

Sports Council for Northern Ireland
Lottery Distribution Account
for the Year Ended
31 March 2020

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Presented to Parliament pursuant to C.39, Section 35(5) of the National Lottery
etc. Act 1993 (as amended by the National Lottery Act 1998)

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at Communications Team, House of Sport, 2a Upper Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5LA or email: comms@sportni.net.

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CONTENTS

Performance Report	6
• Overview	6
• Chairman's Foreword	6
• Chief Executive's Introduction.....	8
• Strategic Report.....	10
• Purpose and Activities of Sport NI.....	10
• Performance Analysis.....	15
• Participation and Facilities	26
• Performance.....	30
Accountability Report.....	41
• Corporate Governance Report.....	41
• Directors' Report.....	41
• Statement of the Accounting Officer's Responsibilities.....	43
• Governance Statement	45
• Remuneration and Staff Report	61
• Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report.....	72
• The Certificate of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament	73
Financial Statements	81
• Statement of Comprehensive Net Income	81
• Statement of Financial Position	82
• Statement of Cash Flows.....	84
• Statement of Changes in Equity	85
• Notes to the accounts.....	86

Performance Report

This Performance Report focuses on matters relevant to all users of Financial Statements. Although it is designed to be a self-standing document, much of the information contained in it is simply a summary of information provided in other documents and is therefore cross-referenced as appropriate.

The Governance Statement (refer to page 45) provides detail on the significant delay in the audit of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery account for 2019-20. The 2019-20 annual report and accounts were audited during the 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years. The narrative and information included in the annual report and accounts should be considered in that context.

Overview

The purpose of the 'Overview' section of the Performance Report is to give the user a brief summary, which provides sufficient information to understand the organisation, its purpose, the key risks to the achievement of its objectives and how it has performed during the year. It consists of the Chair's Foreword, Chief Executive's Introduction and the Purposes of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland.

Chairman's Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the 2019-20 Lottery Annual Report and Accounts for the Sports Council for Northern Ireland (hereafter referred to as Sport NI). Sport NI is the body which, since the inception of the National Lottery in 1994, has been responsible for the administration and distribution of Lottery funds to sport in Northern Ireland.

As Sport NI reached the end of the 2015-20 five-year Corporate Plan cycle, it remained more committed than ever to developing and enhancing Northern Ireland's sporting pathways and sporting system, of which National Lottery funding remains a key part. It is important to acknowledge that in the period 2015-20, Lottery funding was essential in bringing about positive sporting change within communities, and at a national level, and continues to be as instrumental in the current Corporate Plan cycle 2021-26.

Sport NI remains grateful for the support towards its programmes, for example Every Body Active 2020, Female participation, inclusion of Disability Sports, Sporting Winners and Sporting Clubs - all funded via the National Lottery - and will seek to build on work already undertaken to foster a strong sporting system in Northern Ireland in the years to come.

Sport NI invests a range of resources to optimise sustained sport participation and ensure Northern Ireland athletes are among the best in the world. Sport NI aims to ensure that everyone has access to quality sport; volunteers, coaches and leaders are highly skilled; sports clubs thrive; and pathway and performance strategies are effective. Sport NI is proud of the role that Tollymore National Outdoor Centre plays in developing the current and future generations of leaders in outdoor sport and recreation and our Sports Institute, which offers specialist sports science and medicine services to high performance athletes and sports.

In closing, I would like to thank the Board Members, who continue to provide their time, commitment and expertise in the name of promoting and developing sport, and thank the Sport NI CEO and staff for their passion, creativity, dedication and leadership in developing and enhancing our local sporting pathways. Finally, on behalf of the Sport NI Board I would like to recognise that, alongside Exchequer funding, National Lottery resources have significantly increased our capability to harness and action the power of sport to change lives and build communities in Northern Ireland.

Gavin Boyd
Chair
Sports Council for Northern Ireland

Date: 16 December 2025

Chief Executive's Introduction

I am delighted to present the 2019-20 Annual Lottery Distribution Report for Sport NI. As the public body leading the development of sport in Northern Ireland, we remain committed to a relentless pursuit of excellence in sport - from grassroots sport to a quality club environment, to podium-level success. Sport NI has developed significantly in recent years due to a range of change and organisational development initiatives. We have learned of the critical role of a strong organisational culture that sets clear standards and expectations of us all, recognisable in all that we do. We are privileged and proud to take this work forward as part of our partnership with the National Lottery Distribution Fund.

In terms of grassroots sport and our Sporting Communities Programme, Every Body Active 2020 was delivered in partnership with district councils as part of our commitment as a statutory partner to Community Planning Partnerships and increased quality opportunities for targeted groups to develop and sustain participation in sport across key life-course transitions. During 2019-20 this programme opened up sporting opportunities to 95,712 people from under-represented groups (including women (55,658) and disabled people (15,027)) and from areas of greatest need (27,337) which is an achievement we are proud of.

The Sporting Clubs Programme has continued to invest in 21 sporting organisations (governing bodies of sport and umbrella organisations) this year in order to deliver a growing number of quality sports clubs and coaching staff in Northern Ireland. In 2019-20 this work has included the delivery of 18,346 learning opportunities for coaches, officials and volunteers and 19 out of 21 sporting organisations recording an increase in club membership. One organisation has reported a fall in membership of 16%, however this has been attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic arriving during the registration period for this particular sporting organisation.

In terms of our third strategic programme; Sporting Winners provides the foundation for local athletes to develop, thrive and succeed, ensuring Northern Ireland continues to thrive and be recognised as a place where sportspeople excel. The 2019-20 year yielded seven medals at world level, a significant achievement for a small region such as Northern Ireland.

As we celebrate sporting success during 2019-20, Sport NI pays tribute to coaches, officials and volunteers who are critical to the development and delivery of sport in all its forms in Northern Ireland. As part of our annual SportMaker awards, twelve awards were presented with a new Coaching Chain award introduced this year and presented to five recipients.

The Sport NI Communications Strategy for 2019-20 focused successfully on the National Lottery's 25th Birthday celebrations throughout this year, particularly at the Sport NI Conference. Our National Lottery grant recipients, from Olympic/Paralympic athletes, Every Body Active Coaches, governing bodies, clubs and community projects were highlighted in national and social media as part of the celebrations. We were delighted that Northern Ireland voting for the Sporting Heroes initiative, as part of the year of celebrations, was the highest in the UK. Specific National Lottery award profiling was dedicated to Ulster Wheelchair Hurling project, Lagan Dragons and Kelly Gallagher and Charlotte Evans during the year.

As we ended the 2019-20 year, we could never have foreseen the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. For the first time in history, in March 2020, Sport NI closed all three of its sites and began a period of working from home for all staff. Despite this major disruption to our work and the world we knew, Sport NI has managed to adapt our work to not only sustain business as usual but to lead the sports sector through an unprecedented period of change and challenge, providing financial support, technical expertise and support to help the NI public stay active at home and access to much needed online mental health and well-being resources. Sport NI will continue to respond to the needs of the sporting community across NI in the year ahead.

Sport NI and sport in Northern Ireland is deeply indebted to the National Lottery and the public who support sports investment and development. Without such funding, our sporting heroes would not be so strong and our grassroots sport so successful. We look forward to the continued partnership with the National Lottery and developing healthy sporting bodies and environments where athletes excel, and communities thrive.

**Richard Archibald
Interim Chief Executive
Sports Council for Northern Ireland**

Date: 16 December 2025

Strategic Report

Purpose and Activities of Sport NI

Background Information

The Sports Council for Northern Ireland (referred to as “Sport NI”) is the statutory body through which public funding for sport in Northern Ireland is channelled. It was established on 31 December 1973 under the provisions of the Recreation and Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1973 (as amended) with its main objective being the furtherance of sport and physical recreation.

Sport NI’s principal functions are as provided by Article 3 of the Recreation and Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1986;

- On matters relating to sport and physical recreation, to advise the Department for Communities and other Government departments, the Education Authority, Local Councils and other bodies interested in sport and physical recreation;
- To encourage the provision of facilities for, and participation in, sport and physical recreation;
- To assist, subject to Paragraph (4) of the article:
 - In the provision of administrative services, equipment, coaching and instruction;
 - In the organising or supporting of, or participating in, international or other events, by bodies providing facilities for sport or physical recreation or organising such activities; and
 - Bodies providing supportive services in connection with sport and physical recreation.

The National Lottery etc. Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) established the National Lottery and designated five ‘good causes’: arts, sport, national heritage, charitable projects and projects to mark the year 2001 and the beginning of the third millennium. The National Lottery Act 1998 (the 1998 Act) which came into force in July 1998 established a sixth good cause, the New Opportunities Fund, the functions of which were taken on by the Big Lottery Fund (Now the National Lottery Community Fund) through the National Lottery Act 2006 (the 2006 Act). Each of the good causes receives a percentage of the net proceeds of the Lottery paid out of the National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF).

In 1994, the Minister for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) appointed Sport NI as a Lottery distributor for 2.6% of money allocated to sport. Lottery funds are accounted for in the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account (referred to as the Sport NI Lottery Account).

Grant in Aid Activities

In addition to Lottery Funding, Sport NI is funded by Grant in Aid from the Department for Communities. These funds are accounted for separately in Sports Council for Northern Ireland Accounts (referred to as Sport NI Exchequer Account).

Principal Functions related to National Lottery Distribution Activities

Sport NI has developed its policies and procedures for the Sport NI Lottery Account within the framework of the 1993 Act (as amended by the National Lottery Act 1998) and the policy and financial directions (the Directions) issued by the Department for Communities, on behalf of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Sport NI's policies and procedures are continually under review to ensure that they comply with requirements, remain appropriate and that the maximum benefit is achieved for sport in Northern Ireland.

A requirement of the 1998 Act is that Sport NI prepares and adopts a strategic plan for the distribution of its share of Lottery income. Sport NI developed and agreed a Corporate Plan covering the period 2015–2020 and a current Plan covering the period 2021-2026. These outline how Sport NI will allocate its share of Lottery funding and sets out Sport NI's priorities, activities, targets and programmes during the period.

2019-20 National Lottery Distribution Activities

In 2019-2020, Sport NI continued to offer a range of capital and revenue programmes. Every Body Active 2020 (Opportunities), Boxing and Single Facilities were existing programmes, which continued during the year. These programmes are aimed at improving access to and equitable participation in sport and physical recreation. Investment into governing bodies also continued under the Sporting Clubs and Sporting Winners programmes. Sporting Clubs delivers sustained increases in club membership through club and workforce development with a range of funded sporting organisations. Sporting Winners invests in National Governing Bodies of Sport, supporting athletes and teams that have the potential for success at major senior international competitions – Olympic Games, Paralympic Games, Commonwealth Games, World Championships and European Championships.

