

SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND

MINUTES

CONFIDENTIAL

First Meeting 2009

Held on Tuesday 3 February in the House of Sport, Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5LA.

PRESENT

In the Chair: D Walsh

Members:

- O Brown
- M Cowan
- J D'Arcy
- U Duncan
- B Macaulay
- A Money Penny
- H McCaughey
- D O'Connor
- J Rodgers
- P Turnbull

In Attendance P Sweeney, Permanent Secretary, Department of Culture Arts and Leisure

Chief Executive: E McCartan

Staff in Attendance:

- N Harkness
- S Ogle
- A Sloan

J Beggs	For Part
A Campbell	" "
J News	" "
P Donnelly	" "
T Gorman	" "
R	" "
McCormick	
R McDowell	
J Poots	
E Bailey	

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ms M Muldoon, Mr A Strong and Mr B McCargo who was snowbound in London.

2 **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

- 2.1 The Chairman congratulated the Director of Corporate Services Unit, Mr Andrew Sloan and his wife Grainne, on the birth of their first child, a daughter named Sophia Ciara.
- 2.2 The Chairman congratulated Mr B McCargo on the award of the OBE in the New Years Honours and acknowledged his tremendous input to sport generally and in particular the Special Olympics.
- 2.3 The Chairman welcomed Mr Paul Sweeney, Permanent Secretary of the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure (DCAL) to the meeting. Mr Sweeney said that he hoped to visit a Board meeting of each of DCAL's arms length bodies once a year to add value to the strategic relationship between DCAL and Sport Northern Ireland (SNI). He thanked all Members of SNI for the time and effort they gave. He said the set of papers were very impressive and showed the due diligence demonstrated by Members discharging their responsibilities.

The Permanent Secretary also thanked the Chief Executive and his team and said that he had been thoroughly impressed by all the people in SNI. He thanked Dr O Brown for her chairmanship of the Audit Committee.

Finally he acknowledged the recognition given to Mr Jack Palmer prior to his retirement at the December Council meeting. It had been very much appreciated.

The Chief Executive referred to the usefulness of the recent workshop organised by the Permanent Secretary at which there was discussion of issues of accountability and governance to ensure strategic congruence.

Members asked the Permanent Secretary about the status of the draft Strategy for Sport and noted that as a result of the Executive not sitting for some time there was a considerable backlog of papers. Now that weekly meetings of the Executive are being arranged it is hoped to reduce the backlog.

- 2.4 The Chairman asked Mrs U Duncan to give a brief report on the recent Sunday Times "Best Company Award" ceremony when SNI was given an award "The One to Watch". She and the HR Manager, Mr T Gorman, had received the award in London on 28 January 2009. The HR Manager thanked Members for approving the policies and procedures enabling the organisation to be considered for the award. Members congratulated the HR Manager on this achievement and noted that publicity would be arranged to mark the award.
- 2.5 Members heard that Disability Sport Northern Ireland had made an award of special recognition of outstanding contribution to the Irish Team at the Beijing Paralympics.
- 2.6 The Chairman referred to the current status of a Stadium and said that Northern Ireland deserved a multi-sports stadium which would enable Northern Ireland to host world-class sporting events. He said it was a frustration of sport in Northern Ireland that such a facility does not exist.

2.7 All-Island Conference

Members heard that Irish Sports Council was to host this event in 2009 but they had asked if they could put it back to the Spring of 2010 in order to hold the event in conjunction with Dublin City Council which was celebrating the European City of Sport in 2010. SNI had agreed to this request and will have high level input to the conference theme. A meeting with ISC will take place soon and SNI will have full partnership rights regarding themes, speakers and workshops.

2.8 The Chairman informed Members that, in order facilitate the presence of Solicitors who were waiting to join the meeting, Agenda item 7.7 would be taken at the beginning of Agenda item 7.

3 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of 2008 held on 2 December, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed, subject to amendment in the wording of item 9.5 on page 6.

This amendment reflected more accurately the opportunity missed to influence a wider audience attending the Odyssey Athletic event given the financial input of SNI. The event had been attended by hundreds rather than thousands of people. It was noted that this was an issue for Northern Ireland Athletics and discussion ensued as to how to assist Northern Ireland Athletics.

