

SCREENING DOCUMENT Sports Systems Investment – Governing Bodies Overview

1. Background

Sport NI Corporate Plan

The Sport NI Corporate Plan following significant partner consultation identified the following mission statement and outcomes which will focus its delivery across the period 2022-2026.

Mission: We are passionate about maximising the **power of sport** to change lives. By 2026 we want the power of sport to be recognised and valued by all.

Outcome 1: People adopting and sustaining participation in sport and physical activity.

Outcome 2: NI Athletes among the best in the world.

Sport NI will:

- Influence **strategically** and build **partnerships**
- Deliver **expertise**
- Make **outcome** focused investments

By (Sport NI Cornerstones):

- Building a positive and **inclusive** sports culture, recognising the rights of everyone to access and participate in sport.
- Retaining a **duty of care** to all those engaged in the Sporting System.
- Promoting **wellness** and **well-being**.
- Targeting sport in **rural** communities, in **disadvantaged areas** and with **under-represented groups**.

The above will guide Sport NI's support to the sector over the period of the corporate plan. To further explore the key areas for support Sport NI has recently engaged with Governing Bodies, Local Authorities, Clubs and community sport organisations.

2. Sports System Engagement

In developing our approach to future investment in a range of partners, we explored the various roles that currently exist within our broader family of partners. Our first strand is to confirm the future investment in the Governing Bodies who are already funded through Sport NI and our engagement approach has been reflective of this. In this engagement we

also opened up to those governing bodies who are not currently funded. Further engagement with Local Authorities, Clubs, Community & Voluntary Sector and Not for Profit organisations will be held in early 2023.

How did we engage?

As the first stage in the engagement process, three online surveys were developed, targeting feedback from Sports NI's key partners including:

- Governing Bodies of Sport
- Local Authorities
- Sports Clubs and other Local Authorities, Community & Voluntary Sector and Not for Profit Organisations

Three separate surveys were developed with the aim of creating a user-friendly opportunity for key partners to feedback on their experiences of previous Sport NI investment programmes, their thoughts on the direction of future Sport NI investment and the current landscape within their own sporting context.

Running alongside the survey, governing bodies were invited to take part in a series of facilitated, online or face to face sessions to discuss future priority areas of investment, explore potential changes in the investment approach and highlight challenges within the sports sector that greater collaboration could address.

Governing Bodies were invited to register for the following:

- Governing Body CEO/NI Lead Engagement Session
- Governing Body 1:1 Engagement Session (funded and non-funded Governing bodies)
- Performance Director/ Performance Lead Engagement Session
- Open Governing Body Sports System Engagement Session (non-funded Governing Bodies)

The feedback from the survey and engagements were noted and mapped to priority areas governing bodies prioritised. These are outlined below.

Key Learning / Priority areas?

- Data & Insights
- Member Retention

- Facilities and Equipment
- Networks
- Pathway Access
- Cornerstone Support
- Workforce Succession Planning
- More than Medals & Numbers
- Relationship Development
- Trust Flexibility and Agility

3. Sports System Investment - Governing Body

Investment Aims

We recognise the deep-rooted inequalities in sport, which mean people have been excluded because the right options and opportunities have not been there. This is at the heart of any future investment into the Sports System. We want to have real conversations with Sports Governing bodies in seeking to address these inequalities. The investment into Governing bodies is directly linked to this and through this we want to work with them to understand how addressing inequality can be more central to their purpose. In the first instance we acknowledge both the sport system and governing bodies of sport are not perfect. We wish to do this by:

- Moving away from a process of working out if organisations are 'good enough', to understanding more where they are starting from and how we can positively collaborate.
- A single investment into sport's governing bodies to streamline the administration.
- Flexible investment into governing bodies, with the ability to continuously improve and develop to fit emerging needs.
- Agile investment meeting the needs of the sector, for all governing bodies. We want to encourage growth and ambition cognisant that in the context of scarcity and increasing costs this is a more challenging environment.
- Rolling investment, avoiding the lack of stability in governing bodies with potential 'cliff edges' at the end of cyclical investment programmes.
- Encouraging long term partnerships with governing bodies, affording sports the opportunity to consider the longer term with indicative commitment levels to aid their future planning, including exit strategies, to develop greater sustainability.
- Shift towards agreeing common areas of interest, intersections and collaboration on how best to deliver for maximum impact to the sector, within timescales contextually

relevant to each sport. This would be a move away from more fixed target setting and delivery over 4 years.