Future Developments in National Lottery Distribution Activities

Sport NI will continue to offer the programmes above in 2020-21. The Board met on 22 April 2020 and approved an NLDF policy setting out new investment programmes in the period of the new Corporate Plan 2021-26.

National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF) Balance Policy

As at the 31 March 2020, Sport NI Lottery Account balances at NLDF totalled £14.5m (31 March 2019: £14.1m), an increase of £0.4m on the prior year.

In August 2003, DCMS issued a Guidance Note (1/03) which proposed that all Lottery distributors should develop an NLDF policy and should publish an annual statement in their audited accounts, setting out the basis of the policy and the actions required to manage the NLDF balance. Sport NI's NLDF policy is included within the accounts at Note 7.

Key Issues and Risks

Risk management is fully incorporated into organisation and business planning. The Board manages risk by ensuring that the procedures which are in place to verify risk management are regularly reviewed and reported. The Executive Team reviews and updates the Corporate Risk Register on a quarterly basis and submits it to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee for consideration. The report is in turn considered at the subsequent Board meeting.

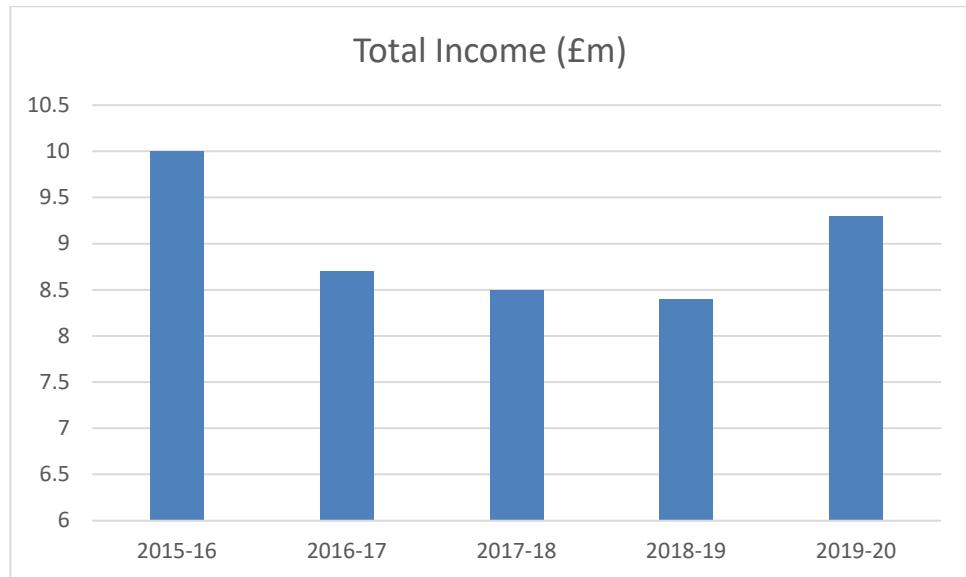
Decisions taken by Sport NI during the 2014-15 and 2015-16 years resulted in risks materialising in subsequent years that had a significant impact on the reputation and operation of the organisation. The details of these decisions and subsequent matters, including the dismissal, and subsequent reinstatement, of the Chief Executive, board resignations, departmental review, and ensuing transformation programme are outlined in the 2014-15 accounts. The areas of focus for 2019-20 are outlined in the Governance Statement.

Going Concern Basis

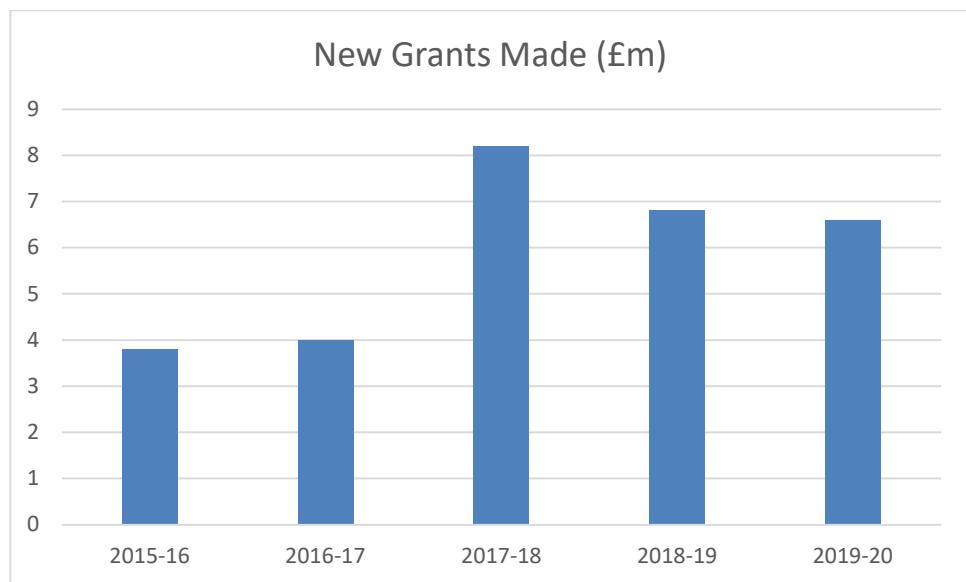
The financial statements are produced on the Going Concern basis. Going concern was re-assessed and approved by the Board at its meeting on the 14 May 2025. Sport NI is not aware of any reason to adopt a different basis.

Performance Summary

The graph below shows total income over the last five years. This has ranged from £10.0m in 2015-16 to £8.4m in 2018-19. The increase in income from £8.4m in 2018-19 to £9.3m in 2019-20 was due to exceptional sales in the EuroMillions Lotto game.



The graph below shows the level of new grants made by Sport NI over the last five years, ranging from £3.8m in 2015-16 to £8.2m in 2017-18. In 2019-20 there were £6.7m new grants made.



Covid-19

On 18 March 2020, recognising the unprecedented and challenging time facing the community and the integral role that the sports sector plays in keeping people safe, active and well during the Covid-19 health crisis, Sport NI issued the first of its communication statements on looking after the sports sector. Its premises were closed on 24 March to protect staff, stakeholders and the general public. Manifesting itself so close to the end of the financial year, Covid-19 had little impact on activities in 2019-20.

EU Exit

The UK's departure from the EU had no impact on the activities of Sport NI in 2019-20.

Performance Analysis

Financial Results

In May 2018, Sport NI reviewed cashflow forecasts and programme investments and revised the targets. The National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF) target balance for 2019-20 was not achieved as a result of the new Corporate Plan 2021-26 not being developed and approved by 31 March 2020. This was not possible due to the lack of a functioning NI Assembly from April to December 2020. Sport NI intend to address the NLDF balance by implementing new programmes over the life of the new Corporate Plan 2021-26 will address the NLDF balances. Sport NI Board has in April 2020 approved a plan and timeline for NLDF investment in the next 5-year period, aligned to our Corporate Plan.

The Sports Council for Northern Ireland's Lottery Distribution results are set out in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Income.

Total income received from the National Lottery totalled £9,280,318 (2018-19: £8,362,703).

During the year Sport NI made net commitments of £6,442,440 (2018-19: £6,222,502) to applicants.

The total administrative costs to Sport NI of its distribution activities, including staff costs, were £1,358,243 (2018-19: £1,521,178).

Equity at Year End

The Lottery Distribution Account showed net income of £ 1,479,635 (2018-19: £619,023). At 31 March 2020 the total equity showed a surplus of £11,604,673 (31 March 2019: £10,125,038).

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Risk and Uncertainty

A reduction in National Lottery funding of sports is a significant risk which could result in the loss of frontline services.

The NLDF Balance Policy Statement (Note 7) highlights that Sport NI's policy is to maintain its NLDF balance at a prudent level based on a realistic assessment of its needs and the availability of funding from NLDF.

Although income is not entirely within its control, Sport NI has arrived at the proposed NLDF target by making realistic assessments of forecasts for levels of income in future years (based on NLDF forecasts), and Sport NI's assessments of associated risks to those forecasts, forecasts for expenditure in future years as well as an analysis of future needs, opportunities and contingencies or risks. Sport NI Board's NLDF target balance for 31 March 2020, set in May 2018, was £5.793m. Sport NI Board most recently reviewed its targets in March 2023.

Sport NI's Business Plan for 2019-20 responds to strategic objectives set out in Sport NI's current Corporate Plan and reflects thirteen overarching outcomes, which are linked to Sport NI's strategic objectives. The outcomes are arranged according to the Kaplan Norton Balanced Scorecard into four main sections, namely Results, Customers/Stakeholders, Internal Processes and Organisational Learning and Growth.

Sport NI's strategic priorities and performance targets are influenced by known factors and uncertainties. A risk management framework is in place to ensure that risk is understood, reported and managed as far as reasonably practicable across the organisation.