At this point Cllr J Rodgers declared an interest in the Minutes of the Special Meeting and left the room.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that when a conflict of interest arose that person should stand up to declare and leave the room.

The Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 10 December, having been previously circulated, were approved and signed.

4 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** (Agenda Item 6)

As it was thought appropriate to seek declaration of interests at this stage the Chairman asked everyone individually if they had any interests to declare.

The following Members declared interests.

Dr O Brown – Hockey, CAAN, and SINI
Mr H McCaughey - Ulster Rugby, and SINI
Mr P Turnbull – Appeals
Mr B Macaulay - Cricket
Mr M Cowan – Performance Sport Programme
Mr D O'Connor – SINI
Mr D Walsh – Ulster Rugby and Belfast Royal Academy
Ms A Campbell – Ballymena Antrim Athletics Club

It had also been agreed that Dr O Brown and Mr P Turnbull would not take part in the decision relating to Belfast City Council's application to the Elite Facilities

Programme in the event an appeal is received.

The following Members left the room – Mr D O'Connor, Mr P Turnbull and Dr O Brown.

5

Elite Facilities Programme – Stage Two Late Applications
(Agenda Item 7.7)

The Chief Executive welcomed Peter Curran, Partner, and Lyndsey Mallon, Associate of Arthur Cox Solicitors.

He informed Members that advice had been taken from Arthur Cox and also from Senior Counsel.

He referred Members to the folder of papers being tabled. This contained a number of recommendations concerning the process to date and Members would be informed of their content and then given time to read them before further discussion. The papers were referred to individually to enable Members to have a complete level of knowledge before coming to a decision.

Mr A Moneypenny expressed the view that he was not confident that he could agree the recommendation to take an informed decision considering the time constraints. Mr M Cowan shared that view.

Arthur Cox, Solicitors said that it was very important that all Members gave proper and due consideration to all the factors that Senior Counsel had raised as well as any other factors that Members might think were relevant. It was important that proper process was followed and that enough time be given to the issue. Mrs U Duncan also expressed agreement with Mr Moneypenny's view.

The Chairman agreed that because of the amount of reading involved a further meeting of Council be convened within the next seven to ten days or as soon as possible. He proposed that, in order to give measured and fully considered input to matters, Members should meet in the morning to read the documents and then discuss the matter in the afternoon.

The Chief Executive reminded all present that the papers were private and confidential and agreed that a one-day meeting would be preferable to prevent any loss or misplacement of documents. He also drew attention to the fact that the only new advice in the papers was that received from Senior Counsel.

Mr H McCaughey indicated that he would find it difficult to devote a whole day to a further meeting and would prefer to take the papers with him to read. Mr J D'Arcy also agreed with this view.

The Chief Executive asked that the documents be kept very secure and if any Members could not come to the further meeting they should return the papers to the safe keeping of SNI.

***Papers were then returned from the following who were present:
Mr P Sweeney, Mr T Gorman, Mr R McCormick.***

The Chief Executive informed Members that the recommendation in the paper is for Council to make decision on admission to the next stage of the programme. The Executive team had not made a recommendation.

The Chairman informed Members that this matter is not for discussion outside the meeting room or with anyone not present at the table. It must be handled with total confidentiality and propriety.

The Solicitors left the room at 2.10 pm.

6 **MATTERS ARISING** (Agenda Item 4)

Minutes of 2 December paragraph 9.1 Members noted that approval had been received for the Places for Sport Business Case and it is hoped to have all monies spent by 31 March.

7 **CORRESPONDENCE** (Agenda Item 5)

7.1 **Northern Ireland Mountain and Cave Rescue Co-ordinating Committee**

Members noted letter dated 22 September 2008 from Mr Tim McMillan, Chairman, marking his departure as Chairman after six and a half years. During his time in office it was his privilege to work with many dedicated and committed people. He wished NIMRCC well and thanked SNI for the help and co-operation he received. The Chief Executive put on record the diligence and hard work which Mr McMillan had given to support the work of the NIMRCC.

7.2 **Fermanagh District Council**

Members noted letter dated 2 December 2008 from the Director of Leisure, Tourism and Arts thanking SNI for its help and support over the past few years.

7.3 **Dr Malcolm Brodie MBE**

Members noted letter dated 9 October 2008 thanking SNI for the launch of the John McNally book and wishing SNI every success.

