

SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES

CONFIDENTIAL

Sixth Meeting 2011

Held on Tuesday 6 December 2011 in the House of Sport, Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5LA.

PRESENT

In the Chair:	D Walsh
Members:	O Brown P Cummings U Duncan B Macaulay A Money Penny P Turnbull
Chief Executive:	E McCartan
Staff in Attendance:	N Harkness S Ogle A Sloan R McCormick E Bailey

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mr J D'Arcy, Mrs H McGrady, Mr R Carr, Mr M Cowan, Mr B McCargo, Mr D O'Connor, Cllr J Rodgers and Mr A Strong.

2 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman asked everyone individually if they had any interest to declare. No-one declared an interest.

3 **ACTIV8 YOUNG LEADERS**

The Chairman welcomed a group of pupils and teachers from St Dominic's Grammar School for Girls. The pupils had been very involved in the Active8 Young Leaders Pilot Programme and they made a presentation on their involvement and how they had initiated and developed a plan within their school to further the Activ8 Young Leaders Pilot Programme.

Members were most impressed with the mature and articulate presentation and raised a number of questions on their work. They congratulated the students on the highly impressive and interesting work they had undertaken at their school and the effort they had put into their presentation.

WORLD POLICE AND FIRE GAMES

The Chairman welcomed Mr David Ferguson, Chief Executive of the World Police and Fire Games (WPFG) and Mr Willie Devlin who gave a presentation on the current state of play regarding preparations for the Games to be held in Belfast in 2013.

They spoke of the impact of the games to Northern Ireland and the likely return on investment. They outlined the organisational structure and the delivery model; and the overall costs and input from sponsors. It was anticipated that the number of visitors to Northern Ireland would be a multiplier of 1.5 per athlete.

Members raised a number of questions regarding budget and income stream and noted the sponsorship target, fees and concessions. Members queried who would cover any shortfall, particularly in the current economic climate. Mr Ferguson replied that there could not be a shortfall and that the project must break-even.

The Chairman thanked Mr Ferguson for his attendance and wished him every success with the Games.

CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

At this point the Chief Executive asked staff to leave the room.

- 5.1 The Chief Executive reported the outcome of the Job Evaluation carried out by the Department of Finance and Personnel on the three Directors. He reported that the Staffing Committee had approved the upgrade for one of the Directors and had requested that the other two Directors' posts be kept under review.

Staff returned to the room.

- 5.2 The Chairman referred to this being the last week in Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) of Mrs Angharad Bunt, Community Development Officer, as she was taking a year-long career break. He commended her for the good work she had done for SNI and extended best wishes to her.
- 5.3 Members expressed their sympathy to Mr Danny O'Connor on the recent death of his sister-in-law; to Mr Alan Strong on the death of his brother; and also to Mr James Rowlinson on the death of his grandfather.
- 5.4 Members heard that a member of staff, Mrs Liz Finlay, who had been with SNI for 25 years had retired on health grounds. The Chairman and Members commented on the tremendous work she had done for SNI over those years as a loyal hard-working member of staff and put on record their thanks and best wishes to Mrs Finlay in coping with the challenges that lay ahead.
- 5.5 The Chairman referred to the letter received by Members from the Minister extending their membership of Council for a period of two months to 29 February 2012. Members were asked to let Elizabeth Bailey know if they had not received such a letter.

5.6 The Chairman updated Members on the discussions with the Department of culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL) in dealing with the challenges and the structure for the delivery of the stadia. The Chairman had met with the Permanent Secretary and agreed that an Away Day be facilitated by the Strategic Investment Board to build on current relationships and ensure the effective delivery of this major programme.

5.7 Review of Arms-length Bodies.

Members asked that an issue be raised with DCAL regarding Members having a formal role in speaking with DCAL. The Chairman reported that he had raised with the Permanent Secretary the role the Chair and Vice-Chair would play in the review of arms-length bodies. She had responded that it was work in progress initiated by the Minister.

The Chief Executive reported that the review is being undertaken by DCAL. SNI would put in place a mechanism whereby Council Members could put their views individually or collectively into the review process.

6 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held On 4 October 2011, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed.

7 **MATTERS ARISING**

7.1 Reference Item 8.1 – Stadia Programme

Members asked for an update on the appointment of the Stadia Programme Director and other associated posts.