The table below provides an overview of progress made against Key Targets (22):

- **13 (59%) were achieved (Green);**
- **2 (9%) were missed by a small margin (Amber);**
- **7 (32%) were missed by a substantial margin (Red).**

Key:

Green = Target achieved

Amber = Substantially achieved

Red = Not achieved

Business Plan Reference & Outputs	Progress Status at Year-End
<p>Results 1.1</p> <p>a) Engage a total of 89,000 participants through Sport NI's Every Body Active 2020 Strand 1: Opportunities investment programme, targeting the following underrepresented groups:*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 59% female participants.• 18% participants with a disability.• 35% participants from areas of greatest social need.• 28,000 individuals participating 11 times or more during the reporting year (sustained participant). <p>a) EBA2020 (Opportunities) final report and figures shows 95,712 total participants, representing 106% of full year target. This over-performance against total participation has a trickle-down impact on the programme % targets for specific groups; for example, in respect of female participation the numeric target was exceeded but the % target was missed by 1%. The programme % targets were 'stretch' targets – for example, women are 51% of the population but programme target was 59%; people living in areas of high social need account for 24% of population but programme target was 29%. EBA coaches/staff across all councils also indicated that Covid-19 had some adverse impact on their ability to deliver a full schedule of activity through EBA 2020 programmes in late February and throughout March 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 58% (55,658) female participants• 16% (15,027) participants with a disability;• 29% (27,337) participants from areas of greatest need; and• 28,156 individuals participated 11 times or more.	SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Business Plan Reference & Outputs	Progress Status at Year-End
<p>b) Engage a total of 18,500 participants through Sport NI's Every Body Active 2020 Strand 4: Capacity Building, Outreach & Small Grants investment programme, targeting the following underrepresented groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% female participants. • 15% participants with a disability. • 30% participants from areas of greatest social need. <p>EBA2020 (Strand 4: Capacity Building, Outreach, Small Grants) Letters of Offer issued to 10 District Councils (DC's) for 2019-20. Offers accepted by all DC's (except Ards & North Down who declined at Expression of Interest Stage). Small grants programmes have been initiated by the 10 DC's.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31,349 total participants representing 169% of our annual target for 2019-20. In June 2017, the Board approved an addendum (SNI/17/94) to the original small grants business case enabling a change to the delivery mechanism of the programme (through DC'). The addendum noted that moving delivery to DC's would deliver administrative efficiencies; the change in delivery model has also resulted in increased participant engagement through the programme (improved impact). 5/10 End of Year reports had been received by 31 May 2020; SNI is working with the DCs to receive outstanding End of Year reports and review End of Year outputs. The delay has been as a result of Covid-19. • 19,640 female participants (63%) • 4,685 participants with a disability (15%) • 13,481 participants from areas of greatest social need (43%) <p>c) Engage at least 10,000 participants through TNOC skills and leadership courses and other services.*</p>	
<p><i>*The outputs reflect Sport NI stretch targets that delivery partners are otherwise unlikely to achieve.</i></p> <p>TNOC recorded 12,767 participants by 31 March 2020. It is also noted that TNOC issued cancellation notices to 223 course participants in March 2020 as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.</p> <p>Additional facility usage includes – Altnadue Quarry usage over 12,000; Hotrock Climbing Wall usage over 2,000; Mountain Bike Skills trail 2,500</p> <p>A number of significant key events were held, including the 'Blue Lights Day' and NI Sports Forum Women's Expo.</p> <p>TNOC continues to build partnerships and relationships with Mountaineering Ireland, The Outdoor Partnership and Field Studies Council all basing staff at TNOC.</p>	

Results 1.2 - To manage and support delivery of the following action plans:

a) Active, Fit and Sporty;

The Female Sports Forum delivered the inaugural 'Active, Fit and Sporty Awards' on 04 March 2020 (Belfast). The Communities Minister, Deirdre Hargey MLA, gave a keynote address and spoke about the importance of grassroots sport within communities. Ten awards in total were presented including role model, best community intervention and best project; the event was recognised by Sport NI Chairperson as a significant success and evidenced the importance and value of publicly recognising and celebrating female sport.

ACHIEVED

FSF and other project partners (e.g. Youth Sport Trust) delivered a series of additional activities to support delivery of the Active, Fit & Sporty Action Plan & priorities including:

- Expo Events (07 March 2020, 49 participants) with governing bodies of sport (including paddle sports, mountaineering, climbing, mountain biking and abseiling) in TNOC;
- Nutritional workshops for Under 17 girls and their parents from the three participating sports (Netball, Hockey and Cricket); focused on "the athlete" and "the nutrition" and provided participants with an insight as to why it is important to consider the athlete when approaching nutritional demands in sport;
- 'Positive Body Image' workshops for >70 Regional Development Squad players (netball, hockey, cricket) that addressed issues around mental health, mental wellbeing, eating disorders and healthy lifestyles.

The Active, Fit & Sporty Participation Survey 2019 Insight Report published. Details of key findings available on request.

b) Active Living, No Limits 2021;

All Out Trekking Project (Gosford Forest Park) – project showcased by BBC as part of their Community Programming, it was aired three times during January and February 2020.

Love to Move (British Gymnastics Foundation) programme has successfully been delivered in partnership across three museums sites (the Tower Museum, Derry; the Braid Museum, Ballymena; and the NI War Museum, Belfast). Five individuals accredited to deliver the Love to Move Programme within nursing homes/day care centres; one person has also undertaken the assessor training.

The Mencap Virtual Reality Project has completed filming for 8 identified facilities/locations. These include NI Cross Community Angling, The Lakeland Forum and The Belfast Indoor Tennis and Ozone Centre Belfast. There has been a delay in filming aspects of the National Stadium due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

c) Our Great Outdoors.

Published & disseminated the 'Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation in N. Ireland'. Additional data analysis undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University to develop 11 district council level insight reports.

Sport NI has continued to develop and strengthen partnership working through 'Our Great Outdoors'. This has included a new Memorandum of Understanding with The Outdoor Partnership (TOP) in N.I. as part of a wider UK project. Work progressed to audit outdoor adventure sports clubs, opportunities and gaps across three council areas of Ards/North Down, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon and Newry Mourne and Down. Sport NI has been working closely with Lough Erne Landscape Partnership, Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust and the Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership through the community planning process in the relevant councils. As a result, 43 participants completed a certified awareness course, 17 participants completed a certified Trainers Course and a further 6 have gone through the Lowland leader training. The final set of courses planned for March had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

<p>Results 1.3 - To develop and deliver a promotional strategy on widening participation and Sporting Ambassador initiative around the Open 2019.</p> <p>Sport NI supported GUI to access additional revenue and capital funding totalling £75k to secure a lasting legacy from The Open 2019. The funding is enabling GUI to widen access to golf to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds through a series of events and coach training seminars. The programme includes Disability specific events, with coaches being upskilled to be able to coach Golfers with a disability more effectively. The programme also focuses on attracting more women into golf, with women and girl only events and coaching days. Programme planning was completed in Quarter 3 and delivery was underway throughout Quarter 4. That delivery was adversely impacted (delayed) by Covid-19 but events are being rescheduled into 2020-21 where possible pending any easing of restrictions in 2020-21.</p>	<p>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED</p>
<p>Results 2.1 - To have completed Stage 2 Multi Facility Fund assessment and identified at least 10 progression projects.</p> <p>Stage 2 processes completed. Ten Multi-Facility Fund projects progressed to Stage 3 (Business Case Development):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Newforge Sports Complex – PQQ procurement stage ii. Rainey Endowed School – development of business case iii. NI Civil Service Sports Association – PQQ stage iv. Belfast Boat Club – development of business case v. Lisburn City and Castlereagh DC (Laurelhill School) – development of business case vi. Derry City and Strabane (Melvin Sports Complex) – development of business case vii. Mid Ulster DC (MU Sports Arena) – development of business case viii. Donaghadee Sports Complex (Ards and North Down Borough Council) – reviewing original DC business case. Option may change ix. Ballyclare RFC – working with Mid and East Antrim Council regarding planned development of facilities within the area x. Armagh Sports Village (Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council) – development of strategic business case 	<p>ACHIEVED</p>
<p>Stage 3 applicants expected to complete business cases by Quarter 4 2020-21</p> <p>Results 2.2</p> <p>a) Increase sports club membership by 8,000 through Sport Northern Ireland's Sporting Clubs investment*</p> <p><i>*Figures above based on assessment with sports and associated targets</i></p> <p>Sports club membership has decreased by 17,310 in 2019-20.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 19 out of 21 realised growth in 2019-20 of a combined 7,657; o Royal Yachting Association NI encountered a decrease in membership of 3; o Ulster Council GAA encountered a decrease of 24,964 – Initial discussions have attributed this fall to the impact of Covid-19 and a reluctance from some people to register with the Central Council GAA in the main registration period January - March 2020 when there was uncertainty over any activity taking place. Ulster Council GAA have recently (Jan-Mar 2020) undertaken an Audit of their 392 clubs, this received a 93% response rate (365). This has identified that club membership in this period was at 160,424, this would be an increase in membership of 4,527 from 2019-20, with also data to be received from the remaining 7% of clubs. <p>b) Engage 13,800 learning opportunities for coaches, officials and club volunteers through Sport NI's Sporting Clubs* investment.</p> <p>18,346 learning opportunities were delivered for coaches, officials and volunteers through Sport Northern Ireland's Sporting Clubs investment.</p>	<p>NOT ACHIEVED</p>

<p>c) To deliver the 'SportMaker' Awards Project to recognise those individuals (e.g. coaches, officials) who help to make quality sport delivery happen within clubs / programmes throughout NI, enabling people to reach their sporting goals.</p> <p>SportMaker Awards were delivered throughout 2019-20 with awards presented to 12 category winners and a new Coaching Chain award presented to 5 recipients. The Celebration Evening which took place on the 24th of February 2020 in Titanic Belfast with over 120 guests in attendance including the Department for Communities Minister.</p>	
<p>Results 3.1</p> <p>a) Support sports to deliver 42* targeted performances at World Championship events (range from medal to Top 32);* 9 World level outcomes were achieved in Quarter 4 bringing the total number of World level outcomes to 53 for the year (7 x Medals, 9 x Top 8, 22 x Top 16 and 15 x Top 32). In Q4 Alice Sharpe recorded 2 x Top 8s, and Lydia Boylan and Christopher Burns both recorded 2 x Top 16s at Cycling World Championships.</p> <p>b) Support sports to deliver 46* targeted performances at European Championships (range from medal to Top 32);* There were no European level outcomes achieved in Q4, leaving the total outcomes for the year at 38.</p> <p>c) Invest in 19-20 Sports Organisations to deliver Sporting Winners benefits (medals, top 8, Top 16 at World, Olympic / Paralympic, European and Commonwealth level); All Sporting Winners made prior to Quarter 4. No offer made to Shooting in 2019/20 as the sport has sought to close its federation with individual shooting governing bodies working out their individual needs.</p> <p>d) Invest in 40 posts within sporting organisations to deliver High Performance programmes; 43 Sporting Winners funded posts continued to deliver HP programmes.</p> <p>e) To work with a range of sports (5-8) to support development of their performance sport systems; Sport NI has completed the development of a Pathway Health Check tool and have carried out Pathway Health Check 'reflection days' with 7 governing bodies of sport (RYANI, Cricket Ireland, Irish FA – Women's Programme, Hockey Ireland, Athletics NI, Ulster Rugby & Ulster GAA). Ulster & County GAA staff have been supported to be in a position to roll a similar process out at County level. A UK Wide Pathway Health Check Day was also contributed to with British Judo, the Northern Ireland Judo Federation and home country partner organisations.</p> <p>f) To deliver a Connect people Development Programme within 4 sports. The Connect People Development Programme continues to support Athletics NI, the Irish Athletic Boxing Association, Hockey Ireland and Swim Ireland in relation to the development of the people within each sports pathway. Projects are in place and progressing with each sport, based on the individual needs and state of readiness within each of the sports. Projects include coach learning opportunities, PCDE curriculum development, in-context coach support, one-to-one mentoring opportunities, change management support, coach development support, programme design support, and coach developer deployment.</p>	<p>NOT ACHIEVED</p>

