

SPORT MATTERS IMPLEMENTATION GROUP (PLACES) MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES

The minutes of the 9th meeting of the Places SMIG held on Wednesday 29th May at 1.30pm in the House of Sport.

PRESENT

Richard Bullick, Chair (Sport Northern Ireland)
Ciaran Mulholland (CAFRE/DARD)
Bob Bleakley (Northern Ireland Environment Agency)
Ciaran Kearney (Northern Ireland Sports Forum)
Caro-Lynne Ferris (Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland)
Brenda Shearer (Department of Education)

In attendance:

William Devlin (Sport Northern Ireland)
Stephen McIlveen (Sport Northern Ireland)

Non-attendance:

Patrick Nelson (IFA); Chris Webster (Ulster Rugby); Stephen McGeehan (GAA Ulster Council); Steven Law (Department of Education); and Linda McAllister (Department of Education).

1.0 APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies were received from Angela Platt (Northern Ireland Sports Forum); Paul Mooney (DARD/CAFRE); John Johnston (Department for Social Development); Aisling Irvine (Disability Sport NI); and Ivor McMullan (CLOA).

2.0 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

2.1 The Chair welcomed members to the 9th meeting of the Places SMIG and thanked everyone for their attendance. After a short introduction of all members present, the Chair asked members to review the minutes of the previous meeting.

3.0 REVIEW OF MINUTES OF THE 8TH PLACES SMIG MEETING HELD ON 5TH NOVEMBER 2015

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were considered and approved.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 The Chair reviewed the actions from the previous SMIG meeting and asked members to update on their respective actions:

Action 1: *DCAL/Sport NI to respond to Ivor's query the £780m figure referenced in 'Cost of Implementation' section of Sport Matters.*

- 4.2 The Chair advised members that Paul Donnelly (Sport NI) is currently progressing this action in partnership with DCAL. The Chair added that either Sport NI or DCAL will be in a position to respond to Ivor's query on or before the next meeting.

Action 2: *DSD to submit a progress return by Friday 14th November 2014.*

- 4.3 The Chair advised members that DSD submitted their progress return by Friday 14th November.

Action 3: *Sport NI to forward the list of Councils still to return a Progress Report to Ivor McMullan.*

Action 4: *Ivor McMullan to contact Councils who have not submitted a return and to advise of the extended deadline.*

- 5.4 The Chair advised members that a list of Councils that had completed a progress return were detailed in the report circulated to Members ahead of the SMIG meeting. The Chair also advised members that Edel Cosgrove (Sport NI) collated returns from District Councils, which was encouraged via CLOA.

Action 5: *NISF to meet with Sport NI to discuss and agree a method of how all NISF members' views can be captured in Sport Matters progress reporting.*

- 5.5 The Chair invited Ciaran Kearney to update members on NISF's meeting with Sport NI.

- 5.6 Ciaran highlighted some of the difficulties associated with attempting to record the contributions of over 70 Governing Bodies in the Sport Matters reporting process. Ciaran advised members that discussions are on-going between Sport NI and NISF.

6.0 MEMBERS UPDATES

6.1 The Chair asked members to provide a short update on how each of their organisations is contributing towards the implementation and delivery of Sport Matters.

6.2 **DARD/CAFRE** – Ciaran Mulholland advised members that the CAFRE update remains similar to the previous SMIG meeting. Ciaran highlighted that over 90 students are currently studying sports turf management at Greenmount College. However, Ciaran asked members to note that golf remains largely the only sport to take sports turf training opportunities.

6.3 Ciaran Kearney suggested that NISF and CAFRE should have further discussions around how to promote CAFRE services amongst relevant sports.

ACTION 1: CAFRE & NISF to have further discussions regarding promoting CAFRE services amongst relevant sports.

6.4 Ciaran Mulholland asked the Chair to consider inviting the Forest Service to attend the Places SMIG. Ciaran suggested to members that Forest Service may be a more relevant contributor, and that CAFRE representatives would happily step aside to allow Forest Service to attend.

ACTION 2: Sport NI to follow-up on the potential for Forest Service to attend future Places SMIG meetings.

6.5 Ciaran also advised members that CAFRE's response to the Progress Report remains outstanding but noted that it is currently being approved by CAFRE officials. The Chair asked Ciaran to send the update to Edel Cosgrove at Sport NI.

ACTION 3: CAFRE to send its response to the progress report to Edel Cosgrove at Sport NI.

6.6 **Northern Ireland Environment Agency** – Bob advised members that NIEA's update also remains similar to the previous SMIG meeting, with significant budget cuts continuing to have adverse effects on operations. Bob added that NIEA has made a bid to the 'environment fund' for additional resources but noted that any successful bid is likely to cover only a proportion of NIEA's previous budget.

