

SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES

CONFIDENTIAL

Seventh Meeting 2007

Held on Tuesday 2 October in the House of Sport, Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5LA.

PRESENT

In the Chair: E D Saunders

Members:
O Brown
G Carson
M Cusdin
J Gallagher
M Murphy
B McCargo
A Strong

Chief Executive: E McCartan

Staff in Attendance:
N Harkness
A Sloan
R McCormick
J Poots
J News
C McGurk
P Donnelly
E Bailey

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Ms H Brady, Dr A Hamill, Mr C Logue, Mr H McCaughey, and Cllr J Rodgers.

2 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

2.1 The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and referred to the Minister's visit to the Sports Institute for Northern Ireland (SINI) on 19 September. Members agreed that it had been a most successful visit and that the Minister was keen to help sport as much as possible.

2.2 The Chairman informed Members that a most positive report had been received from the Investors In People Assessors regarding IIP Accreditation for Sport Northern Ireland (SNI).

They had suggested that SNI was, in many instances, a model for bodies going forward for IIP and that other NDPBs would find it to their advantage to take note of the procedures which SNI had put in place here. They also commended

Members for their commitment, enthusiasm, and expertise to the service of sport in Northern Ireland.

Members heard that full points had been awarded for each of the 10 criteria.

They commented on the culture that existed in SNI from leadership down and the contribution and willingness of staff to work; and were not surprised that there was such a glowing report. They asked that the Report findings be made available to staff and to the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL).

2.3 Members heard a report on the meeting of the Staffing Committee which took place earlier in the day.

2.4 Members heard a report from Dr O Brown regarding a meeting of the Commonwealth Games Delhi 2010 Preparation Committee which she had chaired. She had obtained agreement from the Performance Committee on the proposed action which was, that if there was not a common aspiration to put athletes at the centre with services available to them to give their best performance, there was no point in moving forward. This aspiration was eventually agreed, as were action plans for the future.

Whilst it was recognised that there will be many issues to be resolved in this process the Chairman commended Dr Brown on the progress she had made in encouraging a massive shift of mental attitudes.

2.5 The Vice-Chair reported on the Wheelchair Tennis Tournament that he had attended which had been a most impressive event of very high standard involving Dutch and American players.

3 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of 2007 held on 4 September, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed.

4 **MATTERS ARISING**

4.1 The Vice-Chair referred to comments he had made at the last meeting regarding the training camps at the University of Ulster. He confirmed that he had in fact been aware of these events through an earlier meeting.

5 **CORRESPONDENCE**

5.1 University of Ulster

Members noted letter dated 19 September regarding the Elite Facilities Programme Stage One decision in which they stated that the University of Ulster would now formally withdraw from the competitive process.

5.2 Golfing Union of Ireland

Members noted letter dated 28 September stating that the Ulster Branch Council had unanimously decided not to pursue their application for funding at the Greenmount Facilities and therefore declined a Stage I offer in the region of £100,000.

6 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

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

7 **PARTICIPATION UNIT**

7.1 **Generic Training Needs of Community Sports Coaches**

Members considered Paper SNI/07/140 which had already been considered by the Participation Committee.

Members noted that a review of non-sport specific coaching courses would take place between 1 September 2007 and 31 March 2008 and approved the budget and format for the delivery of the Coach Education Programme between 1 September 2007 and 31 March 2008 as an interim measure to address the needs of community sports coaches.

7.2 **Enabling Improved Community Access to School Sports Facilities**

Members considered Paper SNI/07/141. This provided an overview of the strategic context for improving community access to, and use of, school sports facilities; identified key benefits and challenges arising from improved community use of the school estate; suggested solutions to overcoming barriers currently inhibiting increased access and use of the school estate; and recommended a practical implementation framework that will enable improved planning and delivery between SNI and DCAL.

Members noted that this Paper had been part of a brief to the Minister of Education who had been interested to hear examples of good practice contained in the Paper.

After discussion Members approved the recommendations contained in the Paper.

7.3 **Report of Delegated Decisions**

Members noted delegated decisions taken in accordance with Council policy (Paper SNI/07/142).

