

SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES

CONFIDENTIAL

Fifth Meeting 2011

Held on Tuesday 4 October 2011 in the House of Sport, Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5LA.

PRESENT

In the Chair: D Walsh

Members: P Cummings
J D'Arcy
U Duncan
B Macaulay
A Money Penny
B McCargo
H McGrady
D O'Connor
J Rodgers
A Strong
P Turnbull

Chief Executive: E McCartan

Staff in Attendance: N Harkness
S Ogle
A Sloan
R McCormick
C McGurk (for Item 8.3)
P Donnelly (for Item 10)
E Bailey

In attendance: Dr J Kremer (for Item 10.12)

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Dr O Brown and Mr M Cowan.

2 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman asked everyone individually if they had any interest to declare. Mr A Strong declared an interest in Pre-Games Training Camps (PGTC) – Table Tennis.

3 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

- 3.1 The Chairman informed Members of the death of Professor Jim Allen, former Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ulster. Professor Allen had been ill for some time. He had been an outstandingly helpful and loyal supporter of Sport Northern Ireland and his untiring support in the setting up of the Sports

Institute Northern Ireland had been of great value. Funeral arrangements are not yet known but when they are Members will be informed.

Members held a minute's silence in memory of Professor Allen.

4 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 August 2011, had been previously circulated.

Members received a tabled minute referring to item 12.1 – Pre-Games Training Camps. Members noted that a target to seek to attract ten sports or nations for Pre-Games Training Camps in Northern Ireland had been set by the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL) as part of their PSAs. Members further noted that this target had been extended to include Pre-Games Events with the agreement of DCAL. Members noted the large number of recent events pertaining to Pre-Games Training Camps and expressed some concern about budgets relating to delivery of the policy objective set by DCAL.

Members read and approved this Minute.

The Minutes of the Meeting were approved and signed.

5 **MATTERS ARISING**

- 5.1 The Director of Corporate Services provided an update on reported on Pre-Games Training Camps and Events and the targets set by DCAL for SNI to seek to attract ten sports or nations countries for PGTCs to Northern Ireland. Members noted that Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) had now met that target and will have some funding this year to progress the PGTCs but that post this further funding will be required from DCAL for those events taking place before 31 March 2012. Members noted the need to learn from this process, indicating the need for consultation before setting targets.
- 5.2 The Director of Corporate Services gave a presentation on Paper SNI/11/167 – London 2012 – Pre-Games Training Camps. Members noted that the funding required for bringing PGTCs to Northern Ireland would be of the order of £235,000 but that SNI would be seeking funding from other bodies towards these costs.
- 5.3 Boccia – Members received a report on the recent World Championship and Olympic Qualifying event at the University of Ulster. There had been a number of significant challenges at the planning stage; nonetheless the event went ahead successfully and without major issues. Members expressed the view that it was a most successful event and whilst they were aware of some of the challenges in the planning stage, these would not have been noticed by the participants and audience.
- 5.4 Members noted that the Belfast Boat Club Ladies Team recently won the European Club Championships and it was agreed that a letter of congratulations be sent to them.

6 CORRESPONDENCE

6.1 Mr E Jardine

To note letter dated 3 August 2011. This letter from Edgar Jardine thanked the Chair, Chief Executive and Board Members for their kind remarks and gift received marking his retirement.

6.2 E-mail

To note e-mail from John News dated 12 August 2011. This e-mail referred to very complimentary comments made by an Awards for Sport applicant in connection with help from and focus of SNI staff in making an application.

6.3 Lord Mayor

To note letter from the Lord Mayor dated 15 August 2011. This letter thanked the Chair for his good wishes on his election as Lord Mayor. The Lord Mayor has since visited the House of Sport.

6.4 Irish Squash Federation Ltd

To note letter dated 1 September 2011. This letter thanked SNI for its contribution in making the European Club Squash Championships a tremendous success.

7 PARTICIPATION UNIT

7.1 Participation Team Update

Members received Paper SNI/11/146 for information and noted an overview of the work of the Participation Team in the period May-September and key areas of work over the next four months.

