

SPORT MATTERS IMPLEMENTATION GROUP (PARTICIPATION) MEETING

The minutes of the 7th meeting of the Participation SMIG held on Wednesday 30 April at 1:30pm in the House of Sport.

PRESENT:

- Brian Delaney, Chair (Acting) - Sport Northern Ireland (Sport NI)
- Barry Willis – Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU-UB)
- Gerard Houlahan - Chief Leisure Officer's Association (CLOA)
- Colette Brolly - Public Health Agency (PHA)
- Aideen Exley – Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland (ORNI)
- Michael Boyd – Irish Football Association (IFA)
- Peter Smyth – Irish Sports Council (ISC)
- Katie Nixon - NI Sports Forum (NISF)
- Linda Robinson – Age NI (ANI)

In attendance:

Nick Harkness and Edel Cosgrove (Sport Northern Ireland)

1. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the 7th meeting of the Participation SMIG and noted he was deputising on behalf of Barry Macaulay.

2. APOLOGIES

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Barry Macaulay (Sport NI), Kevin O'Neil (Disability Sports NI), Sharon Lawlor (Department of Education) and Gerry Kelly (SkillsActive).

3. REVIEW OF MINUTES OF THE SIXTH PARTICIPATION SMIG MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2013

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

4. MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 The Chair took Members through each of the 6 actions from the previous meeting and asked the respective Member to provide an update:

- 4.2 *Update on action 1: DE to define 'quality' PE.* The Chair noted this action was outstanding and suggested it remains as an action for the next meeting.

- 4.3 ***Action 1: DE to define 'quality' PE.***

- 4.4 Update on actions 2, 3, 4 & 6: completed. The Chair advised Members Simon Toole will present on action 5 later in the meeting.

5. MEMBER UPDATES

5.1 The Chair invited members to provide a verbal update on significant actions that had been undertaken since the last meeting by each of the representative organisations which contributed to the implementation of Sport Matters.

5.2 Members heard of a range of initiatives and areas of progress including:

SPORT NI

5.3 NH advised Members of Active Clubs which will seek to employ a minimum of 18 club development officers through governing bodies across NI. He noted the programme aims to promote life-long participation in sport by encouraging participants to become members of at least one sports club. The anticipated target is 18,000 new club members.

5.4 NH commented on round one of the Active Awards for Sport programme which received 314 valid applications from a wide range of sports applicant bodies and all 26 district council areas by the closing date. The total requested funding is approx. £1.90m.

5.5 NH added that the Active Communities programme is continuing to provide opportunities for individuals to participate in sport. NH noted the programme is due to complete by March 2015 and the likely budget constraints on any continuation of the programme beyond 2015.

5.6 NH also commented on Sport NI's work with the Giro d'Italia event. He advised Members that Sport NI's CEO and Chairman met with the British and Irish Ambassadors in Brussels to showcase how sport is enhancing communities across Northern Ireland and what Northern Ireland has to offer as a sporting event destination. NH further added Sport NI continues to work through the structures set up by NITB to deliver a participation legacy from Giro d'Italia.

IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION – ULSTER BRANCH

5.7 BW advised Members that rugby in the province has seen a rise in participation rates. He noted they are on target to achieve 3 games per week in season.

5.8 Furthermore, through the implementation of new systems and processes by clubs to enable greater flexibility for disabled users to participate in the sport, they have experienced a rise in people with disabilities, particularly people with special needs, playing rugby.

5.9 In terms of women and girls BW noted 8 new female teams province wide and that in March 2014 the IRFU hosted its first women and girls rugby conference. In addition he also commented on the increase in schools participation.

CHIEF LEISURE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

5.10 GH summarised the work of district councils. He noted the success of the

Active Communities programme but was concerned of its completion in March 2015. He also commented on the need to keep sport on the agenda during local government restructuring.