6.7 Bob also suggested that available budget may not support the same operations as in previous years. Bob added that a number of NIEA staff has been placed on notice, and that their employment future rests on the outcome of the bid for additional resources.

- 6.8 **Department of Education** – Brenda advised members of the Community Use of Schools Toolkit which is now available on DE’s website and advised that schools have a statutory responsibility to promote community use. Brenda added however, that schools are unable to use school budgets to subsidise community use. Brenda highlighted the incoming Education Authority and noted that this body will bring consistency in approach to a number of areas, including community use of school facilities.
- 6.9 **Northern Ireland Sports Forum** – Ciaran advised members that NISF has established an ‘All Party’ group to help raise the profile of sport amongst Politicians. Ciaran added, the Group will meet regularly at Stormont and is an important mechanism for raising important issues associated with sport at the highest level. Ciaran also advised, the group will have close links to the CAL Committee, but will be Chaired/Vice-Chaired by Mike Nesbitt and Chris Nicholl. There will be no ‘set’ membership, but Politicians can drop in and out when needed.
- 6.10 Ciaran also advised members that NISF will be working with all political parties to draft ‘Manifesto Pledges’ relating to what each individual Party will do for sport. Ciaran added that a new Board Member with experience in public relations and communications will help drive this initiative forward. Finally, Ciaran asked members to note that material relating to the pledges will be drafted in advance of the May 2016 elections.
- 6.11 **Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland** – Caro-Lynn advised members of a 65% reduction in ORNI’s funding from the last financial year, and suggested that this cut in funding will have major implications on the implementation of ORNI’s Operations Plan. Caro-Lynn further advised that ORNI has made a bid to the Environment Fund, but regrettably had to make 4 staff redundant at the end of March, with further redundancies a possibility.
- 6.12 Caro-Lynn noted ORNI is/will have significant difficulties in feeding into Sport Matters, mainly because of the uncertainties around future funding and associated projects.
- 6.13 Caro-Lyn advised members that ORNI is exploring a new business model, which includes Service Level Agreements with District Councils, namely Mid-Ulster Council, Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Council, and Down, Newry & Mourne Council. Caro-Lynn also updated on the Mountain Bike Strategy, which identifies a priority project in Gortin, with 50km of MTB trails and 20km of walking trails, as well as potential projects in Mid-Ulster, Castlewellan and Tollymore.
- 6.14 Caro-Lynn advised members of the Community Path Network Toolkit, which assists local people to develop recreational resources in their local community. Finally, Caro-Lynn advised members that ORNI still has aspirations to host MTB championships in Northern Ireland by 2024.

- 6.15 **Disability Sport Northern Ireland** – The Chair advised members that DSNI had sent an update via email, and read out the following:
- 6.16 The DSNI/Inclusive Stadia Advisory Group (ISAG) Inclusive Stadia Design and Management Guidelines will be launched on the 4th June. Attempts to secure endorsement from DCAL/Sport NI over the last year have been unsuccessful to date.
- 6.17 A number of sports facilities continue to work towards Inclusive Sports Facility (ISF) accreditation. It is anticipated that 12 sports facilities will have achieved accreditation by the end of 2015.
- 6.18 As part of Sport NI’s consultation on the recently launched Capital Investment Programme, DSNI has responded requesting two measures: 1. The inclusion as a strategic priority of the development of a Northern Ireland Disability Sports Hub & Centre of Excellence; and 2. The inclusion of disability access consultant fees as eligible project expenditure to enable and facilitate funded projects to secure ISF accreditation.

7. SPORT MATTERS ACTION PLAN 2015-19

- 7.1 The Chair highlighted the Sport Matters Action Plan 2015-2019 which will outline organisation’s commitment to informing the Sport Matters targets. The Chair asked members if they had any comments to make concerning any of the targets. The Chair highlighted in particular, Places target PL25 and asked members to discuss.
- 7.2 Members discussed the wording of the proposed target and suggested for consistency it would be sensible to continue with the same measurement criteria i.e. Travel Time, rather than Travel Distance. Concerns were raised over the proposed wording of PL25 in the Action Plan. Members believed this wording may change the target from its original intention.
- 7.3 Members suggested the following wording for PL25:
- By 2019, at least 90% of the population should have access to quality multi-sports facilities within a 20 minute travel time (which equates to approx. 3 miles in an urban environment and 10 miles in a rural environment).*
- 7.4 Caro-Lynn also suggested an alternative or new target which could seek to provide ‘Every community in Northern Ireland with door step opportunities for ‘off-road’ recreation’. Caro-Lynn indicated further that this new/alternative target would allow more organisations to contribute in a more meaningful way to the Sport Matters Progress Report.