We have taken the learning from the engagement with governing bodies of sports, to understand from their perspective the priority opportunities and gaps in the sports system, at this point in time.

Revised Priority Areas

Retention & Growth	Medals and more	Pathway Access
To create opportunities and environments that attract and retain participants in sport, members, spectators, etc.	To build athlete centred environment which enables athletes to achieve success.	To strengthen and align the performance pathway.
Workforce Planning	Data & Insight	Knowledge Sharing
To develop an active, skilled, and supported workforce, to meet the demands of the sporting system.	Be able to make evidence led decisions, adapting to emergent needs.	To set foundations for shared learning and development.
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	Good Governance	
To work in ways that support trust, enable collaboration, and foster shared commitment to tackling inequality.	To embed good governance practices within sporting culture.	

4. Approach

The approach to investment requires a departure from how Sport NI has worked in the past, with a more flexible innovative and progressive approach necessary to deliver for sports and physical activity. The change in approach will enable sports to think differently about the nature of the engagement that they wish to have with Sport NI. We believe that this is fundamental to changing how sports view Sport NI and its value, but more critically,

how sports choose to deliver to their members and society. Two significant areas where a different approach has been approved are:

a) Indicative baseline planning figures

A challenge of using Zero-based budgeting, as was used within the Sporting Clubs and Sporting Winners Investment Programmes, is that, despite the theory, many sports were anchored to previous investment levels and submissions reflected that. Equally there was a wide range of over-ambitious and under-ambitious projects, or more importantly some sports that under-sold themselves, delivering a very strong return, but for a modest investment. Incremental budgeting also has flaws, for example that the past is not the best predictor of the future. The intention of giving sports a baseline planning figure is to:

- **Steer the overall programme investment levels towards what is planned.**
Leaving an open application process with a zero-based approach will present greater risks of requested investment that is over or under the planned resource. An extreme example being the Building Better Sports Facilities programme that opened with a £500k budget and the combined requested investment was £14m.
- **To provide assurance to governing bodies.**
Sport NI has repeatedly committed to ensuring that investment will continue to flow from April 2023 and providing an early planning figure could reinforce that commitment.
- **To encourage growth within the sector.**
Many sports have historically made relatively small uplifts in their requested investment levels from cycle to cycle. It is likely that this has been to minimise exposure if the requested investment is not forthcoming. A planning figure could be a tool that signals Sport NI's willingness to invest more, or in more things.
- **To encourage ambition and innovation.**
Linked to encouraging growth, some sports may 'play it safe' in an environment of limited resources, but greater investment, coupled with other measures could be used to encourage more ambitious or exploratory initiatives within sports.

The indicative baseline planning figure will be a minimum level of award, as long as the governing bodies could indicate how they would utilise the investment to a satisfactory level of sectoral benefit. Governing bodies would also be afforded the opportunity to seek

levels of investment above the baseline figure, with commensurate increases in sectoral impact/delivery. This has the effect of safeguarding the baseline investment level as a **‘starting point’ for planning, but not necessarily the final investment level**, which could in theory be higher or lower (if sports choose to deliver less than would be required with the baseline investment level). The indicative baseline planning figure does not guarantee that the organisation will be supported with continued investment.

Additionality and Added Value

Sport’s governing bodies have demonstrated the need for lottery investment and stability to enable continuous planning. Sport NI recognises that much of the work happening on the ground to create safe quality environments for sport to take place would be at risk should the investment cease. It is critical therefore that baseline investment is provided in April 2023 to sustain these organisations.