- 5.11 GH highlighted that other funding opportunities exist independently from Sport NI and noted DARD & DSD funding 3G pitches.
- 5.12 In addition, GH commented on the lack of feedback from the Forestry Service regarding an application for funding towards outdoor pursuits.
- 5.13 KN noted her concern over Executive Department's lack of reference to the Sport Matters strategy and strategic direction in terms of sport facility development.
- 5.14 NH acknowledged KN's concern and advised that through the development of the sport facility strategies for each of the new 11 consortia areas this should assist to inform strategic direction.
- 5.15 GH noted the Social Investment Fund and other Departments investments in sports facilities. He noted the and lack of planning in terms of consultation with other partners on facility development and felt that better consultation on proposed developments could improve outcomes e.g. the lack of flood lighting at the Boy's and Girl's Model.

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY

- 5.16 CB apprised the group of research carried out by QUB which highlights the low level of awareness of physical activity guidelines. She advised that there are challenges regarding marketing for the different age groups. She further added that the PHA are considering ways to standardise the exercise referral programme and exploring how the Active Communities programme could compliment this area of work.
- 5.17 KN commented that as Members are communicating similar messages there is a need for Members to explore innovative approaches to partnership working.
- 5.18 CB noted the challenge in mapping the range of physical activity programmes available and highlighted the need to better co-ordinate programmes across organisations. b. She recognised the need to incorporate monitoring and evaluation methods and the necessity to standardise programmes.

OUTDOOR RECREATION NI

- 5.19 AE reported the following participation levels for each of the new mountain bike trails:
- Castlewellan – 25,000
 - Rostrevor – 14,000
 - Barnette demesne 44,000 (walking trail), 20,000 (bike trail)
 - Darvagh – 17,000
- AE also noted ongoing discussions regarding the phase two trail at Davis and Blessington.

- 5.20 AE advised Members that ORNI are now placing a greater emphasis on community network projects.
- 5.21 AE informed Members that ORNI provide leadership training to equip education providers and the private sector with the skills to engage with minor groups.
- 5.22 AE advised Members the challenge is keeping participants engaged and active.
- 5.23 MB noted the IFA's success with their 'story telling' workshops linking fans and players from their past with their future in the form of the clubs youth sections and suggested ORNI look at opportunities for collaboration. He noted the overarching outcome from the workshops resulted in the club reconnecting with their community.

IRISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

- 5.24 MB advised Members of the restructuring within the IFA and his Directorate's responsibilities which include football development, primary school engagement, refereeing and women & girls.
- 5.25 MB noted the IFA launched their strategic plan which establishes the organisations priorities for the period covering 2013-18. He noted engagement with partners is crucial in determining its success.
- 5.26 Operationally MB advised Members on key successes including:
- 755 school sessions delivered in 255 primary schools to over 14,000 children
 - 60 after schools programmes established
 - 7,000 young people involved in the small sided games centres with an emphasis placed on skills development rather than solely performance achievement
 - 150,000 involved in the football Easter Camps, target of 4,000 for the Summer Camps
 - Launch of the Girls & Women's Football Plan which includes, for the first time, a commitment from the IFA to deliver girls only courses
 - Launch of a new unique safe guarding app to enable users to access up-to-date safeguarding information and advice at the touch of a button
 - Noted recent wins for the U16s girls squad and disability squad
 - Noted World Cup referee training at the Slieve Donard Hotel week commencing 5 May 2014
- 5.27 MB referenced the C2K services for schools and the IFA's intention to design programmes which complement and support the Northern Ireland curriculum.
- 5.28 IRISH SPORTS COUNCIL
PS updated Members on the ISC new National Physical Activity Plan and

confirmed sport is well presented. He added they are reviewing community sport hubs and developing the initiative.