Mr B McCargo referred to the excellent symposium in Tollymore National Outdoor Centre (TNOC). Almost 100 coaches and staff had been in attendance. The speakers had been superb and TNOC staff had been very efficient and helpful. Congratulations were extended to Mr J News and his team and to the Director of Participation.

Regarding paragraph 3.1 of the Paper - Staffing and Structures, Cllr J Rodgers expressed increasing concern about the pressure on staff of the organisation. It was noted that a number of staff were off on sick leave, some for a considerable period of time; and that staff were seconded to World Police and Fire Games. It was agreed that Council has a responsibility and a duty of care to its staff; and cannot sit idly by and allow staff to be over-worked in the absence of ability to further recruit. Members congratulated staff on their outstanding commitment and requested that a report be prepared on this matter and brought to the next Council meeting.

7.2 Access to the Natural Environment for Sport and Physical Recreation

Members considered Paper SNI/11/147 which provided feedback on consultation regarding the policy position paper that went out for consultation in March 2011

and sought approval for revised SNI policy position.

The Director of Participation presented the paper in the absence of Mr M McClure and undertook to have any questions raised by Members referred to Mr McClure on his return.

Members approved the recommendation.

8 PLACES

8.1 Stadia Programme

Members considered Paper SNI/11/148 which sought approval of the award percentage for the Letters of Offer relating to the development costs for the three Governing Bodies.

Members noted the background to this paper and noted that as highlighted within the original paper the approach in Paper SNI/11/148 being considered today would be applied to all SNI large-scale capital projects (SNI contribution in excess of £1m) as it would assist in the management of SNI budgets.

Members discussed the Paper at length and raised a variety of questions. Members asked about the risk associated with the project in terms of time and money. They agreed the importance of moving forward quickly. They noted that officers are currently trying to find a suitable procurement route to enable all the stadia to work at the same pace. Members also noted the delays experienced in the planning area and noted that there was nothing in the SNI system that was holding up the project.

The Chief Executive reported that in terms of strategy, structure, systems and staffing SNI had, to the best of its abilities, put in place appropriate mechanisms, strategies and structures to deliver the programme. There were however issues around the staffing area where there would be a need for more staff and these had been brought to the attention of DCAL some time ago.

Members approved the recommendation in principle.

8.2 Elite Facilities – 50m Pool

Members considered Paper SNI/11/149 which made advanced provision to ensure timely availability of contingency within the capital expenditure budget identified within the funding agreement between SNI and North Down Borough Council.

The Paper sought approval to undertake a virement of available contingency money from design risk contingency to contractual risk contingency should it be required.

The Paper also provided an update on the impact of unforeseen events on the project contingencies to date and the risk mitigation measures employed to manage these events.

After discussion Members approved the recommendations contained in the Paper.

8.3 Building Sport Revenue Tail Awards

Members considered Paper SNI/11/150 which sought approval for an increase in percentage of award to Moyola Park Football Club's revenue tail. Members noted that this had been considered by Places Committee.

Members heard that it was the aim of this increase to get this facility utilised to the maximum.

After discussion Members approved an increase in percentage of award from 48% to 100% of an award of £72,000 towards the employment of a part-time revenue tail post plus programme costs over four years towards Moyola Park Football Club.

Members also delegated authority to officers to review the percentage funding contribution of the post in the final years of the award, based on the sustainability of funding from the applicant.

8.4 Delegated Decisions – Places

Members received Paper SNI/11/151 and noted action taken in accordance with Council policy.

8.5 Capital Programmes and SNI Overseeing Function

Members received Paper SNI/11/152 which advised of progress on the various Capital Programmes run by Sport Northern Ireland.

9 **PERFORMANCE UNIT**

9.1 Muaythai Recognition

Members considered Paper SNI/11/161 which sought approval to reject the application from the United Kingdom Muaythai Federation (UKMF) for recognition of Muaythai as a sporting activity; and the application from the UKMF as the National Governing Body for Muaythai in Great Britain.

Members noted the background to recognition and approved the recommendations contained in the Paper. Members noted that UKMF could in future be invited to re-submit under the new recognition process.

9.2 Delegated Decisions - Performance

Members received Paper SNI/11/162 and noted decisions taken in accordance with Council policy.