It should also be noted that Sport NI is seeking additionality for the sports sector by targeting lottery investment to impact problems and issues that sports and society cannot readily tackle alone. These intractable problems will by their nature require resource, therefore investment over and above the baseline levels of investment can reasonably be expected and justified in addressing inequalities within our society. This approach is reflective of the additionality principle contained within the NLDF and Sport NI’s commitment to added value as set out in the “Power of Sport”.

The indicative baseline planning figure is derived from the organisations investment in the 2022-23 investment year plus a **30% addition** to allow for;

- 10% inflationary increase
- 20% to encourage growth, new initiatives, cost of living and post-Covid recovery responses

This will increase the indicative baseline investment level from £4.7m to £6.1m, prior to any sports seeking increases to their investment level. It is felt that this may exceed what many sports would otherwise have sought, and for that reason Sport NI will be encouraging sports to think beyond their normal realm.

Adjustments, either increases or decreases, for current performance were dismissed. It was felt that these would be counter-productive and are also difficult to undertake in-year, as many measures only materialise after year-end.

Additionality and what we know

From the membership, workforce (including coaches, officials, unpaid and paid), Talent Pathways and UK Coaching data, it is clear that the demographic in sport is not reflective of the current Northern Ireland population. The information is clearly showing that women, people with a disability and those from the most deprived neighbourhoods are underrepresented in sport. LGBTQAI+, Ethnically diverse and Rural communities are not fairly represented, this is further underpinned by the CHS, which also highlights the changing age profile of the population. The evolution of investment into Sport Governing bodies is to fully understand and breakdown barriers to create real sustained sport and physical activity for everyone. This is also aimed at not only more athletes among the best in the world, but that there is a more diverse athlete population. Investment will be made to make long term changes to the current picture

Investment caps

As sports would have the opportunity to seek increased investment levels, the risks associated with applying a cap at the indicative baseline investment level diminish. Were a cap to be applied, that sport could reasonably seek to make a case for an increased award with commensurate increased impact. For that reason, an investment cap is being suggested. The cap also serves to set expectations at a sport level that higher levels of investment will come with additional scrutiny and allow the management of awards at a sport level and a programme level. It is also explicit learning from the Sports Sustainability Fund.

What are the benefits of the cap? It will allow a resetting of the investment level. If these sports can justify a higher level of award, that option will be open to them. The risks of not introducing a cap are that disproportionate historic investments skew future investment levels and reduce the resource that is available for other sports. We propose that all sports will be offered an opportunity to increase their award above the baseline investment through the submission process by demonstrating additionality, greater strategic alignment and by contributing to the Sport NI cornerstones. To ensure that any additional 'ask' from sports is realistic, deliverable and within the sports capabilities, a tiered investment cap is proposed. This tiered Cap is to attempt to set expectations at a sport level, manage awards at a sport level and manage awards at a programme level. There is also direct learning from Sports Sustainability Fund.

For sports that choose to request additional resources, in total three control points are proposed at;

- £450,000 – Indicative baseline investment cap
- £600,000
- £750,000 – Upper limit of investment for a single sport (i.e. a Maximum Project Cap)

In practice this would mean any sport with an indicative baseline level below £450k, that wanted to apply for more than £450k would first need to justify what would be specifically delivered to justify an increase to the £450k control point. The same would apply between £450k and £600k, and so on. This is part of the process to manage risk and for sports to show clear ability to deliver against the 5-year strategy. It will also provide the SNI programme team with ways of developing options, as marginal analysis will be more easily facilitated through this approach.

Sport NI has not historically invested in a Sports Governing bodies over £750,000 per annum and propose that for year 1 there is a Cap of £750k, to be reviewed in December 2023. This is to demonstrate an openness to support sports with wide ranging benefits to a high level, whilst managing the risk and is a recommendation from the Sports Sustainability Fund.