<p>Customers/Stakeholders 1.1 - Work collaboratively with the Department for Communities (DfC) to engage, consult and co-design the new Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2020-2030.</p> <p><i>Through this work, Sport NI will support the development and design of a strategy that will improve the wellbeing of all citizens in Northern Ireland.</i></p> <p>DfC is progressing with Strategy 2020 and Sport NI is working closely with Departmental colleagues to share data, knowledge and insights to inform a new strategy.</p>	<u>ACHIEVED</u>
<p>Customers/Stakeholders 1.2 - To develop a new Corporate Strategy for the period 2020-2025, which meets the needs of sport, provides leadership and reflects the objectives of PfG and the new Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2020-2030.</p> <p>The draft Plan was scheduled for public consultation in September 2019, but this could not progress in the absence of an Assembly and a Minister. The draft Plan was submitted to DfC in February 2020 for Ministerial approval prior to public consultation.</p>	<u>NOT ACHIEVED</u>
<p>Customers/Stakeholders 1.3</p> <p>a) To establish & embed a culture of safety at sports venues through collaborative working with venue operators, sports governing bodies, SGSA and the DfC;</p> <p>Sport NI continuing to embed a culture of safety at sports venues across NI. In addition to providing support, advice and guidance to district councils, sports and venue operators on venue safety, SGSA identified prioritised safety improvements relating to a number of designated venues. On the basis of those recommendations, Sport NI funded safety improvement works including installation of additional PA and CCTV, in addition to other health, safety and wellbeing enhancements at The Vale Centre, Carrick Rangers FC and City of Armagh Rugby Football Club.</p> <p>Sport NI is working with SGSA to develop a new three-year work programme to commence from November 2020.</p> <p>b) Continue to share knowledge, insights and collaborate with European partners working in outdoor sports;</p> <p>Final BOSS project toolkit & report completed, published and the project submitted to the European Commission. Through the project Sport NI was responsible for dissemination and had a final “interactive PDF” produced. This is available to see at https://adobe.ly/2URxwLi</p> <p>Through ENOS, SNI was involved in an information sharing seminar hosted at the Office of NI Executive in Brussels on sustainability in outdoor sports on 3rd March 2020.</p> <p>c) To enhance greater partnership working with national governing bodies and other relevant bodies relevant to the objectives at TNOC.</p> <p>TNOC has continued to build on existing and build new partnerships across the outdoor adventure sports sector including work with other National Outdoor Centres (Glenmore Lodge and Plas Y Brenin) and NGBs (mountaineering & paddlesports). TNOC hosted a networking event for adventure activity providers in collaboration with the Irish Association of Activity Tourism (IAAT).</p>	<u>ACHIEVED</u>
<p>Customers/Stakeholders 1.4 - To work in partnership with Public Health Agency and others to develop and deliver a Mental Health and Well-Being in Sport Action Plan.</p> <p>A Pilot programme to December 2019 has delivered sessions to 2934 participants through 92 workshops. 7 Mental Health Ambassadors case studies have been released online with over 300k views. Independent evaluation carried out and recommendations presented to Wellbeing in Sport Forum and to be implemented in 2020/21.</p>	<u>ACHIEVED</u>

Customers/Stakeholders 1.5	ACHIEVED
<p>a) Deliver services into 14 - 16 High Performance (HP) Sport Programmes to support delivery of objective R3;</p> <p>Services were delivered by SNISI into the following 20 HP Programmes: (Athletics, Para Badminton, Boccia, Bowls, Boxing, Canoeing, Cycling, Men's Hockey, Women's Hockey, Judo, Netball, NICGC, Rowing, Sailing, Shooting, Para Snowsport, Swim IRL, Para Swim GB, Triathlon, Wheelchair Basketball); The process for allocation of service provision for 2020 was initiated and completed by Year End. Ongoing delivery of the 2020 support was disrupted by Covid-19, with a shift to remote engagement with sports and athletes.</p>	
<p>b) To build on the pilot project developed last year in order to deliver a Pathway Curriculum project for 1 sport;</p> <p>Sport NI has been building internal understanding and capacity in relation to Curriculum Development and Perspectives on Curriculum in partnership with UK Sport, the English Institute of Sport and SportScotland. This has enabled Sport NI to offer project support to Ulster GAA, Swim Ireland and Athletics NI.</p>	
<p>c) To develop a Northern Ireland Pathway Health Check tool that enables sports to identify strengths and gaps within their athlete pathway and use this tool with 5-8 sports;</p> <p>Sport NI has completed the development of a Pathway Health Check tool and have carried out Pathway Health Check 'reflection days' with 7 governing bodies of sport (RYANI, Cricket Ireland, Irish FA – Women's Programme, Hockey Ireland, Athletics NI, Ulster Rugby and Ulster GAA). Ulster & County GAA staff have been supported to roll a similar process out at County level. The tool and associated facilitated process have achieved strong engagement and positive feedback from sports organisations involved to date.</p>	
<p>d) To deliver 4 events that provide opportunities to develop capacity of sport-based personnel;</p> <p>Sport NI has delivered four capacity building events for Performance Pathway personnel during the 2019/20 financial year. The themes for these events have included Pathway Development, Performance Environments, Leading Change, Psychological Characteristics of Developing Excellence (PCDEs), the 'Coaching Pipeline', Succession/Workforce Planning, and Supporting the Individual Development of Performance Coaches.</p>	
<p>e) To provide 'effective organisations' support (in the areas of Governance and Anti-doping) to up to 28 sports organisations receiving investment;</p> <p>Governance and Anti-doping support is being delivered to 28 sports organisations currently in receipt of investment through the Sporting Clubs and Sporting Winners programmes.</p>	
<p>f) To develop a method to assist sports with assessment of their culture and implement improvement programmes in 6-8 sports that will address aspects of culture that are sub-optimal.</p> <p>A Sport Census tool is being used by 6 sports to examine current culture, and an internal method is to be devised by Sport NI that assists sports to assess their culture -identifying aspects for improvement (this is part of collaborative work with other Home Country Sports Institutes and will be combined with Pathway programme through UK Sport).</p>	

<p>Customers/Stakeholders 2.1 - To contribute to the development of a Mid Term Community Planning Impact Report in each of the 11 District Councils as a statutory partner in community planning.</p> <p>Sport NI contributed to 11 Community Planning Partnerships to publish a Statement of Progress within each district council area which have been submitted through District Council leads to DfC. Sport NI provided case studies ('Report Cards') for each community plan.</p> <p>Additional funding was secured to enable Sport NI to support the Implementation of Community Planning 2019/20 with at least one partnership project in each district council area that supported sporting workforce enabling clubs & communities to enable more people to adopt and sustain grassroots sport participation.</p> <p>Sport NI invested £60,000 into 18 community planning projects across the 11 district councils; this leveraged a further £66,500 partnership funding. Projects included Participatory Budgeting in Killultagh, provision of an inclusive climbing programme for children with disabilities and their families in Gilford and a programme for teenagers from three Women's Aid Groups across Mid & East Antrim to try new sports and activities, contributing to improved mental health and physical wellbeing.</p>	<p>ACHIEVED</p>
<p>Customers/Stakeholders 3.1 - Delivery of tailored service support to up to 30 Performance staff and > 100 athletes in order to meet performance needs identified in SLAs established with sports.</p> <p>Tailored support was provided to 30 Performance staff (including PDs, head coaches and service practitioners operating in National sport programmes), and 180 athletes.</p>	<p>ACHIEVED</p>
<p>Customers/Stakeholders 3.2</p> <p>a) To develop a Transitions programme pilot with sport and business in partnership with third level education and NI commerce sector to identify an effective transitions pathway for relevant athletes. Transitions programme pilot has been developed. The programme is in operation and athletes have been placed. The transitions pathway will continue as an ongoing with OU, UU and QUB</p> <p>b) To provide a key learning event for all Sport NI customers and stakeholders on best practice in sport. Game Changer event was held in September-October 2019.</p>	<p>ACHIEVED</p>
<p>Internal Processes 1.1 - To ensure compliance with statutory governance requirements and demonstrate continuous improvements in governance, reflective of best practice standards:</p> <p>a) To undertake a post project evaluations as required, including the Active, Fit and Sporty; Active Living, No Limits, Our Great Outdoors projects to inform new corporate strategy priorities aligned to sports' needs; The Active, Fit & Sporty insight report was completed during Quarter 3 and published in February 2020. http://www.sportni.net/news/active-fit-sporty-participation-survey-2019-insight-report/. No PPE was carried out by 31 March 2020. This is now scheduled for 2020-21.</p> <p>Active Living, No Limits and Our Great Outdoors are policy frameworks. Sport NI contributed to a Mid Term Review of the Active Living No Limits framework along with other sectoral partners in Quarter 2 2019-20 that noted progress against the 17 targets.</p> <p>Sport NI completed an Interim PPE on Special Olympics Ireland Investment 2016-20 (part of Active Living No Limits) for the Inter Departmental Oversight Group.</p> <p>b) To undertake a specific post project review in relation to TNOC, ensuring that departmental requirements have been met, and Project Board objectives are complete to enable transition to business as usual; The Tollymore National Outdoor Centre project investment period concluded on 31 March 2020. Therefore, the PPE was due for completion in 2020-21 and not 2019-20.</p>	<p>NOT ACHIEVED</p>

