

SPORT MATTERS IMPLEMENTATION GROUP (PARTICIPATION) MEETING

The minutes of the 8th meeting of the Participation SMIG held on Wednesday 5 November at 1:30pm in the House of Sport.

PRESENT:

- Chair Geoff Wilson - Sport Northern Ireland (Sport NI)
- Gerard Houlahan - Chief Leisure Officer's Association (CLOA)
- Jackie O'Loughlin - Playboard
- Colette Brolly - Public Health Agency (PHA)
- Gordon Reid - NI Sports Forum (NISF)
- Michael Boyd - Irish Football Association (IFA)
- Kevin O'Neil - (Disability Sports NI)

In attendance:

Nick Harkness and Edel Cosgrove (Sport Northern Ireland)

Robert Heyburn (Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure)

1. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the 8th meeting of the Participation SMIG and provided some background information on his previous work and current roles.

2. APOLOGIES

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Sharon Lawlor (Department of Education), Gerry Kelly (SkillsActive), Barry Willis (Irish Rugby Football Union – Ulster Branch), Kieran Harding (Business in the Community), Linda Robinson (Age NI), Peter Smyth (Irish Sports Council) and Kevin Murry (Student Sport Ireland).

3. REVIEW OF MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH PARTICIPATION SMIG MEETING HELD ON 30 APRIL 2014

- 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 4 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 & 4: completed. The Chair noted the absence of Linda Robinson (LR) and advised to maintain action 3 as an action for the next meeting.

4.5 ***Action 2: LR to circulate Age NI's work programme to Members.***

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 The Chair congratulated NI's athletes at the Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2014 and noted Sport NI's partnership with the Commonwealth Games Council which provided an extensive media hub to service all NI media platforms and subsequently secure a high volume of media coverage for Team NI over the course of the Games. The Chair noted the media hub service proved invaluable for the local media and Sport Northern Ireland were congratulated widely on the excellent service provided.

5.4 The Chair advised members of Sport NI's Sporting Ambassador initiative which launched in October. It encourages local high performing and high profile athletes to act as positive role models, volunteering in communities, particularly those in areas of high social need, inspiring the next generation of athletes and young people to reach their goals in life.

5.5 The Chair also noted the 2015 Euro'meet conference launched in Brussels and advised of Sport Northern Ireland's work with the NI Executive Office in Brussels to launch the 2015 Nature and Sports Euro'meet conference which will be held in Newcastle County Down in October next year.

5.6 NH advised that under the Active Awards for Sport programme 372 applications were received, currently under assessment. The grants range from £1,000 to £10,000 and are intended to cover expenses such as coaching fees, coach education, facility hire, fees for project-related courses and the purchase of equipment. He noted £400,000 funding is available under the current round but that the total value of applications far exceeded the available budget.

Disability Sports Northern Ireland (DSNI)

5.7 KON noted DSNI's sports programme with 70% of participants having a disability. He noted the GAA's and UB-IRFU's new programmes targeting people with disabilities and congratulated the IFA leading in this area. KON advised of his concerns with current funding cuts and noted the new strategic plan is on hold until funding is confirmed.

Irish Football Association (IFA)

5.8 MB commented on the success of the primary school programme noting 30 full-time coaches reaching 18,000 children. He advised members that

the programme successfully received an award from Sport NI. MB also noted the grass roots programme and small sided games which encompasses 59 venues targeting 6-12 year olds and securing the participation of 8000 children. He acknowledged the programme is continuing to grow with 65% of clubs involved.

- 5.9 MB also added that his football development unit is in every special school in Northern Ireland. He further noted the success of the NI team winning the 'Homeless World Cup' and that volunteers raised £10,000 to pay for flights.
- 5.10 In terms of women & girls, MB advised members of the new women's football plan and the Mallusk festival which attracted 1200 participants, securing 40 girls who were selected for the IFA's elite programme.

Northern Ireland Sports Forum (NISF)

- 5.11 GR noted that the NISF requires more engagement with governing bodies regarding returns for the progress report. He noted particular reference to PA6 which would provide invaluable information to informing the target.
- 5.12 GR noted a range of the NISF current work areas including progressing the Equality Standard and their collaborative work with the female sports forum.