At a programme level, an **£8m Programme Cap is proposed**. The NLDF can sustain this level of investment for several consecutive years. This would represent a 70% increase on current year investment, and requested investment is not expected to reach this level.

It was noted that for those sports with only 2 years recent investment, their investment level was likely to be skewed due to the limited level of programme funding that was made available at that time through the Governing Body Support Programme.

For that reason, it is proposed that those sports are not given an indicative baseline investment level, as it could anchor thinking at a lower level than would otherwise be the case, or it could result in Sport NI being seen as applying a blanket approach without recognising the weakness in this case.

Sports in this category would effectively be afforded the opportunity to make a submission to suggest an appropriate award level, which would be correlated against what they plan to deliver, as will be the case for all sports.

	Sport	Total investment 22-23	Total PLUS 30%	Total PLUS 30% (£450k cap)	Total PLUS 30% (£450k cap) Only sports with 6 years investment offered baselines	Baseline Planning Figure Rounded to next £5k
Sports in receipt of 6 years of investment	Athletics	£373,363	£485,372	£450,000	£450,000	£450,000
	Badminton	£94,017	£122,222	£122,222	£122,222	£125,000
	Boccia	£67,759	£88,087	£88,087	£88,087	£90,000
	Boxing	£425,116	£552,651	£450,000	£450,000	£450,000
	Canoe	£66,961	£87,049	£87,049	£87,049	£90,000
	Cycling	£246,041	£319,853	£319,853	£319,853	£320,000
	Golf	£182,274	£236,956	£236,956	£236,956	£240,000
	Hockey	£473,139	£615,081	£450,000	£450,000	£450,000
	Judo	£131,103	£170,434	£170,434	£170,434	£175,000
	Netball	£242,342	£315,045	£315,045	£315,045	£320,000
	Sailing	£188,141	£244,583	£244,583	£244,583	£245,000
	Swimming	£348,165	£452,615	£450,000	£450,000	£450,000
	Wheelchair Basketball	£115,877	£150,640	£150,640	£150,640	£155,000
	Archery	£59,000	£76,700	£76,700	£76,700	£80,000
	Lawn Bowls	£211,066	£274,386	£274,386	£274,386	£275,000
	Rowing	£84,500	£109,850	£109,850	£109,850	£110,000
	Triathlon	£147,647	£191,941	£191,941	£191,941	£195,000
	Cricket	£338,695	£440,304	£440,304	£440,304	£445,000
	Camogie	£55,049	£71,564	£71,564	£71,564	£75,000
	Fencing	£23,250	£30,225	£30,225	£30,225	£35,000
	GAA	£252,730	£328,549	£328,549	£328,549	£330,000
	Gymnastics	£135,599	£176,279	£176,279	£176,279	£180,000
	Mountaineering	£51,615	£67,100	£67,100	£67,100	£70,000
	Orienteering	£39,398	£51,217	£51,217	£51,217	£55,000
Rugby	£157,621	£204,907	£204,907	£204,907	£205,000	
Tennis	£36,754	£47,780	£47,780	£47,780	£50,000	

Sports in receipt of 2 years of investment	Angling	£15,000	£19,500	£19,500	N/A	N/A
	Coarse Fishing	£15,000	£19,500	£19,500	N/A	N/A
	Equestrian	£7,500	£9,750	£9,750	N/A	N/A
	Soccer	£30,000	£39,000	£39,000	N/A	N/A
	Table Tennis	£10,000	£13,000	£13,000	N/A	N/A
	Volleyball	£7,500	£9,750	£9,750	N/A	N/A
	Basketball*	£52,900	£68,770	£68,770	N/A	N/A
	Motorsport	£7,500	£9,750	£9,750	N/A	N/A
	Rambling	£7,500	£9,750	£9,750	N/A	N/A
Total	£4,700,122	£6,110,159	£5,804,441	£5,605,671	£5,665,000	

b) Measures and Impacts

Through this investment Sport NI is keen to engage partners in a model that positively impacts the delivery of Outcome One and Two of the Sport NI Corporate plan. Firstly, we need to treat Governing Bodies like partners, and for them to do likewise to us. We have shared interests and common goals, so the alignment our effort makes strategic and tactical sense. Secondly, we need to see a shift away from investment being the driver for posts and programme development within governing bodies, to investment being focused on the deliverables to achieve outcomes.