<p>c) To ensure the Internal Audit plan is effectively implemented and all relevant recommendations are completed or in progress; Sport NI continues to implement recommendations from 2018/19 IA. The 2019/20 IA exercise has been completed – this included audits in the following areas: Safeguarding, HR, Programme Funding & GFD, Finance Areas, and IT, BCP & DR. There were also two advisory pieces completed, including: Programme Funding Data Analytics Review and Gap Analysis on Policies & Procedures. The 2019/20 IA Annual Assurance statement has concluded with Satisfactory Assurance.</p> <p>d) To continue implementation of GDPR regulations aligned to best practice; Achieved.</p> <p>e) Through effective staff absence management, to have a maximum of 8.5 working days lost per employee (average per annum); and Achieved. The actual number of working days lost per employee in 2019-20 was 5.05</p> <p>f) To have completed and submitted all outstanding annual accounts and 2018/19 annual accounts to return Sport NI to a business-as-usual approach. The Exchequer 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18 accounts were all completed and published; the audit of the 2018-19 is almost complete; and the draft 2019-20 accounts will be submitted to NIAO in line with agreed timeframe. The audit of the Lottery 2014-15 and 2015-16 accounts remain in progress; the draft 2019-20 accounts will be submitted to NIAO in line with agreed timeframe.</p>	
<p>Internal Processes 2.1 - To have delivered the following system upgrades to ensure Sport NI is making the most effective and efficient use of resources through the deployment of IT;</p> <p>a) Procurement of new integrated financial, HR and information management systems; Target not achieved. Business case has been approved by DoF and DfC. System will be implemented in 2022-23.</p> <p>b) Introduce an information management system which enables capture of data for effective and evidence based strategic decision making; and Target not achieved. Business case has been approved by DoF and DfC. System will be implemented in 2022-23.</p> <p>c) Upgrade Sport NI website to reflect technological developments and to ensure information is more user friendly and accessible. Target not achieved. Procurement process is underway and to be upgraded in 2020-21.</p>	NOT ACHIEVED
<p>Internal Processes 3.1 - To implement an effective health and safety policy and associated procedures aligned to statutory requirements and best practice. Sport NI's Health and Safety policy and its implementation is compliant with statutory requirements, Regular compliance testing is carried and reported monthly to the Sport NI HR Committee, all staff are provided with regular training and updates in this area.</p>	ACHIEVED
<p>Internal Processes 3.2 - To develop a staff well-being and duty of care delivery plan to reflect Sport NI culture of placing staff well-being as a key cornerstone of a modern lead sports development agency. During 2019-20, the Sport NI DNA has been developed. The DNA is underpinned by Values, Mindsets and Behaviours with staff wellbeing at the forefront of these. Wellbeing initiatives have been delivered to all staff throughout the year including access for all staff to Inspires Wellbeing Hub as part of an Employee Assistance Programme.</p> <p>Organisational Learning and Growth 1.1 - To appoint a new and substantive Executive Leadership Team to Sport NI, aligned to the "Driving High Performance initiative and organisational development needs. Not achieved. This will be achieved in 2020-21.</p>	ACHIEVED

<p>Organisational Learning and Growth 1.2 - To undertake a range of knowledge capture and insight work to ensure an evidence-based approach to new Corporate Plan priorities and new Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2020-2030 (linked to CS 1.1 and CS1.2).</p> <p>A range of knowledge capture and insight work was undertaken throughout the year. This included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Club survey; 2. Programme level reports (EBA/SC/SW) 3. Economic impact of outdoor recreation; 4. Consensus statement on physical literacy (ongoing in partnership with Sport Ireland); 5. Corporate Plan 2021-26 stakeholder engagement 	<p>ACHIEVED</p>
<p>Organisational Learning and Growth 2.1 - To have restructured Sport NI staffing to ensure we have the necessary skills and functions in place to deliver our strategy and that we are an efficient and effective workforce working towards the same common goal.</p> <p>Not achieved – this will be achieved in 2020-21.</p>	<p>NOT ACHIEVED</p>
<p>Organisational Learning and Growth 2.2 - To develop a staff training and development plan aligned to staff restructuring and our new corporate strategy, organisational objectives and performance needs.</p> <p>As part of the annual Performance Management process, staff members have agreed performance objectives in line with the Sport NI Business Plan along with associated training requirements. HR Committee has considered and approved the Training and Development Plan for delivery within 2019/20. HR and Line Managers are coordinating the delivery of the Training and Development activities, including Corporate Governance, Business Case development and Procurement training.</p>	<p>ACHIEVED</p>

The following narrative provides detail of the significant work of Sport NI during 2019-20:

1.0 Participation and Facilities

The role of our Participation and Facilities Unit is to lead and develop quality sporting experiences at grassroots level, increasing access to sport and physical recreation and ensuring a life-long enjoyment of sport for all people, regardless of age, gender, background or disability.

1.1 Every Body Active 2020 (Opportunities)

Every Body Active 2020 is closely aligned to Sport NI's responsibilities within community planning and has embedded the 'Outcome Based Accountability' model within its approach to monitoring and evaluation. To that end, the impact of the programme is presented here using the OBA framework of:

- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Is anyone better off?

How much did we do?

In 2019-20, Sport NI invested £1,580,293 of National Lottery funds in the 'Opportunities' strand of the Every Body Active 2020 programme. This investment, delivered through the 11 district councils and in partnership with a range of governing bodies of sport and sports clubs, enabled 95,712 individuals (against a target of 89,000) to participate in sport and physical activity across Northern Ireland.

Overall programme participation was broken down as follows:

- 55,658 (106% of numeric target) female participants (58% of total programme participants – target 59%);
- 15,027 participants (94% of numeric target) with a disability (16% of total – target 18%);
- 28,156 participants (99% of target) engaged in sustained activities (11 activities or more over the reporting year); and
- 27,337 participants (88% of target) from areas of greatest need (29% of total – target 35%, cf. 24% of total NI population).

How well did we do it?

As part of the EBA 2020 (Opportunities), Sport NI commissioned a Participant Survey, where currently 3,290 participant surveys were completed across NI in 2019-20. 1,630 were completed by participants aged 4-11, 788 by young participants aged 12-17 and adults completed 872. Participants can complete the survey themselves, or it can be completed on their behalf by coaches/parents.

Final results of the survey will be available at the end of June 2020 following data collation, cleansing and analysis. Responses from these age groups will detail the impact that the Every Body Active 2020 programme has had on those who have taken part over the 2019-20.

Specifically, responses will provide details on the level of enjoyment of the programme across each of the age groups and give an indication on the level of engagement in sport and physical activity of participants prior to their involvement in the programme. This response provides a useful comparison with another surveyed insight that aims to capture sustained participation details. The survey enquires whether participants wish to continue taking part in the sport/physical activity they engaged in during the programme and asks participants to indicate whether they have joined a sports team or organised physical activity group since taking part in the programme. Younger participants are asked if they have joined a similar team or group both in and outside of school.

Is anyone better off?

Further questions from the Participation Survey will allow us to evaluate the positive impact of the Every Body Active 2020 programme. Participants provide information about their frequency of taking part in sport/physical activity post-programme and also indicate if their health and fitness has improved since taking part. These figures can also be broken down to provide figures for the women and girls and people with a disability, this providing complementary findings for two of the KPIs of the programme. Participants are also asked to consider whether taking part in the programme has impacted upon their self-confidence, and this offers a further indication of the impact of the Every Body Active 2020 programme.

Case Studies:

The examples below have been selected from a range of case studies highlighted across all of the 11 councils throughout Northern Ireland.

1. SENSE Project (Mid and East Antrim). The project is for participants with sight loss, hearing impairments and learning difficulties and is sustained by Every Body Active 2020 coaches. Participants are given the opportunity to take part in sports such as Boccia, Basketball, Golf and Rugby in a way that is suitable for all abilities. The programme has enabled participants and their carers to increase their confidence and enjoyment and allow them to break down barriers in their day-to-day life. <https://youtu.be/8pL769YdCvc>
2. Netball Morning with Victoria College (Belfast City Council) is designed for girls to take part in netball sessions with a coach from Netball NI. Sessions take place between 8.00 and 8.45am before school starts and allows participants to develop new and existing skills in netball. The sessions are beneficial and popular because they cut out the need for childcare for parents and participants can engage in a fun activity that reduces stress, anxiety and improves concentration for the rest of the school day. <https://youtu.be/oC1p4y5jn0>

3. Yogalates (Ards and North Down Borough Council) provides free pilates and yoga sessions that are sustained by the Every Body Active 2020 programme. The sessions are open to people of all ages (18-80) and all genders. 20 people can take part in a session at a time and most spaces are filled in all sessions. Participants have commented that they like the sessions because they offer a way of getting active and encourage them to return to other forms of sport and physical activity. <https://youtu.be/DTkieAig1Q4>

1.2 Every Body Active 2020 (Outdoor Spaces)

Outdoor recreation is all about having a great time being active outdoors, in a natural environment. The natural outdoor environment provides a fantastic resource that has the potential for delivering healthy and active lifestyles for everyone, regardless of background or identity. Access to green space is globally recognised as critical to our physical and mental health and well-being. Helping people to be active outdoors in groups or as individuals can help to deliver on issues associated with social exclusion, rural and urban deprivation and community cohesion.

Sport NI's EBA 2020 Outdoor Spaces (pilot) programme was designed to encourage and enable more people to access local trails for cycling and walking within their local communities. In addition to the benefits outlined above, the Outdoor Spaces programme has also enabled Sport NI to develop and strengthen its partnership working across government, in particular leveraging additional investment into a number of projects from DAERA rural development funds (Tackling Rural Poverty & Social Exclusion).

During 2019-20, Sport NI progressed the final projects within its 'Every Body Active 2020' Outdoor Spaces programme; these included:

- Crumlin Glen Trail, (Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council)
- Garvagh Forest Trails, (Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council)
- Accessible sites at Groomsport and Cranfield beaches, (Mae Murray Foundation)
- Derrymore Demesne Trails, (Newry, Mourne and Down District Council)

1.3 Multi Facility Fund

Sport NI launched its National Lottery funded 'Multi Facility Fund' in 2018-19. We received 47 Stage 1 applications in May 2018 and by September 2018, 39 of those projects had progressed to Stage 2. Preliminary workshops for Stage 2 projects were held at locations throughout Northern Ireland in October 2018, reflecting the geographical spread of projects.

The Stage 2 phase was originally due to close in March 2019 but following representations from the Chief Leisure Officers Association (CLOA), this was extended to the end of May 2019. A total of 19 Stage 2 applications were received by the closing date. Those projects who decided not to submit a Stage 2 application did so on the basis of the additional information and understanding of the programme following the Stage 2 workshops and Sport NI officer support.

During Q2 & Q3 2019-20, Sport NI officers assessed the 19 Stage 2 applications against the published criteria and each project was subsequently peer reviewed through a series of moderation meetings. Each application was also subject to independent moderation (internally by the Club and Workforce Team and externally by DAERA staff).

Based on the indicative available National Lottery budget (£6.75m), Sport NI is progressing the top ten projects. Ten projects have been progressed to Stage 3 on the basis of a prudent level of over-commitment; based on prior experience of large capital projects, it is reasonable to anticipate that some projects will withdraw due to unforeseen circumstances.

The ten projects are now working through Stage 3 Business Case and are expected to progress to final decision (by Sport NI Board) during 2020-21.