ACTION 4: Sport NI to raise the proposed target with the Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure.

7.5 Members confirmed that they are happy to approve the Action Plan subject to comments relating to target PL25 being considered.

8.0 FACILITIES STRATEGY UPDATE – STEPHEN MCILVEEN

8.1 Stephen McIlveen (Sport NI) opened his presentation on the Sports Facilities Strategy project by providing some background to the project. Stephen referred members to his presentation at the last SMIG meeting, and outlined why the Facilities Strategy project was needed.

8.2 Stephen advised members that the Sports Facilities Strategy Project continues to be progressed in partnership with all 11 District Councils. Stephen added that District Councils have now contributed to 50% of the project development costs with Sport NI providing the remaining 50% in this current financial year.

8.3 Stephen indicated that the project is now at the half way stage. Over the past six months work has focused primarily on consultation and research of the Sports Facilities Strategy for Northern Ireland. Stephen advised that the project Consultants are currently drafting the Strategy document, and that Sport NI can expect a 1st draft in early June 2015.

8.4 Stephen asked members to note, at the request of Councils, work on the 11 District Council Area Reports has been suspended until June to allow for RPA to 'bed in'. However, some Councils have recently given Sport NI an indication that they are ready to reengage in the project development process.

8.5 Stephen advised members that the next milestone for Councils will be the review/update of 'Data Hub' (i.e. information in facility provision in their area) and the facilitation of local consultation sessions, which will ensure that the thoughts/facility needs of local clubs, organisations, schools etc will be included in the District Council Area Reports.

8.6 Members were told that the District Council Area Reports should be completed by October/November 2015 (subject to District Council engagement).

8.7 When complete the Strategy and Reports will provide a framework for the strategic development of sports facilities throughout Northern Ireland, and will ensure smarter use of public money. In particular, Stephen suggested that the Council Reports would be used to identify facility need for Sport NI's forthcoming Multi-Facility and Performance Facility Funds.

8.8 The Chair thanked Stephen for the update and asked Willie Devlin (Programme Manager at Sport NI) to provide a short update on the £17.5m Lottery Capital Investment opportunity.

9.0 £17.5m LOTTERY CAPITAL PROGRAMME – WILLIE DEVLIN

9.1 Willie Devlin (Sport NI) introduced Sport NI's £17.5m Lottery Funded Capital Investment programme. Willie advised members of a 3 strand approach consisting of a 'Single Facility Fund', a 'Multi-Facility Fund' and a 'Performance Facility Fund'.

9.2 Willie briefed members on the Single Facility Fund, advising that the investment will seek to develop sports facilities or purchase sporting equipment for community groups and individual sports clubs. Willie added the fund will have an overall budget of £2m, with maximum awards up to £100k. Willie further advised there will be a partnership funding requirement on all applicants.

9.3 Willie asked members to note that any proposed capital/equipment projects to the Single Facility Fund should be based on sports development need within local areas. Willie added sports development activities should increase participation in sports especially amongst under-represented groups.

9.4 Willie advised members of a programme of workshops currently being delivered across Northern Ireland to support and guide potential applicants with their proposed projects.

9.5 Willie also updated members on the Multi-Facility Fund, which will be launched later in 2015. Willie suggested the Multi-Facility Fund will seek to develop new, or open up access to existing multi-sport environments with four or more different sports facilities located at the one site. Willie advised of additional eligibility criteria, including securing support from 3 or more Governing Bodies of Sport.

9.6 Willie indicated that the Sports Facilities Strategy project would play a major role in identifying the strategic need for any investment from the Multi-facility Fund. Willie noted the importance for clubs/organisations to engage in local consultation for the Strategy & Reports.

9.7 Finally, Willie updated on the Performance Facility Fund which seeks to integrate the facility needs of high performance athletes and community participants within the same environment. Members were advised of a Governing Body prioritisation matrix which ranks sports on their ability to return performance success as a result of capital investment. Willie advised members that Sport NI will engage the top 3 or 4 ranked sports

regarding their preferred facility criteria, before seeking expressions of interests from potential delivery partners.

9.10 The Chair thanked Willie for the update.

9.11 Caro-Lynn Ferris welcomed the funding, but raised concerns over the likelihood of outdoor recreation applicants being able to fit the selection criteria of the multi-facility fund. Caro-Lynn suggested that outdoor recreation projects such as walking and mountain bike trails have the potential to deliver significant increases in participation, and argued that in some cases participation increases may exceed that of projects considered to be more 'main stream'.

10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 No other business was recorded.

11.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1 The Chair advised that dates for the next SMIG meetings will be confirmed following the Sport Matters Monitoring Group meeting in June 2015.