We expect this process to take time, but we will be up-front with sports about this ambition and direction of travel. The shared collaboration with Governing Bodies that led to the Priority Areas being developed, was an important step in gaining understanding and getting buy-in from sports. These areas are of importance to both sports and Sport NI, therefore they are a useful anchoring point for our shared measurement of progress. A sample of measures and impacts has been identified below. While this is not an exhaustive list it will be used to initiate conversations with governing bodies as we move away from a one size fits all approach to one that supports the development of each individual organisation.

Our approach to measurement and evaluation of this investment strand of the Sports System Investment is still very much in development. The early thinking has just started on this and we will be working with governing bodies to progress this further. We want to ensure that the measurement and evaluation impacts those underrepresented groups within Northern Ireland and does not just chase numbers.

It will be vital to be clear how the investment in the governing bodies of sport is ultimately supporting the wider, long term outcomes that we know sport and physical activity contributes to. We will need to be able to evaluate what we do and how we do it so we can understand and demonstrate the longer-term change in the sport system.

Measurement and Evaluation Approach

Inputs and preconditions – Identified through the self-evaluation framework and evaluated on an ongoing basis as partners develop.

Plans, Goals and what is expected to change – Strategy, plans and goals, alignment with Sport NI Corporate Plan. Evaluation at individual and collective level.

Impact – what is the longer-term impact on wider outcomes. Evaluating what we do and how we do it in the long term.

Key to this approach will be understanding the effect of interventions in sports using the OBA framework.

Effort	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?
Effect	Is anyone better off?	
	#	%

How Much did we do? – Quantity

How well did we do it? – Quality

Is anyone better off as a result? (Quantity and quality of effect or outcome for the user of the service)

Revised Priority Areas

Retention and Growth

To create opportunities and environments that attract and retain participants in sport, members, spectators, etc. In particular those from underrepresented groups.

- Areas to consider as a point of reference to your response:
 - Your ambition with regards to participation in your sport (not just members)
 - Your understanding of the nature and needs of inequalities faced by those people and communities relevant to you and how that shapes and informs action to grow their participation in your sport.
 - Increased opportunities through sport targeting under-represented groups or communities including those in later life
 - Increased opportunities being provided with a geographical spread including rural communities.

Medals and More

To build athlete centred environment which enables athletes to achieve success.

Areas to consider as a point of reference to your response:

- Areas to consider as a reference point to your response?
- Understanding of the athlete experience and providing athletes with a safe performance environment
- Understanding of demographics of the athletes and staff in performance programmes and how that shapes action to grow and retain athletes from underrepresented groups
- Is the sport a core Commonwealth Sport, an Olympic Sport or Paralympic, that UK Sport or Sport Ireland Invest in?
- Medals and placings the sport has delivered.
- Medal availability.
- Geographical access to Performance programmes
- Number and demographic of athletes on UK and Irish Athlete Investment programmes

Pathway Access

To strengthen and align the performance pathway.

Areas to consider as a point of reference to your response:

- Number of athletes progressing to UK and Ireland athlete funded National programmes
- Understanding of the athlete experience and providing pathway athletes with a safe performance environment
- Understanding the barriers to pathway access for those people and communities relevant to you and how that shapes and informs action to ensure opportunity for all with talent.
- Increasing diversity in your sport, representation from under-represented groups areas, - in particular those most deprived communities, females, disabled and geographically accessible in sports' pathway athletes

Workforce Planning

- To develop an active, skilled, and supported workforce, to meet the demands of the sporting system.