Multi Facility Fund Stage 3 progression projects are:

- Rainey Endowed College, Magherafelt
- Northern Ireland Civil Service Sports Association, Belfast
- Newforge Sports Complex (Newforge Community Development Trust)
- Belfast Boat Club
- Laurelhill College, (Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council)
- Melvin Sports Complex, (Derry City and Strabane District Council)
- Mid Ulster Sports Arena, (Mid Ulster District Council)
- Ballyclare Rugby Football Club
- Donaghadee Sports Hub (Ards and North Down Borough Council)
- Armagh Sports Village (Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council)

2.0 Performance

2.1 Sporting Winners

Programme Goals

Sporting Winners is investing to deliver programme objectives across 5 performance indicators;

1. To increase the number of medals won by Northern Ireland athletes at the highest level of their sport by 31 March 2021.
2. To increase the number of Top 8 finishes by Northern Ireland athletes at Olympic/Paralympic, World, European and Commonwealth Games by 31 March 2021.
3. To increase the number of Top 16 finishes by Northern Ireland athletes at Olympic/Paralympic, World, European and Commonwealth Games by 31 March 2021.
4. To increase the number of athletes from NI who have won medals at the highest level in their sport by 31 March 2021.
5. To have supported athletes qualify for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games 2020.

This is achieved through investment in governing bodies of sport either regionally (Northern Ireland/Ulster) or nationally (Great Britain/Ireland) recognising Northern Ireland's position at the intersection of both the British and Irish performance sport pathways.

Programme Performance

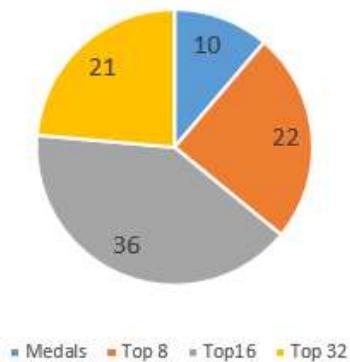
Under the Effective Organisations element, up to 28 governance 'expectations' were identified (see *Sporting Clubs* section for details) at the beginning of the programme and each sport has committed to address these expectations over the period of the investment. At the end of Year 3 of the investment, of the 17 sporting bodies receiving Effective Organisations support, 397 (86%) of the 464 expectations had been addressed. The remaining expectations are on track for completion before the end of Year 4.

The Sporting Winners Programme runs over a four-year cycle and the contribution of each sport as a 'project' within this Programme will also vary across the cycle. Detailed submissions were made by sports. Due to the nature of high performance sport, it will be challenging to achieve every result targeted, it is therefore reasonable to expect that there will be over-achievers and under-achievers. The key is annual progression towards the overall Programme targets and management of performance of projects within the Programme.

Although Year 3 of the investment has delivered benefits at a lower level than originally anticipated, the programme remains on track with over 95% achievement of the projected benefits in the first three years. The spread of outcomes across the various categories is shown below.

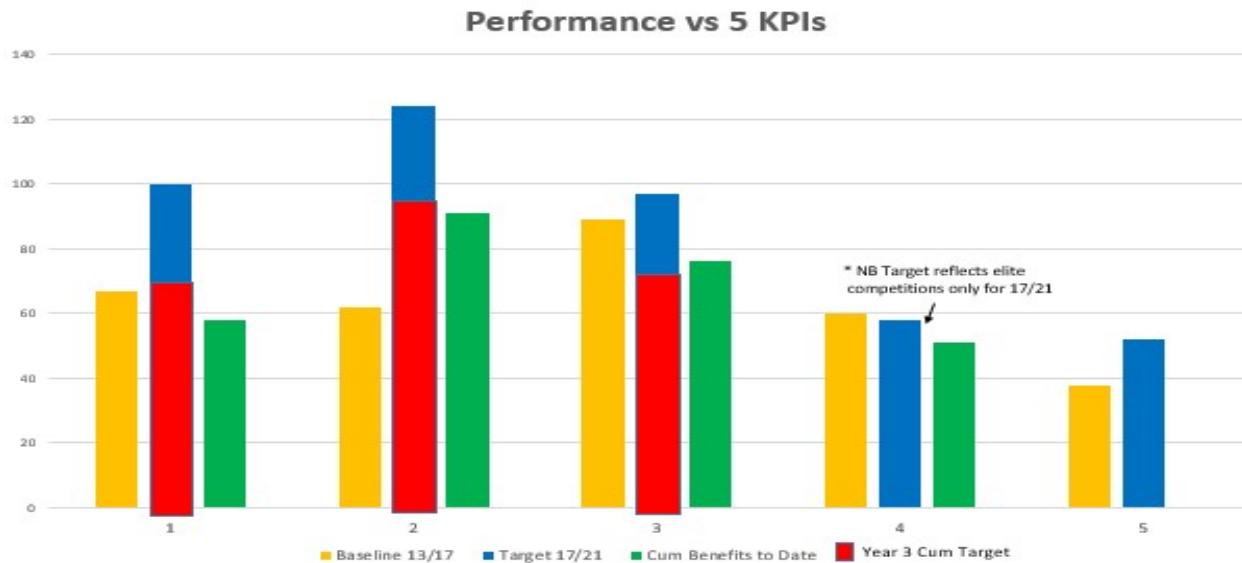


Outcomes in 2019/20



1. Graph showing medals and placings for SW Year 3 – targets vs actuals
2. Pie chart comparing the proportion of medals and placings for SW Year 3

The nature of performance sport makes accurate prediction of outcomes more challenging in the later stages of the programme, which is a significant contributor to the gap against target by the third year of the programme. That said, the vast majority of sports improved their cumulative points tallies in Year 3, with a number significantly exceeding their targets.



3. Graph showing the 5 Sporting Winners Performance Indicators – baseline figures; 2017-21 target; Year 2 target; Cumulative benefits to date (1. Medals; 2. Top 8s; 3. Top 16s; 4. Nos. of Medallists; 5. Nos. of Olympians/Paralympians)

Looking at the programme to date, the challenges that impacted Year 1 of the programme, such as cancelled events or athletes being injured, were compensated for by performances at the Commonwealth Games and other championships in Year 2 and a number of sports have recorded performances well above target in Year 3. Overall, the cumulative benefits of 95.4% achievement of targeted benefits are a reflection of the health of the programme and the level of stability it has in a rapidly changing environment of performance sport.

Programme Investment

Sport NI has invested £2,403,467 in 17 organisations in Year 3 of the Sporting Winners Programme to facilitate this achievement. Of the sports included within the Sporting Winners Programme, only Shooting did not receive funding this year - its funding was agreed to be Year 1 only. There are 52 posts operating across the 17 sporting organisations that are supported by this investment on an employed and contracted basis.



4. Graph showing sports cumulative performance to date as a proportion of 3-year target, overlaid with annual investment level.

Year 2 of Sporting Winners was closed out by August 2019. Historically de-commitments of funding to High Performance scheme have occurred due to poor planning and/or poor financial management within sports. In Year 1 of the Sporting Winners programme, de-commitment was 6.4% (£179,575) out of a £2.8m investment. This was far below de-commitment on the previous two programmes (covering 8 years) and has been attributed to work that had gone into addressing this area proactively with sports. Year 2 saw an even smaller de-commitment level of 1.9% (£42,400 out of a £2.2m investment) as the programme has become more embedded. Sports are continuing to show both better long-term planning and financial management skills, as well as working more collaboratively with Sport NI.

Athlete Awards

The Sporting Winners Programme continued to invest in Athlete Awards to assist athletes with essential personal costs and to make changes enabling greater commitment to training. Awards are targeted at athletes able to demonstrate financial need. In year 3 of the programme Athlete Awards were made to 23 Olympic/Paralympic and Commonwealth sports, worth a total amount of £252,750. Of these 23 organisations, 19 are also in receipt of Sporting Winners Programme funding. The allocation to Irish Hockey was paid as a block payment and was not player-specific but covered both the male and female disciplines. The 5 Olympic and Commonwealth sports applying for and being granted Athlete Awards in 2019-20 that did not receive Sporting Winners Programme funding are: British Rowing, Horse Sport Ireland, Gymnastics Ireland, Irish Surfing Association and GB Taekwondo. In total, awards were made to 82 athletes of which 56 were male and 25 female. The 69/31 gender split compares to 74/26 in Year 2. In Year 3 there were a total of 29 first time recipients- 16 male and 13 female.

Looking forward - Sporting Winners Year 4 (2020-21)

Year 4 is the key year for the programme, with both the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games scheduled for July-September. Events which have unfolded in early 2020 around the COVID-19 pandemic have caused significant disruption to all high-performance sports, with camps cancelled and Olympic/Paralympic qualifying events cancelled. Olympic qualification processes had not been completed in many sports although Northern Ireland athletes had secured quota places for nations (GBR or IRL) across a wide range of sports as shown in the table below:

OLYMPIC

Archery (GBR)
Athletics (IRL)
Boxing (IRL)
Golf (IRL)
Women's Hockey (IRL)
Men's Hockey (GBR)
Rowing (GBR & IRL)
Shooting (GBR)
Triathlon (IRL)
Gymnastics* (IRL)
Eventing* (IRL)

**Indicates no Sporting Winners investment*

PARALYMPIC

Para Swimming (GBR & IRL)
Para athletics (IRL)
Wheelchair basketball (GBR)
Canoeing (GBR)
Boccia (GBR)

On 24 March 2020 the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games were postponed until 2021.

2.2 Sporting Clubs

Programme Goals

The Sporting Clubs Programme has invested in 21 sporting organisations (governing bodies of sport and umbrella organisations) to deliver against the applied principles of investment listed below.

1. Growing, sustaining and retaining the number of sports club members
2. Quality of sports club management and operations
3. The recruitment, development, deployment and retention of an active and skilled:
 - Coaching population for identified coaching settings;
 - Club volunteer population to fulfil key roles;
 - Official population to fulfil key roles.

Investment is across two elements of the programme, namely Club & Workforce Development (CWD) and Effective Organisations (EO).

Programme Performance

Under the Effective Organisations element, up to 28 governance ‘expectations’ were identified at the beginning of the programme and each sport has committed to address these expectations over the period of the investment. At the end of Year 3 of the investment, of the 21 sporting bodies receiving Effective Organisations support, 480 (84%) of the 572 expectations had been addressed. The remaining expectations are on track for completion before the end of Year 4.

The governance expectations are based on ‘The Code of Good Governance (Northern Ireland)’ produced by the Developing Governance Group. The last twelve months has seen a progressive shift in Sport NI’s aim to add value to the work of the governing bodies and move away from the checking/auditing nature that has been the approach in the past.

