which reflect both the current worldwide research and the sporting landscape in Northern Ireland. It went on to propose an action plan to address current weakness in talent identification in Northern Ireland and made a number of recommendations for approval.

Members approved the recommendations to:

- adopt the terminology and definitions currently identified by world-wide research.;
- amend the current LTAD framework to reflect accurately the specialist nature of talent identification and development in a high performance context as identified by UK Sport; and
- the proposed Way Forward as outlined in section 9.4 of the paper.

9.2 Policy on the Support of Potentially Talented Individuals in Northern Ireland

Members considered Paper SC/07/62 which sought approval for the establishment of a network of Performer Development Centres (PDCs) across Northern Ireland. The aim of these centres is to refine and improve current talent development systems and structures by bridging the gap between governing body programmes and the work of the Sports Institute Northern Ireland.

The paper outlined the current context of talent development and provided a clear rationale for creating a structure which nurtures and supports emerging and precocious talent in Northern Ireland. It also provided an understanding of how the proposed PDCs integrated strategically with the draft Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2007-2017 and the Elite Facilities Programme currently being rolled out by the SCNI.

Members approved the recommendations.

9.3 Delegated Decisions

Members received an update on delegated decisions taken in accordance with Council policy in respect of award adjustments in the Athlete Support Programme (Paper SC/07/63).

9.4 2 and 4 Wheel Motorsport Steering Group

Members considered Paper SC/07/65 which advised of a request from 2 and 4 Wheel Motorsport Steering Group for funding for safety upgrading for the NW200 circuit for 2007.

Members noted that SCNI had received and assessed the Business Case and received confirmation from DCAL economists that it had been approved.

Members approved the request for the identified funding within the Business Case. The Chief Executive referred to branding opportunities for SCNI at the event.

10 **COMMITTEE REPORTS – FOR ADOPTION**

10.1 Participation Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of the Eighty-sixth Meeting held on 23 January 2007.

10.2 Performance Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of the First Meeting held on 25 January 2007.

11 **PUBLICATIONS**

There were no publications.

12 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 5 June 2007.

13 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

13.1 Dr M Murphy referred to the Facilities Committee and the Facilities Strategy Group whose remit was to develop facilities strategy for Northern Ireland. She referred to the Vision Day and to a series of meetings that had taken place to produce a facilities strategy in a timely manner.

Since then there had been a number of postponements in the drafting and publishing of a Facilities Strategy. These postponements had occurred because of the imminent publication of the Strategy of Sport and Physical Recreation.

Members noted that an explanation would be provided to key stakeholders who were involved in the process and that this explanation would build on the launch of the Strategy for Sport and other operational issues.

13.2 Mr B McCargo referred to the World Police and Fire Games 2013 which would take place in Northern Ireland. Members heard that this is likely to be one of the biggest events in Ireland and will impact on SCNI business. The Chief Executive undertook to write to the Chief Constable on this matter.

13.3 Mr A Strong received an update on the UKCC Awards Scheme. Members felt that there would have to be some accreditation of an award before SCNI would endorse the quality of the award.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked Members for their attendance and the meeting closed at 4.15 pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

House of Sport
Upper Malone Road
Belfast
BT9 5LT