The Chairman advised that the Staffing Committee held a meeting on 28 November 2011 to discuss the matter. He advised Members of the approval of the appointment of a Programme Director as well as the appointment of Nick Harkness as Interim Programme Director and later, Deputy SRO for the programme, until a full-time Programme Director is in post. He further advised Members that there was a requirement on the Chief Executive, as the Programme SRO, that a minimum of 20% of his time would be dedicated to the Programme (as per OGC guidelines).

The Chairman advised that the Human Resources Manager was considering the various options in relation to the recruitment and selection process for the Programme Director post. Members noted the SIB recommendation that it should recruit and employ the Programme Director and enter into a secondment agreement with SNI. The various options, strengths and weaknesses were discussed and Members noted that CPD were of the opinion that the Programme Director post should be under the direct management authority of the Programme SRO.

Council agreed the structure recommended by the Staffing Committee and that all of the SNI appointments need to be through open and direct recruitment process.

Finally the Chairman advised Members that SNI would also seek the approval

of DCAL to recruit and select a Technical Manager and an Administrative Officer for the Stadia Programme.

8 **CORRESPONDENCE**

8.1 Special Olympics Ireland

Members noted an e-mail dated 28 November 2011 from Shaun Cassidy, Regional Director Ulster, thanking SNI for attending the Special Olympics Launch.

8.2 Belfast City Council Health and Environmental Services Department

Members noted letter dated 13 October 2011 thanking SNI for support and, in particular, Paul Scott and Laura Strong for their hard work in assisting the Council in its workshop for premier clubs.

9 **PARTICIPATION UNIT**

9.1 Participation Team

Members received an update on the work of the Participation Team in the period September - December 2011 and alerted Members to key areas of work over the next four months (Paper SNI/11/189). Members heard that DCAL had identified funding pressures across Government to take account of such things as the freeze of student fees. It was as yet unclear what impact these pressures would have on SNI budgets. Members congratulated staff on the success of the Activ8 Programme.

9.2 Delegated Decisions

Members received Paper SNI/11/190 and noted decisions taken in accordance with Council policy.

9.3 Stadium Programme Development Costs – Letter of Offer

Members considered Paper SNI/11/198 which had been circulated by e-mail.

Members noted the background to SNI proposing to issue multi-year letter of offer for development costs. They considered the IRFU Multi-Year letter of offer and consideration of funding towards historic costs. SNI is satisfied that funding should be released towards the costs already incurred by IRFU, and noted the single tender action, related justifications and approval requested from DCAL.

Members noted that requests for approval for development cost awards in respect of GAA and IFA cannot yet be presented to Members for their consideration. Members were asked to consider delegating the approval of the release of development cost letters of offer to GAA and IFA should the timing of the need for these approvals not intersect with scheduled quarterly Council meetings to SNI Chairman, Vice-Chairman and SNI Chief Executive in his capacity as Programme SRO for the Stadium Programme.

After lengthy discussion Members approved the recommendations as follows:

- They noted and approved the template multi-year letter of offer.

- Up to £662,590 towards eligible development costs at 100% of eligible expenditure for the period 2011-15; and
- Up to £94,762 towards eligible historic costs at 49% of eligible expenditure of £193,391 subject to the approval of the DCAL Permanent Secretary of the treatment of historic costs.

10 **PERFORMANCE UNIT**

10.1 Performance Unit

Members received an update on the progress of the Performance Team over the past two months in implementing actions in line with SNI priority areas as detailed in SNI's Corporate and Business Plans (Paper SNI/11/191).

10.2 Delegated Decisions

Members received Paper SNI/11/192 and noted actions taken in accordance with Council policy.

10.3 SNI's Performance Sport Investment Policy

Members received a copy of the updated Performance Sport Investment Policy. This will inform 2013-2017 investment decisions which aim to build performance systems in sports to achieve international sporting success by Northern Ireland athletes (Paper SNI/11/195).

11 **CORPORATE SERVICES UNIT**

11.1 Management Accounts

Members noted the Management Accounts for the seven-month period to 31 October 2011 (Paper SNI/11/176). Members sought clarification on the accounts and, after discussion, were satisfied with the financial position of the organisation.

11.2 Exchequer Accounts 2009/10

Members noted the signed Exchequer Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2010 (Paper SNI/11/177). Members noted that these accounts were unqualified.

11.3 Lottery Accounts 2010/11

Members noted the Report on Lottery Distribution Account for the year ended 31 March 2011 (Paper SNI/11/178). Members noted that these accounts were unqualified.