Under the Club & Workforce Development (CWD) element, sports are asked to report against a number of performance measures. The table below shows progress against each performance measure at the end of Years 1 and 2 using a RAG rating: green – on target; amber – within 10% of target; red below 10% of target. At the end of Year 2 (2018-19) Sporting Clubs is on target to achieve in 8 of the 9 performance measure areas. Reporting figures for the 2019-20 period will not be available until the end of April 2020 and will then go through a period of verification.

Performance description	measure	Target	Progress Year 1	Progress Year 2
No. of Sports		21	19	21
No. of Posts – CWD & EO		54.5	47*	70**
Club Membership		Increase by 27,905	23,578	33,545
New Club Members		67,613	27,200	52,624
Clubs Accredited		284	151	122
New Coaches		Increase by 4,617	5,391	7,610
New Volunteers		Increase by 2,269	1,763	3,509
New Officials		Increase by 791	570	962
Workforce Learning Opportunities		50,000	16,236	41,780

* Amber at end of Year 1 taking account of the number of posts that were due to be in place at this time rather than against programme end target.

** Posts at end of year 2 has exceeded the programme end target due to the redistribution of some programme spend into posts, this specifically relates to administration posts within effective organisations element of the programme.

Governing Body Engagement

Throughout 2019-20 Sport NI has engaged with sporting organisations through a variety of formats including project meetings, the Club & Workforce Development Network and targeted events. In May 2019 Sport NI hosted an Insight Session with National Governing Bodies which was open to their Board members and staff. These sessions delivered by 4Global highlighted the importance of *Insight* and the need for organisations to justify their areas of work in the future and to be able to demonstrate the impact of these. Insight was also the focus of the Club & Workforce Network in November with insight specialist Callum Irving facilitating a session with attendees to look at how they engage their environment to gain knowledge and use this information to set direction. The focus on these sessions has been important to ensure that as we move towards the next cycle of investment Governing Bodies can demonstrate the insight, they hold on their environment, sport and populations and to identify the outcomes that can be delivered through engagement to add value to society.

Programme Investment

The Sporting Clubs programme originally awarded £2,014,638 across the 21 sporting organisations, award adjustments totalling £9,000 were made to 2 organisations leading to a total of £2,023,638 awarded.

Looking forward - Sporting Clubs Year 4 (2020-21)

Moving into the last year of the Sporting Clubs Programme, sports need to continue to build insight into their sport and also the populations that they engage. This will enable sports to make strategic decisions for the development of their own sport in the current environment and to address the areas of challenge that they face. The final year of an investment is also an opportunity to be innovative in design and use the knowledge learned in the previous years of investment. Sport NI has completed a NI Clubs Survey through use of Exchequer funding in 2019-20. This has generated a rich source of insight to inform Sport NI's thinking regarding future investment in clubs under Sport NI's new Corporate Plan.

3.0 Additionality

Sport NI recognises and respects the additionality principles of Lottery funding. Lottery funding enables us to extend the reach and increase the impact of the activity that we could undertake if Exchequer funds alone were available. Together with the other Lottery distributors, we have agreed to share the following common definition of additionality:

“Lottery funding is distinct from government funding and adds value. Although it does not substitute for Exchequer expenditure, where appropriate it complements government and other programmes, policies and funding.”

We have regard to the principles of additionality and this policy when we set the strategic objectives of our Lottery-funded programmes and when we decide how each programme will operate. We have, and will continue to use, Lottery funding to fund specific, time-limited activity that would not take place without the support of Lottery.

4.0 Sustainability Report

Sport NI is committed to practices and procedures that minimise impacts on the environment and has continued to make good progress in becoming a more sustainable organisation while still focusing on “making sport happen.” For example, the Sport NI Procurement Policy seeks to implement the Department of Finance procurement guidance note in integrating social considerations into contracts where appropriate.

Sport NI strategy encourages its staff to ensure that:

- Energy usage is more efficient.
- Business travel where possible continues to be reduced through greater use of Video/Teleconferencing.
- Waste Management is controlled through the practice of reduce, reuse, repair and recycle.
- Biodiversity remains an element in planning for sports facilities and developments.

5.0 Ethical Practices

Sport NI is committed to ensuring that its policies, procedures and services which it receives from third parties respect human rights, promote equality and manage the risk of fraud, anti-bribery and corruption. Sport NI utilises Central Procurement Directorate on procurement which has policies in place to assist with ethical practices.

Sport NI has a number of policies in place which are designed to minimise the risk of fraud. These are: Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy & Procedures, Conflicts of Interest Policy & Procedures, Whistleblowing Policy & Procedures and Gifts and Hospitality Policy & Procedures.

During 2019-20 there was one report of suspected fraud relating to Sport NI. An independent investigation found no evidence of fraud. (2018-19: nil).

6.0 Communications

Sport NI Communications Strategy focused successfully on social media as a primary engagement tool and utilised our Sporting Ambassadors to attract significant media opportunities, who conveyed key strategic messages aligned to the organisational objectives and route map for change. Reach was optimised for the launch and messaging of the Wellbeing in Sport project, and Tollymore National Outdoor Centre consistently outperformed other comparable outdoor centres on social media. Sectoral engagement around key learning topics, culminated in the very successful Game Changer Conference over 30 September and 1 October 2019.

Communications also conveyed the transformative impact of the National Lottery investments over the last 25 years on projects, communities and people through a joint media campaign to tell the 'One National Lottery' story with the National Lottery family. The media campaign involved high profile athletes, case studies of impactful sports projects, organised around thematic approaches; culminating at the Sport NI conference; to link the National Lottery players to the good causes. The evaluation indicated a strong national reach through print and broadcast media.

7.0 Social & Community Issues

Sport NI supports charitable giving. The staff fund makes charitable donations each year. For the year ended 31 March 2020 it hosted three charity fundraising events raising a total of £195 for three charities.

8.0 Human Rights

Sport NI is deeply committed to equality, diversity, inclusion and respect for human rights. We will prioritise the dignity and welfare of our staff and stakeholders. During the course of their employment, no employee receives less favourable treatment or is discriminated against on the grounds of their sex including gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity leave, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, race or ethnic origin, religious belief, political opinion, national identity, age, or disability. Sport NI also ensure that the statutory equality duties relating to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act informs and influences our key policies and practices.

9.0 Covid-19

Financially, the impact was limited to some £460,000 of timing differences, due to the delay in issuing capital grant awards, resulting from the inability to complete construction works due to lockdown restrictions. These grant awards were subsequently issued in 2020-21.

10.0 Research and Development

Sport NI conducted extensive sectoral engagement and a desk-based research literature review during 2019-20 in preparation for the new Corporate Plan period. Specific research and evaluation was undertaken for: Economic Impact of Outdoor Sport; Active, Fit and Sporty (female sport); Clubs Survey.

11.0 Political and Charitable Donations

Sport NI made no such donations during 2019-20 (2018-19: NIL).

12.0 Payment of Suppliers

Sport NI is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services in accordance with the Confederation of British Industry's Prompt Payment Code. The target for payment of bills is 10 days from receipt of goods or services or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later. During 2019-20 Sport NI paid 52% (31 March 2019: 90%) of invoices within 10 working days and 87% (31 March 2019: 100%) of invoices within 30 days. Overall, for the year, the average number of days taken to pay invoices was 29 days (2018-19: 9 days). The delays were as a result of staff turnover within the finance team, with several temporary staff members during the year filling the finance officer role which manages the payment approval process.

13.0 Pension Fund

All assets, liabilities and operating costs of Sport NI's pension scheme are recorded in the accounts of the Sport NI Exchequer entity. The salary charges to Lottery in-year include a recharge of employer pension costs of £133,876 (2018-19: £140,616).

The market value of Sport NI's share of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) pension scheme's assets (excluding Additional Voluntary Contributions) at 31 March 2020 was £25.14m (31 March 2019: £31.09m) and the present value of Sport NI's share of the scheme liabilities was £35.543m (31 March 2019: £37.107m). Sport NI's share of the Scheme recorded net pension liabilities at 31 March 2020 of £10.403m (31 March 2019: £6.017m).

All assets, liabilities and operating costs of Sport NI's pension scheme are recorded in the accounts of the Exchequer entity. Details of this pension scheme are available within the Sport NI's Exchequer accounts.

14.0 Interest Rate and Currency Risk

Sport NI has no borrowing, relying primarily on Lottery funding for its cash requirements and is therefore not exposed to liquidity risks. It has also no material deposits. Therefore, Sport NI is not exposed to material interest rate risk and, as all significant assets and liabilities are determined in sterling, it is not exposed to material currency risk.

15.0 Accounts and Appointment of Auditors

Sport NI is required to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in accordance with sections 35(2) and 35(3) of the National Lottery etc. Act 1993.

The financial statements are also prepared in accordance with:

- The form directed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport with the consent of the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland and the approval of HM Treasury in accordance with Section 35(2) – (3) of the National Lottery etc. Act 1993; and
- 2019-20 Government Financial reporting Manual issued by HM Treasury.

The Department for Communities issued Lottery Policy Directions to Sport NI on 16 April 2008, a copy is attached at Appendix A.

Under the National Lottery etc. Act 1993, in particular Section 35(5), the Comptroller and Auditor General audits the financial statements of each of the National Lottery distributing bodies. The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) complete this audit on behalf of the National Audit Office (NAO). Once complete, the NAO is responsible for laying the audited accounts before Parliament.

The fee for the audit of these financial statements was £47,500 (2018-19: £47,000). This cost is included in Other Operating costs in the financial statements. Sport NI did not purchase any non-audit services from its external auditor.

The NIAO published a separate report on governance issues in Sport NI early in 2020. The Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, led on addressing the issues arising from this report.

16.0 Disclosure of Relevant Audit Information

So far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which Sport NI's auditors are unaware. The Accounting Officer has taken all steps that he ought to have taken to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that Sport NI's auditors are aware of that information.

17.0 Complaints Handling

Sport NI operates a complaints procedure to manage general complaints about our service. Complaints can be made informally by telephone or formally in writing.

Further information on the complaints procedure can be found on the Sport NI website at: [Raising-a-Concern-Framework.pdf \(sportni.net\)](https://www.sportni.net/Raising-a-Concern-Framework.pdf)

There was one complaint received in the 2019-20 financial year (2018-19: two). The complaint was about administrative handling.