7.4 **British Olympic Association**

Members noted letter dated 15 October 2008 thanking SNI for the generous letter acknowledging the success of Team GB.

7.5 **Irish Women's Bowling Association**

Members noted letter dated 12 November 2008 from the Honorary Secretary thanking SNI for the assistance with the British Isles Championships.

8 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** (Agenda Item 6)

See above at item 4.

9 **PARTICIPATION UNIT** (Agenda Item 7)

9.1 Implementing Disability Mainstreaming Policy 2009-12

Members considered Paper SNI/09/19 which provided an update on outputs to date and SNI's commitment to implementing this Policy for the period 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2012.

Members raised various questions about the implications of budget cuts and congratulated staff on the work with Disability Sports Northern Ireland and SINI.

After discussion Members approved the recommendations to note progress and approved the strategic investment of £509,460 in Disability Sports NI to support the implementation of the SNI Disability Mainstreaming Policy from 1 April 2009 - 31 March 2012 (Section 7) subject to budget availability and DCAL approval of the associated business case.

9.2 Investing in Countryside Recreation 2009-2012

Members considered Paper SNI/09/20 which outlined the proposed investment in Countryside Recreation NI, trading as the Countryside Access and Activity Network (CAAN) for the period 2009-2012.

During discussion Members were pleased to note the action being undertaken by CAAN and approved the recommendation for a three-year funding commitment of £345,000 to the Countryside Recreation NI, subject to budget availability and DCAL approval of the associated business case.

9.3 Promoting Workplace Health

Members received Paper SNI/09/21 and noted the review of workplace health interventions. They also noted the intention to develop a Workplace Health Policy and explore potential funding opportunities for its implementation.

Members agreed that this Paper pooled together examples of good practice as they exist on other parts of these islands. Dr O Brown offered any assistance she could as this had been the topic of her PhD thesis.

9.4 Participation Team Update

Members received an overview on the work of the Participation (Revenue) Team in the period April-December 2008 and alerted Members to key events and developments in the period January-March 2009 (Paper SNI/09/22).

9.5 Community Sport Programme

Members received an update (Paper SNI/09/23) on the outputs of the community Sport Programme over the three years investment term and noted the achievements of the Community Sport Programme.

Members thought it was an excellent document. They asked if there was an accountable point in relation to the work with other Departments; and when SNI has partnership with other stakeholders who would take the lead responsibility? It was agreed that that is one of the weaknesses of public sector strategic planning. Stakeholder organisations should have key performance indicators to drive it forward.

9.6 Report of Delegated Decisions - Participation

Members received a note of delegated decisions taken in accordance with SNI policy (Paper SNI/09/24).

9.7 Appeals

Dealt with above at paragraph item 5.

9.8 Report of Delegated Decisions - Places

Members received a note of delegated decisions taken in accordance with SNI policy (Paper SNI/09/26).

Members asked what advice was given to unsuccessful applicants and noted that reasons and opportunity to meet are included in the rejection letter from SNI, which is in the business of trying to promote and develop sports facilities and strenuous effort is being made to get monies out before the end of the financial year.

Cllr J Rodgers thanked the Chief Executive and Mr N Harkness for their hard work.

At this point in the meeting Mr Harkness informed Council that he had just learned of the sudden death of Mr Neville Bell of the Central Procurement Division. Mr Bell had worked closely with SNI officers and the meeting observed a short silence.

10 **PERFORMANCE UNIT** (Agenda Item 8)

10.1 Recognition of Sporting Activities

Members considered Paper SNI/09/27 which set out the background to the recognition process. Members approved the recommendation made by the UK Officers' Panel to reject the application for the recognition of Pigeon Racing as a sporting activity.

10.2 Investing in Performance Sport Programme 2009-13

Members considered Paper SNI/09/28 which sought approval for the Performance Committee's recommended preferred funding options.

The Chairman thanked everyone involved in the work of funding performance sport. He asked members to declare a conflict of interest at the appropriate time.

Mr D O'Connor as Chair of the Performance Committee informed Members that they had dealt with the paper with due diligence and their approach had been rigorous and robust. The Paper listed the comments made by Members of the Performance Committee when they considered Project Assessment Reports. Council Members noted the funding applications were considered against the Strategy for Sport.