11.4 Delegated Decisions – Corporate Services

Members received Paper SNI/11/179 and noted decisions taken in accordance with Council policy.

11.5 National Lottery Distribution Fund Policy (NLDF)

Members considered the Policy on the management of the NLDF Balance (Paper SNI/11/180). Members approved the revised Policy and delegated authority to officers to make amendments to the Policy as a result of Section 75 Screening.

11.6 Declaration of Interest 2010/11 Publication

Members considered Paper SNI/11/181 and agreed to advise the Director of Corporate Services of any amendments to the Register of Interest should there be data protection issues.

11.7 Delegated Authority Policy

Members considered Paper SNI/11/182 which sought approval on SNI's amended policy on Delegated Authority in the context of efficiency and effectiveness in decision making across the organisation.

Members noted that the Paper had been discussed and recommended to Council at the Audit Committee earlier in the day and had also been considered by the Chairs of the main committees.

After discussion Members approved the amended Policy on Delegated Authority and delegated authority to officers to make amendments should any be necessary as a result of the Section 75 Screening.

11.8 Fees and Charges

Members considered Paper SNI/11/183 and approved Sport Northern Ireland's charges for services and facilities provided to sports organisations in the forthcoming financial year 2012-13.

11.9 Exchequer Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2011

Members considered Paper SNI/11/187 and approved the Annual Report and Accounts for signature and delegated authority to SNI officers to make minor amendments to the draft if required by the Northern Ireland Audit Office.

Members noted that SNI has received an unqualified audit on this report.

11.10 Advocacy and Communications

Members received an update of recent and upcoming activities in the Advocacy and Communications Department (Paper SNI/11/188).

11.11 Business Plan Quarterly Review

Members noted SNI's Business Plan Quarterly Review which highlighted SNI's progress against 57 key performance indicators for the second quarter (July-September) of 2011/12 (Paper SNI/11/193).

Members were content with the progress made and noted that this was achieved despite a number of staff being off ill.

11.12 Promoting Equality, Good Relations and Personal Choice: A Policy Position for Sporting Organisations in Northern Ireland

Members considered Paper SNI/11/194 which provided a policy position in relation to the interpretation of statutes that have a bearing on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. This includes all anti-discrimination statutes, Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the outworkings of the Belfast-Good Friday Agreement.

After discussion Members approved the recommendation.

11.13 Risk Register

Members reviewed the Sport Northern Ireland Risk Register which provided a summary of the key corporate risks, their ratings, agreed mitigation activities and progress against those activities (Paper SNI/11/196).

Members were content that the Risk Register reflected the key corporate risks that the organisation faced and that appropriate actions were being taken to address those risks.

11.14 Frequency of Sport Northern Ireland Board and Committee Meetings

Members considered Paper SNI/11/197 which sought approval of the timing and dates of Council and Committee meetings.

Mr P Cummings put the view that as a new member quarterly meetings could be challenging in terms of getting to know the organisation. He felt that this would require careful handling with new Members coming on to Council.

Members noted in part this view that would be addressed by having a comprehensive induction for two days. Members would ultimately sit on at least two or three of the Committees and would therefore have an active involvement in the Council. When it is known who the new Members are a very substantial induction handover will be arranged. Mrs U Duncan agreed that the induction programme she had experienced was excellent and had helped her as a new member.

Members approved the recommendation.

12 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

12.1 Northern Ireland Mountain, Cave and Cliff Rescue Co-ordinating Committee

Members noted the Minutes of the One Hundredth Meeting held on 18 August 2011.

12.2 Mountain Leader Training Northern Ireland

Members noted the Minutes of the One Hundred and Fifth Meeting held on 5 September 2011

12.3 Audit Committee

Members noted the Minutes of the Sixty-Eighth Meeting held on 4 October 2011.

13 **PUBLICATIONS**

13.1 Northern Ireland Sport and Physical Activity Survey Report 2010

Report tabled

13.2 Wildcats on the Prowl

Flyer tabled

14 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 7 February 2012

15 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

15.1 Mr P Turnbull requested that Minutes in draft form be available within five days of the meeting with action points. It was agreed to look into this.

15.2 EMcC put his thanks to all members who gave of their time to go to the many functions that take place.

15.3 There being no further business the Chairman thanked Members and the executive team for all their work during the year and wished them all a safe and Happy Christmas.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

House of Sport
Upper Malone Road
Belfast
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