- 5.29 PS commented that the ISC is merging with the national sports centre and is in the process of being rebranded to 'Sport Ireland' in line with its UK counterparts.
- 5.30 In terms of research the ISC are producing the Irish sports monitoring report and confirmed trends are growing with notable increases in cycling, swimming and athletics. He also noted greater collaboration and partnership working between sports.
- 5.31 PS referenced the report 'Keeping them in the game' which explores the issues surrounding attrition. He advised the research considered the findings from large population based surveys and peoples engagement in sport.
- 5.32 PS noted that at the age of 10 everyone is participating in sport but highlighted the profound influence exams have on participation levels and the resilience of certain sports. He suggested he would forward this report to Members.
- 5.33 ***Action 2: PS to forward the report 'Keeping them in the game' to Members.***

NI SPORTS FORUM

- 5.34 KN commented that while Sport NI's 'Your School, Your Club' framework is helpful it falls short in convincing schools to open up their facilities. She added the considerable expense placed on sports as all costs are required to be paid upfront including VAT.
- 5.35 KN also expressed the view that coach development was too focused on high performance.
- 5.36 KN suggested that more coordination is required between councils and governing bodies in relation to participation programme.
- 5.37 KN highlighted to Members certain sports concern over the Departments priorities of promoting equality and tackling poverty and social exclusion and the perception that sports situated in affluent areas could be unfairly disadvantaged despite being accessible to all sections of the community they serve. She noted the need for transparency regarding the decision making process adopted for funding decisions based on these priorities.
- 5.38 MB advised that the majority of football clubs support the Department's priorities and that the accreditation process Club Mark provides practical support to assist them in achieving standards. MB recognised a change in culture is required.
- 5.39 NH advised Members that 'Your School, Your Club' highlights case studies of well managed facilities which can generate a financial surplus from

synthetic pitches which can in turn be invested in sport development outcomes.

- 5.40 KN however highlighted the costs for clubs to hire the facilities remain high. MB further added this is in addition to coaching courses costs. GH commented some costs are subsidised. NH further added the Active Schools programme was developed to alleviate this financial burden and highlighted the impending learning from its evaluation.

AGE NI

- 5.41 LR advised Members of Age NI's current work programme and the process of developing age related groups and associated actions for each. She noted she would forward information to Members.

5.42 ***Action 3: LR to circulate Age NI's work programme to Members.***

- 5.43 LR highlighted the complexities associated towards people with dementia, their needs and what is measurable.

- 5.44 LR informed Members of Age NI's Age Ambassadors and the concept of healthy aging. She recognised sport as an avenue to further objectives.

- 5.45 CB noted the challenge for older people to attend courses and information sessions.

- 5.46 The Chair also noted the correlation between increased age and declining levels of physical activity.

- 5.47 GH commented the Active Communities target for older people is a challenge.

- 5.48 The Chair thanked all Members for their updates.

6. PROGRESS REPORTING OCTOBER 2013 – SEPTEMBER 2014

- 6.1 The Chair confirmed the Sport Matters Monitoring Group approved the fourth progress report covering the period Oct 12 – Sept 13 and thanked Members for their contribution.

- 6.2 The Chair advised that Sport NI will issue the progress reporting template covering the period 1 October 2013 – 30 September 2014 in early August and asked Members to complete and return within the timeframe.

6.3 ***Action 4: Sport NI to issue 5th progress reporting template.***

7. PRESENTATION BY SPORT NI (SIMON TOOLE)

- 7.1 Simon Toole (Sport NI) joined the meeting.

- 7.2 The Chair welcomed ST to the meeting and advised Members the

presentation related to a previous action from the last meeting.

- 7.3 ST presented on the NI Children's & Participation Coach Development Landscape.
- 7.4 Following the presentation the Chair noted the various resources available to aid the coaching sector. The Chair noted his interest in coaching the 'whole child' and the impact of coach education on sustained participation in sport.
- 7.5 NH noted that the development of coaching excellence was as much focused on community level coaching as it is on high performance coaching. NH noted the importance of making sure that trained coaches is fully deployed and asked ST how sports manage this.
- 7.6 ST advised that some sports incentivise education costs for coaches who are currently deployed.
- 7.7 GH highlighted the issues regarding Inland Revenue requirements and deployment impact how a sport would employ and recruit a coach.
- 7.8 ST advised that some sports place a requirement for the coach to maintain a log book.
- 7.9 The Chair thanked ST for his presentation.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 The Chair asked for any other comments from Members. No additional comments were noted.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next meeting will be confirmed following the Sport Matters Monitoring Group meeting in May 2014.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____