Members worked through the Summary of Preferred Options in Appendix 4 of

the Paper and were asked to approve the Performance Committee's recommended preferred funding options contained in the Project Assessment Report.

The following Members left the room at the appropriate point.

Basketball	- Mr A Money Penny
Canoeing	- Mr N Harkness
Orienteering	- Mr M Cowan
Rugby	- Mr D Walsh and Mr H McCaughey
Commonwealth Games	- Mr J D'Arcy
Multi-Sport NICGC	- Mr P Turnbull

Members approved the offers to all the sports listed in Appendix 4.

Members noted that work with the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council (NICGC) was progressing slowly. Dr O Brown congratulated staff who are carrying out the work in this regard. The Chief Executive congratulated Dr Brown for the painstaking patience and diplomacy she had pursued in trying to take it on board. The next Commonwealth Games are one and a half years away in Delhi 2010; and it was important that limited financial resources be put to good use through the athletes. The Chair may meet with the Minister or DCAL about progress with the NICGC.

Mr H McCaughey sought assurance that there sufficient caveats in place regarding the modernisation of organisations funded and noted that conditions will be attached to each of the awards.

The Chairman noted that this was one of the largest commitments SNI had made and we have to ensure it is done correctly. Members had presentations on the day and it was most reassuring to see the professionalism involved and the confidence it inspired. Any publicity about this good news story should emphasise that while this is investment in sport it is also an opportunity for increasing employment in NI.

10.3 Delegated Decisions – Performance

Members noted delegated decisions taken in accordance with SNI policy (Paper SNI/09/29).

11 **CORPORATE SERVICES** (Agenda Item 9)

11.1 Section 75 Annual Report

Members received an update on the Section 75 Annual Report (Paper SNI/09/10).

Members noted that mainstreaming equality is about the integration of equality of opportunity principles, strategies and practices into the everyday work of SNI. The 2007-08 Annual Report and the previous five years reports, all indicate that SNI has been effective in mainstreaming equality and fulfilling its Section 75 obligations as a whole.

11.2 Business Plan Review Update 2008/09

Members received an update for Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 (Paper SNI/09/11). Members noted that this is used for monitoring with DCAL and that they are happy with progress to date.

Members raised a number of queries regarding the traffic light colour system to monitor the governing bodies.

11.3 Survey of Public Attitudes to Sport and Physical Activity

Members received an update on the Survey of Public Attitudes to Sport and Physical Activity (Paper SNI/09/12).

Members considered this to be a good document and congratulated staff on this work. Members noted that it was value for money. It had closed that gap in evidence regarding baseline data and this evidence would help in making the case for sport to DCAL and other Departments.

Comment was made about the sample size and the type of participation shown in the report. There is a need to shift the balance to get people involved in sport.

Members heard that the survey had demonstrated that SNI funding decisions are in line with what the public value. The survey provides reassurance that SNI investment is in line with what people want to see. It was a valuable draft document and would be shared with governing bodies in due course. Whilst it would be preferable not to have to mention religious affiliation in the document Members recognised that Section 75 left no choice in this regard.

11.4 Fees and Charges 2009-10

Members considered Paper SNI/09/13 and noted that it was proposed that charges should be frozen due to the current economic climate. Members approved the recommendation for charges for services and facilities provided to the governing bodies of sport at the House of Sport in respect of the financial year 2009-10.

11.5 Management Accounts

Members considered the Management Accounts covering SNI's Exchequer and Lottery financial position for the nine-month period to 31 December 2008 (Paper SNI/09/14) and approved their submission to the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure.

11.6 Delegated Decisions – Corporate Services Unit

Members noted decisions taken in accordance with Council Policy (Paper SNI/09/15).

The Director of Corporate Services drew Members' attention to a Participation Survey by IPSO-Mori which appeared to be beyond management's delegated authority. He advised that he would ascertain the facts and report back to the Audit Committee Members prior to the next Council Meeting.

11.7 Appeals

Mr B Macaulay left the room.

Members received a report of decisions taken on appeals (Paper SNI/09/16).

Members noted that a further appeal had been received from Camogie before today's Council meeting. Members' attention was drawn to the fact that Cllr J Rodgers had not signed each of the appeals forms as he was on holiday at that time but he would be giving assurance that he was happy to sign the forms.