Areas to consider as a point of reference to your response:

- Growth and diversification of your workforce (paid and unpaid coaches, technical officials, administrators, performance coaches, performance staff etc)
- How do you use and build the capacity in your organisation (paid and unpaid) to tackle inequalities?
- How do you use your organisational capacity to facilitate capacity building in others to achieve your ambitions and tackle inequality?
- Understanding wellbeing and support for workforce (paid and unpaid – coaches, technical officials, administrators, performance coaches, performance staff etc)
- Sustainable, diverse workforce (paid and unpaid) across all levels of your sports system

Data and Insight

Be able to make evidence led decisions, adapting to emergent needs.

Areas to consider as a point of reference to your response:

- Ability to clearly identify membership, workforce (paid and unpaid) and participants demographics
- How well do you gather data and insight to better understand the nature and needs of inequalities faced by those people and communities relevant to you in accessing your sport?
- How prepared do you feel in terms of skills and capabilities in digital innovation. to deliver effectively?
- Your understanding of participation patterns across your sport (not just members)
- Insight into the wider impact of your sport
- Real time collation of information and feedback
- Data and insight used to deliver performance programmes

Knowledge Sharing

To set foundations for shared learning and development:

Areas to consider as a point of reference to your response:

- Increased sharing of practice and insight across sports (Sport driven)
- How you share the opportunities with others to identify shared opportunities and challenges?
- How do you use data, insight gathered internally and from internally and from outside your organisation to learn, adapt and improve?
- How do you encourage and foster a culture of curiosity, creativity, innovation, sharing of knowledge and learning both within your teams and through your relationships with partners and stakeholders?
- Increased sharing of practice and insight across the sport sector (Sport NI driven)
- Establishment of knowledge sharing communities within sports

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Areas to consider as a point of reference to your response:

To work in ways that support trust, enable collaboration, and foster shared commitment to tackling inequality.

- Increased communication of EDI by sports about their sport
- Your understanding of the needs and nature of inequalities for those people and communities relevant to you?
- Demographics that you are working to address
- How have you built relationships with other organisations to tackle inequalities in a way that meets the needs of the people and the communities relevant to you?
- How do you use other resource e.g. funding, facilities, opportunities to tackle inequality?
- How well do you understand the lived experience of those in your sport and that their voices are heard?
- Diversity of your sports leadership to include board.
- Increasing board diversity working towards more representative boards

Good Governance

To embed good governance practices within sporting culture

Areas to consider as a point of reference to your response:

- Compliance with selected governance codes
- Intentional inclusivity policy, procedures and practice

5. Timeline & Process

Step	Timeline	Heading	Description
1	w/c 19 th December '22	Planning Letter	Letter will contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicative Baseline Planning Figure - Proposed Timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Phase 1 - Year 1 o Phase 2 - Years 2-5
2	20 th January to 17 th February 2023 (4 weeks)	Phase 1 Submission Development	Governing Bodies will develop their Phase 1 submission indicating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic Alignment - Key Priorities - Measures to be Achieved - Investment Required
3	17 th February to 17 th March 2023 (4 weeks)	Phase 1 Submission Review	Sport NI will undertake a review of Phase 1 submissions and prepare Sports Systems Investment Programme - Phase 1 Business Case.
4	March 2023	Sport NI Board	Sport NI Board will review Paper incorporating Sports Systems Investment Programme Phase 1 Business Case.
Phase 2			

5	1 st April to 31 st May 2023	Letters of Offer	Letters of Offer for Year 1 will be distributed between these dates where possible.
6	1st April to 1 st July 2023	Phase 2 Submission Development	<p>Governing Bodies feedback and Phase 2 development (Years 2-5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning - Measures to be Achieved - Investment Required <p>Governing Bodies will have an opportunity to engage with Sport NI regarding their proposed submission.</p>