9.3 Governance Improvement Programme

Members considered Paper SNI/11/163 which sought approval for a Governance Improvement Programme.

Members noted the prevalence of governance issues in the press various organisations operating in Northern Ireland. They heard that the Performance Committee had approved the Governance Improvement Programme, the assessment process and the revised Risk Management framework.

Members approved the delivery process for the Governance Improvement Programme as outlined in the paper. They also approved the assessment and scoring process as outlined in Appendices; and they approved the revised Risk Management framework for the programme.

9.4 Performance Sport System in Northern Ireland

Members considered Paper SNI/11/164 which referred to SNI funding sporting organisations through a new investment programme in April 2013.

The programme, details of which are currently being developed and refined, will go 'live' in December 2011 and will build on lessons learned from previous investment rounds: Investing in Sport Programme, Athlete Investment Programme and Investing in Performance Sport Programme.

The Paper included a Roadmap which covered the period June 2011 through to April 2013 and gave an overview of how SNI intends to undertake the journey with all relevant stakeholders.

Members heard that one of the strengths of this process is that SNI is dealing in depth with these sporting organisations. Members noted that the process is building on what exists. It is about capacity and capability to deliver in an incremental way. Members noted that officers are aware of the current state of readiness of many of these sporting organisations. The policy remains the same but the process to get there is different. This is a journey that will build capacity in the organisation so SNI and its partners are better able to manage expectations in pursuit of improving athlete performance.

Members discussed the paper at length and noted comments from the Performance Committee.

Members approved the Process Roadmap leading to Investment in April 2013 as part of the development of a world leading performance sport system.

10 **CORPORATE SERVICES UNIT**

10.1 Management Accounts

Members noted the Management Accounts for the five-month period to 31 August 0211 (Paper SNI/11/158).

Members noted that Lottery proceeds are up as National Lottery ticket sales are up. Members also noted that the new "Health Lottery" has been launched across the United Kingdom.

10.2 London 2012 – Olympic Torchbearers

Members considered Paper SNI/11/165 which sought approval for SNI's approach to the allocation of London 2012 Olympic Torchbearer slots.

The Director of Corporate Services reported that despite having been advised by LOCOG that SNI could advertise for the Torch Bearer slot, he had been informed by LOCOG only the day before the Council meeting that we could not in fact do so. Accordingly the Paper was withdrawn from Council consideration.

Members noted that the deadline is the end of October and that SNI had five slots. It was agreed that nominations should be sought through the Activ8 Programme.

10.3 London 2012 – Olympic Tickets

Members considered Paper SNI/11/165 SNI's approach to the allocation of tickets for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Members noted the background and that the allocation of tickets to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games provided a mechanism to incentivise participation in Sports in Northern Ireland.

Members discussed the constraints regarding age of potential recipients and agreed that 18 years should be the lowest age. As SNI is not likely to know what events the tickets will be for it is not possible at this stage to consider coaches and athletes attending together; or even to send two people together.

Members approved the proposed allocation method and agreed that Governing Bodies should be asked to select a number of appropriate recipients after which a random selection draw would take place.

10.4 London 2012 – Pre-Games Training Camps

Members received an update on the progress made on seeking to secure Pre-Games Training Camps and Events for Northern Ireland for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Paper SNI/11/167).

The Director of Corporate Services presented the Paper, much of which had been referred to earlier in the meeting; and recorded his thanks to Members who had attended the Chinese delegation's visit to Salto Gymnastics Centre and the subsequent media launch arranged for them.

10.5 Delegated Decisions – Corporate Services Unit

Members received Paper SNI/11/159 and noted action taken in accordance with Council policy.

10.6 Risk Register

Members received Paper SCNI/11/144 and noted key corporate risks, their ratings, agreed mitigation activities, and progress against those activities.

Members heard that this had been considered in detail at the Audit Committee held before the Council Meeting.

Members agreed that an invitation be extended to the Chief Executive of World Police and Fire Games 2013 to attend the next Council Meeting and give a presentation on progress in respect of preparation for the Games.