Dr O Brown reported on the appeals. The panel had sympathy with Woodvale Cricket Club but the application did not come up to standard. There no confidence in giving public money to it but SNI will go back to them and assist with another application in due course.

Reference Lurgan Town Arena – they had a lease from the Borough Council with 17 years remaining on it although they had a promise that it would be extended. The rules asked for 21 years before SNI could give public funding and legal advice had been sought in relation to a letter received from the Borough Council indicating that a longer lease may be available.

Reference Bellanaleck Art Maccurrough's GFC – there had been an issue on providing information about their scores. They had argued about their score and came back with more information which the Committee had sympathy with. However they were rejected.

Reference Ulster Branch of Tennis Ireland – the UBTI application was received after the 4pm deadline. UBTI had claimed they could submit their application by e-mail and subsequently told this was not possible. The Appeals Panel took the view that UBTI were still not going to get an application in on time and this despite the fact that they have an office in the House of Sport.

Members were informed that the Appeals Panel reiterated that an application must include all the required documentation. Staff are aware that, before they accept an application when they receive it at 4 pm, they check that the documents are there so that it is accepted as complete.

After discussion Members approved the recommendation of the Appeals Panel that the four appeals be rejected; and that the Chairman write to the four organisations informing them of this decision.

11.8 Sexual Orientation Literature Review

Members received an update on the finding from "A Literature Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport" (Summary Report) which had been commissioned by Sport Northern Ireland, Sport England, Sport Scotland and UK Sport (Paper SNI/09/17)

11.9 Funding of the Sports Institute Northern Ireland

Dr O Brown, Mr H McCaughey, Mr D O'Connor and Mr P Turnbull left the room.

Members considered Paper SNI/09/30. The Paper requested approval to make a second revenue award of up to £11.088 million for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2014 to the Sports Institute for Northern Ireland (SINI) as outlined within the preferred option of the business case.

The Paper also required delegated authority for management to determine the affordability for the full implementation of the preferred option over the period of the award; and to confirm budgets annually subject to satisfactory evidence that objectives are being met.

The Paper requested that Members note that all recommendations contained within the Paper are subject to a Section 27 waiver by the Secretary of State at the Department of Culture Media and Sport. Mr P Sweeney reported that he had written to his counterpart in DCMS.

After discussion Members approved the recommendations.

11.10 Data Protection Policy

Paper SNI/09/31 was tabled for Members' consideration. It provided an overview of the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998; and it sought approval for Sport Northern Ireland's Data Protection Policy and Section 75 screening form which was attached. It was agreed that this would be considered at the next Council meeting on Tuesday 7 April.

11.11 Marketing

11.11.1 Press and Media Report

Members received an update (Paper SNI/09/18).

Members noted that a new member of staff had joined the Sports Institute Northern Ireland and would work closely with SNI's Marketing Department.

12 **COMMITTEE REPORTS – FOR ADOPTION** (Agenda Item 10)

12.1 Participation Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 November 2008.

12.2 Performance Committee

Members adopted the Minutes of the Eighth Meeting held on 20 November 2008.

13 **COMMITTEE REPORTS – FOR INFORMATION** (Agenda Item 11)

13.1 **Audit Committee**

The Chair of Audit Committee reported on the meeting held on 3 February and updated Members on the investigation into Camogie.

13.2 **Staffing Committee**

Members received a report of the Meeting held on 3 February 2009.

Cllr J Rodgers reported on a special bonus scheme throughout the Civil Service. Members were also updated regarding the NILGOSC Pension Scheme and actions to protect employees.

14 **PUBLICATIONS** (Agenda Item 12)

There were no publications.

15 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** (Agenda Item 13)

Tuesday 7 April 2009.

16 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** (Agenda Item 14)

16.1 Mr A Moneypenny congratulated staff who organised the conference in December and Dr O Brown who chaired it. It had been superb.

16.2 Mr P Turnbull reported his attendance at two workshops run by UK Sport and Irish Sports Council on anti-doping.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everong for their attendance and the meeting finished at 4.20 pm.

The Permanent Secretary, Mr Paul Sweeney congratulated Members on an excellent, well-run meeting.

A meeting of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Trust would take place immediately following the meeting.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

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Upper Malone Road
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