7.4 **Building Sport Stage 2 Assessments**

Members considered two Stage II project assessment reports relating to Donaghadee Sailing Club and Glenravel Community Development Association (Paper SNI/07/143).

Members approved the recommendation to approve Stage II.

8 **PERFORMANCE UNIT**

The Chief Executive apologised for the absence of the Director of Performance Unit who was attending a funeral.

8.1 Bursary Scheme for Athlete Support Personnel

Members considered Paper SNI/07/144. This proposed the introduction of a Bursary Scheme to support those working with high performance athletes; and outlined how the Scheme would improve access to high quality coaching and Sports Science and Sports Medicine (SS/SM) interventions for developing athletes, aspiring to perform at the highest level.

After discussion Members approved the recommendation to develop the bursary Scheme at a cost of £220,000 over a 30-month period. Also that, in the event of a positive evaluation of the first two years of the programmes, SNI should consider the continuation of the Scheme in line with clearly identified needs in the areas of high performance coaching and sports science/medicine.

8.2 Review and Re-Opening of the Athlete Support Programme

Members considered Paper SNI/07/145 which sought approval to re-open an amended Athlete Support Programme (ASP) in October 2007 on an interim basis, pending an ongoing longer term review of SNI's investment in performance sport from April 2009.

Members noted the comments of the Performance Committee which had welcomed the proposed plans to adopt a more integrated approach towards SNI investment in Performance Sport from April 2009.

Members approved the recommendations to:

- Approve the proposed revisions to the ASP.
- Approve the re-opening of the programme until 31 March 2009.
- Support officers' proposal to further review and revise the way in which SNI invests in performance sport beyond April 2009.

8.3 Report of Delegated Decisions

Members received a report of delegated decisions taken in accordance with Council policy (Paper SNI/07/146).

8.4 Recognition of Sporting Activities

Members received Paper SNI/07/147 which sought approval to reject an application from the Ulster Ladies Gaelic Football Association to recognise Ladies Gaelic Football as a sporting activity. The basis for the recommendation was that Gaelic Football is already recognised as a sporting activity by the Sports Councils in the United Kingdom. The proposed activity does not therefore satisfy the "uniqueness" criteria of the recognition policy.

After discussion Members approved the recommendation made by the UK Officers' Recognition Panel to reject the application from the Ulster Ladies Gaelic

Football Association for the recognition of Ladies Gaelic Football as a sporting activity.

8.5 Unit Update

Members received an update on aspects of the Performance Sport Team's work over the past three months and were alerted to key events and developments (Paper SNI/07/148).

9 **CORPORATE SERVICES**

9.1 Management Accounts

Members considered and approved the Management Accounts for the five-month period to 31 August 2007 for submission to the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (Paper SNI/07/149).

9.2 Fixed Asset Depreciation for Tollymore Mountain Centre

Members considered and approved a revision in the depreciation rate for Tollymore Mountain Centre (Paper SNI/07/150).

9.3 Marketing

Members received an update of recent activities in Marketing and Communication (Paper SNI/07/151).

9.4 Section 75

Members received a copy of SNI's Section 75 Annual Report for the period 2006/07.

9.5 Disability Action Plan

Members considered SNI's new Draft Disability Action Plan 2007-2009 (Paper SNI/07/153). Members noted that two responses had been received following consultation and they were asked to let Mr P Donnelly have their comments by 25 October.

Members approved the Draft Plan.

10 **COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR ADOPTION**

10.1 Performance Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of the Third Meeting held on 25 May 2007.

10.2 Participation Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of a Special Meeting held on 29 August 2007.

10.3 Northern Ireland Mountain and Cave Rescue Co-ordinating Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of the Eighty-Fourth Meeting held on 28 June 2007.

11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 4 December 2007.

12 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

12.1 Dr O Brown reported that she had received a letter from UK Sport inviting her to become a member of their Appeals Panel. Mr B McCargo also reported receiving an invitation.

12.2 The Chief Executive reported that it was hoped to arrange an opportunity to recognise the work of the Members since they were appointed. A date would be confirmed as soon as possible.

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

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

House of Sport
Upper Malone Road
Belfast
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