10.7 Advocacy and Communications

Members received Paper SNI/11/145 which provided an update of recent and upcoming activities in the Advocacy and Communications Department.

Members expressed thanks for the useful morning news alerts; and the Chief Executive thanked all those Members who attend events on behalf of SNI, sometimes at the last minute as invitations are sometimes late in arriving.

10.8 Section 75 Annual Report

Members received Section Paper SNI/11/153 and noted SNI's Section 75 duties. The Paper highlighted key actions carried out in terms of meeting those regulations. Members drew attention to an error on page 61 which officers will correct.

10.9 Sport Matters

Members received a progress update on the implementation of Sport Matters (Paper SNI/11/154). They noted the background, the update on SMIG membership and highlights and recent progress.

10.10 Arms Length Bodies (ALB) Review

Members received an update on the review currently being undertaken by DCAL (Paper SNI/11/155).

The Paper reviewed the out-workings of the Phase One process. Members noted the detail in the update Paper and, following the second meeting with other ALBs, approved the release of a formal response to the DCAL Minister outlining SNI's views and concerns with regard to the Phase One process in advance of Phase Two commencing.

Members expressed the view that as they are appointees of the Minister they should have been consulted on the Review.

10.11 Frequency of Board and Committee Meetings

Members considered Paper SNI/11/156 which essentially sought to improve the business efficiency of Council in the light of the changing environment in which it was working. It sought approval for a reduction in the number of Sport Northern Ireland Council Meetings from six to four per year, ie one per quarter; and a re-scheduling of the Sports Matters Implementation Group meetings to a different date from the Committee meeting date.

Members noted that if the need did arise for more meetings they would be arranged. However there was a view that a smaller number of meetings would be more efficient vis-à-vis discussion and airing of views.

Members also noted that it can be intensive to have Audit and Staffing Committee meetings on the same day as Council; but recognised that when they previously had been held on a different day attendance at the Committee meetings had been poor.

After discussion Members approved the recommendation. It was also agreed that a more detailed Paper would be brought to the next Council Meeting which would deal with issues such as policy and delegation.

10.12 Equality and Good Relations

Members received Paper SNI/11/157 and the Chairman welcomed Dr John Kremer who presented the position paper. The Paper provided an update on SNI's current position in relation to the interpretation of various statutes that have a bearing on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. This included all Anti-Discrimination Statutes, Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the outworkings of the Belfast Good Friday Agreement.

The Paper provided clarity around SNI's current working arrangements and the issues that have arisen; and Members discussed a variety of issues including use of flags and citizenship.

Mrs H McGrady left the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Dr Kremer for his most insightful and interesting presentation.

11 COMMITTEE REPORTS

11.1 Places Committee

Members noted the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 May 2011.

11.2 Participation Committee

Members noted the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 July 2011.

11.3 Audit Committee

Members noted the Minutes of the Sixty-Seventh Meeting held on 2 August 2011.

12 PUBLICATIONS

- 12.1 Members received a flyer for an SNI Staff Fund Charity Event "Strictly Come Dancing" to be held on 10 November proceeds of which were for Macmillan Cancer Care.

Mr P Turnbull and Mr A Strong left the meeting.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 6 December 2011

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 Staffing Committee

Cllr J Rodgers referred to the concerns raised in Staffing Committee about the pressure that SNI staff are currently working under. He congratulated staff on their professionalism and commitment and said that Council Members had a duty of care to ensure that staff should not be put under undue pressure. He asked that the Executive Team give this concern serious consideration.

14.2 UK School Games

The Chairman raised the question of whether SNI would like NI athletes to have the opportunity to compete in the UK School Games which would take place in the Olympic facilities before they close down for the Games. There is likely to be a conflict in connection with times of exams. However it was agreed that SNI would wish to see as many of our athletes involved if they are allowed. He referred to the funding requirement and to the fact that efforts would be made to obtain sponsorship support.

14.3 Merger

The Chairman reported on a decision taken by the Secretary of State at DCMS, Jeremy Hunt, that UK Sport will be merged with Sport England.

There are consultations in progress and Members were asked to submit any views they might have to the Council Secretary for inclusion in SNI's submission.

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

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

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Belfast
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