Public Health Agency (PHA)

- 5.13 CB advised members of the PHA's continuing work to develop the 'Fitter Futures' strategy. She noted that over **£2million** had been invested by PHA in 2013 to address a range of physical activity initiatives including 'lower level' physical activity initiatives e.g. community allotments. CB agreed it was difficult to differentiate what was classified as 'lower level' participation and advised PHA's focus on 'walking' and 'active travel' and the intention to develop a regional programme next year which would be backed with a social media campaign.
- 5.14 CB further added that the PHA's work on the 'Obesity' strategy is ongoing with a number of programmes being delivered. CB noted the omission of 'early years' from the Sport Matters strategy.
- 5.15 The Chair suggested that officers should meet to explore any possibilities for more collaborative work between Sport NI and PHA.
- 5.16 **Action 3: Sport NI and PHA officers to meet to explore opportunities for collaborative working.**

Playboard

- 5.17 JOL noted the complexities associated with measuring priorities and the requirement to meet the overall agenda. She advised of the need to overcome language barriers and the difficulty understanding where sport and young people fit. JOL noted research indicates that young people feel not welcome in their communities. JOL advised that the Young People's

'Life and Times' survey could be used to inform relevant policy development.

5.18 JOL also noted the establishment of a working group which meets fortnightly and is currently reviewing the collective policy framework in the Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon super council area. She also advised that the Forest Service could explore the potential for play and the natural environment to assist in achieving targets.

5.19 The Chair asked JOL if she is aware of the programmes governing bodies are delivering in schools. JOL noted the absence of this information and advised it depends on the agenda in individual schools. CB noted the need for a 'mapping' exercise across schools. Although it was noted that the sport matters progress report captures a lot of this information.

5.20 **Action 4: NISF to identify what governing bodies are involved with delivering programmes in schools.**

Chief Leisure Officers Association (CLOA)

5.21 GH noted the requirement for the RPA review team to consult with district councils and the need to make the case for sport. He also asked whether additional money is required to achieve the Sport Matters targets.

5.22 NH noted that he had written to DOE seeking to promote the role of sport in community planning and seeking a definition of the respective roles of 'statutory' consultees and 'support partners'.

5.23 GH also advised of the current challenges facing councils in relation to the transition, increased costs and new responsibilities. GH welcomed the facilities strategies as a tool for more strategic capital investments in the future. He also highlighted the success of the Active Communities programme and reinforced the aspiration for its continuation.

5.24 KON noted the success of the Active Communities programme.

5.25 Following members updates the Chair sought members views on any areas or actions to be taken forward. The following were agreed:

5.26 **Action 5: SMIG chairs to provide a verbal update at the beginning of each SMIG meeting.**

5.27 **Action 6: Draft SMIG minutes to be circulated to all SMIG members.**

6. **CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORT SEPTEMBER 2013 – OCTOBER 2014**

6.1 The Chair asked if Members had any comments on the fifth progress report covering the period 1 October 2013 – 30 September 2014.

6.2 The Chair thanked all Members for the contribution and advised any outstanding contributions received before 10 November 2014 would be in the final draft for consideration by the SMMG.

6.3 Members approved the fifth progress report.

7. **SPORT MATTERS ACTION PLAN 2015-19**

7.1 The Chair recalled Members contribution to the Sport Matters Action Plan 2011-15 which outlined organisations commitment to informing the Sport Matters targets. This action plan covered the first half life cycle of the Strategy.

7.2 The Chair advised Members once the Sport Matters review is finalised, Sport NI will issue members with a new action planning template in quarter 4 covering the period 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2019.

7.3 The Chair ask Members to complete and return the template within the timeframe as the draft action plan will be presented to Members for consideration at the next meeting.

7.4 **Action 7: Sport NI to issue the Action Plan template for completion by Members once the review of Sport Matters is complete.**

8. **VERBAL UPDATE BY KEVIN O'NEIL**

8.1 KON updated members on the paper 'the Northern Ireland Assembly All Party Group on Visual Impairment's Discussion on sports opportunities for blind & partially sighted people held on the 10th June 2014'.

8.2 He noted that 30,000 people, 1.7% of the NI population are partially sighted or blind and noted the lack of data also reinforced the anecdotal information DSNI collects that would suggest low participation rates in sport.

8.3 The Chair noted the opportunity for shared learning and invited members to individually present a further meetings. Members agreed.

8.4 **Action 8: JOL to present on the area of 'participation' for the next meeting.**

8.5 KON noted the need for Sport NI to facilitate discussion on potential partnership working.

8.6 NH advised on Active Communities objectives in relation to addressing areas of high social need, women and girls and people with disabilities. He also noted the inter departmental role into Special Olympics Ulster.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

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

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1 The Chair confirmed the date of the next meeting will be confirmed following the Sport Matters Monitoring Group meeting in December 2014.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____