**Richard Archibald
Accounting Officer
Sports Council for Northern Ireland**

Date: 16 December 2025

Accountability Report

Corporate Governance Report

Introduction

The Corporate Governance Report explains the composition and organisation of Sport Council's governance structures and how they support the achievement of the entity's objectives. The report begins with a Directors' Report which sets out the composition of the Board and a Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities in respect of the preparation of the accounts. It concludes with the Governance Statement which sets out how the Accounting Officer's duties in relation to internal control and the safeguarding of public funds and the Sports Council's assets have been carried out through the financial year and includes an assessment of the corporate governance and risk management systems in place within Sports Council.

Directors' Report

Board Members of the Sports Council and Members of its Committees

The Board of the Sports Council consists of a Chair and Vice-Chair and other Members appointed by the Minister for Communities, after a selection and recruitment process that is carried out by Department for Communities.

The following persons served as members during the financial year 2019-20.

Mr. G Lucas – (Chair) (appointed February 2017)

Mr. J Colville – (Vice-Chair) (appointed February 2017)

Dr. C O'Mullan (Interim Vice-Chair) *

Ms. J. Bryson (appointed February 2017, resigned January 2023)

Mr. R Bullick

Ms. W Erskine (resigned August 2022)

Mr. K Ferguson

Mr. K Harding

Mr. D. Petticrew (appointed February 2017, resigned March 2022)

Ms. S. Weir (appointed February 2017, resigned May 2019)

* Dr. C. O'Mullan was appointed to the position of Interim Vice-Chair until the new Vice-Chair (J. Colville) was appointed on 1 February 2017.

Mr. G. Boyd joined the board in August 2021 and was appointed Chair in February 2025.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The members of the Committee were:

Mr. J. Colville (appointed June 2017)

Mr. K. Ferguson (appointed June 2017)

Mr. K. Harding (resigned December 2021)

Mr. M. Matthews (appointed November 2017)

Dr. C. O'Mullan (appointed June 2017)

Mr. D. Petticrew (appointed June 2017)

Board Directorships or Other Interests

Note 18 within the financial statements details any interests held by Sport NI Board Members. The register of interests can be seen at <http://www.sportni.net/about-us/register-of-interests>.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive, Antoinette McKeown, is the permanent Accounting Officer. The Chief Executive is supported by three executive directors heading each of the departments within the organisation. Due to the unavailability of the Chief Executive at the time of signing an interim Chief Executive and Accounting Officer, Richard Archibald, was appointed by the Department for Communities (DfC).

Organisational Structure

The affairs of Sport NI are managed by a Board consisting of the members listed in the Directors' Report. Sport NI has an Interim Chief Executive and currently has three executive directors: the Interim Director of Finance and Governance, the Interim Director of Participation and Facilities and the Interim Director of Performance. This team is supported by a discreet Executive Unit to facilitate coherent and consistent decision making and communication across the organisation. The Interim Chief Executive, Richard Archibald, is the Accounting Officer for Sport NI and is supported by a professional staff responsible for subject and functional areas of Sport NI's programme.



Information Assurance

Sport NI's Information Governance and Security Unit safeguards business and personal data. Sport NI is compliant with the measures of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). All staff received GDPR online training. Sport NI maintains an Information Asset register which is updated annually. All staff received 'A guide to Physical, Document and IT Security' and the organisation operates a clear desk policy.

There were no reportable incidents of a loss of data or information during the year.

Statement of the Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Sport NI is required to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form directed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) with the consent of the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland and the approval of HM Treasury in accordance with section 35(2) - (3) of the National Lottery etc. Act 1993 (as amended) and the Lottery Accounts Directions issued by the Department for Communities on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Sport NI Lottery Account and of its income and expenditure, statement of financial position, changes in equity, and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by Department for Communities on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- observe the current version of the Government Financial Reporting Manual;
- make judgments and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis.

The Accounting Officer for the Department for Communities has appointed the Chief Executive of Sport NI as the Accounting Officer for Sport NI. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding Sport NI's assets, are set out in the Non-Departmental Public Bodies' Accounting Officer Memorandum, which is issued by the Department of Finance and published in Managing Public Money published by HM Treasury; and in the Financial Directions issued by Department for Communities on behalf of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport under s26(3) of the National Lottery etc. Act 1993 (as amended).

So far as, the Accounting Officer of Sport NI, is aware there is no relevant audit information of which Sport NI's auditors are unaware. Given issues relating to corporate memory, the Accounting Officer has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that Sport NI's auditors are aware of that information.

I hereby confirm that the annual report and accounts as a whole are fair, balanced and understandable, and that I take personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgements required for determining that they are fair, balanced and understandable.

Governance Statement

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Governance Statement is to explain what arrangements Sport NI has in place to identify, evaluate and manage the risks to the achievement of objectives. Sport NI's Governance Statement is informed by the corporate risk register, bi-annual and annual assurance statements to the Department, management reports and findings from third party reviews.

2. Compliance and Structure of Governance

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values, by which Sport NI is directed and controlled and the activities through which it accounts to and engages with the public and other stakeholders. It enables Sport NI to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate and value for money services and facilities.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives, and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Sport NI's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

Sport NI is publicly accountable to the Department for Communities, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and their Ministers for its performance and the use of its resources.

Sport NI's governance framework is predicated on the provisions laid out within its Management Statement and Financial Memorandum with its parent Department, the Department for Communities and 'Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice NI 2013' ("the 2013 Code") as detailed below in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Sport NI's Governance Framework



The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise Sport NI's governance arrangements are:

Vision, Purpose and Intended Outcomes

In delivering on its strategic objectives, Sport NI produces a five-year corporate plan and an annual business plan. The corporate plan is a forward-looking document linking the operational activities of Sport NI to its strategy.

Sport NI had a Corporate Plan for the period 2015-20 and a current plan covering the period 2021-26. These plans adopted a Balanced Scorecard Approach enabling the employment of an “outcomes-based” approach in support of the new Programme for Government 2016-21. Driving the plans was our vision which was “Northern Ireland: renowned as a place where people enjoy, engage, and excel in sport”.

This vision was supported by our mission at that time ‘to lead world class sports development at all levels producing more participants and more winners. Sport NI sought to realise this vision through interventions that created Sporting Communities, identified and supported effective Sporting Clubs and resource and celebrated Sporting Winners.

The 2015-20 plan was based on projections of £100.3m of resources for the period. In administering these resources, Sport NI focused on the changes needed across Northern Ireland to provide people and athletes with the conditions they require to participate, perform and succeed in sport.

Accounting Officer Role

The Accounting Officer of Sport NI is personally responsible for safeguarding the public funds for which they have charge; for ensuring propriety and regularity in the handling of those public funds; and for the day-to-day operations and management of Sport NI.

The Accounting Officer exercises the following responsibilities:

- Establish, in agreement with the Department for Communities (DfC) and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), corporate and business plans in support of DfC's wider strategic aims and current Programme for Government objectives;
- Inform the Departments of Sport NI's progress in helping to achieve the Departments' policy objectives and in demonstrating the use of resources to achieve those objectives;
- Ensure timely forecasts and monitoring information on performance and finance are provided;

- Advise the Board on the discharge of its responsibilities as set out in the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, the Recreation and Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and in any other relevant instructions and guidance that may be issued by the Department of Finance, the Department for Communities or the Department for Culture, Media and Sport;
- Ensure that all relevant financial and non-financial information is provided to the Board in a timely fashion to ensure informed decisions are made and governing requirements complied with;
- Ensure that a system of risk management is maintained to inform decisions on financial and operational planning and to assist in achieving objectives and targets;
- Ensure an effective system of programme, project and contract management;
- Ensure that all public funds made available to Sport NI including any income or other receipts, are used for the purpose intended, expended in compliance with governing requirements and are used economically, efficiently and effectively;
- Ensure compliance with all governing directions issued by the Department of Finance, Department for Communities or the Department for Culture, Media and Sport; and
- Ensure the existence of proper accounting records.

Board

The Board is the ultimate place for decision-making on new policy, strategic planning, budgets and organisational performance. Our arrangements are covered by a range of governance directives including the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum/Partnership Agreement, Scheme of Delegation, Terms of Reference and Board Standing Orders.

The principal role of the Board is the stewardship of all public resources entrusted to Sport NI to aid the realisation of the policies and priorities of the Minister for Communities in Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Executive and the Minister for Culture, Media and Sport.

Sport NI's Board met on 10 occasions during 2019-20 to discuss and consult on key strategic matters. Attendance by Board Members was 83.5% compared to 72% for the previous year. These included strategic planning, approval of corporate and business plans, delivery of the Transformation Programme, key strategic investment programmes, budgeting, stewardship reporting, risk management and governance, advising on and overseeing on key policies such as Governing Body recognition and performance review.

The Boards attendance during 2019-20 was as follows:

	Board Meetings			ARAC Meetings			Total Meetings		
	Attended	Held	%	Attended	Held	%	Attended	Held	%
George Lucas (Chair)	10	10	100	--	--	--	10	10	100
Jay Colville (Vice Chair)	10	10	100	4	4	100	14	14	100
Jackie Bryson	9	10	90	--	--	--	9	10	90
Richard Bullick	10	10	100	--	--	--	10	10	100
Wilma Erskine	8	10	80	--	--	--	8	10	80
Kyle Ferguson	7	10	70	1	4	25	8	14	57
Kieran Harding	7	10	70	1	4	25	8	14	57
Catherine O'Mullan	9	10	90	4	4	100	13	14	93
Darryl Petticrew	6	10	60	3	4	75	9	14	64
Michael Matthews (Co-opted)	--	--	--	3	4	75	3	4	75
Siobhan Weir (resigned May 2019)	0	1	0	--	--	--	0	1	0

Board Effectiveness

The Board arranged for Department of Finance to carry out an independent Board Effectiveness Review to commence in March 2020 based on Cabinet Office good practice guidance and advice contained within the Northern Ireland Audit Office Board Effectiveness Good Practice Guide (2016). The review encompassed the following themes: objectives, strategy and remit, relationships, project management and oversight, culture and skills, risk management, governance and accountability and performance management and functioning. The Review was completed in June 2020. It reflected the findings from the Board self-assessment and contained recommendations which helped inform the Board Training and Development Plan 2020-21.

The Board's role is to provide leadership of Sport NI within a framework of prudent and effective controls which enables risk to be assessed and managed. It functions to ensure that Sport NI acts in the public interest at all times and that its obligations to its stakeholders and others are understood and met.

The Board fulfils its accountability role by setting the Sport Councils strategic aims, assessing assurances that the necessary financial and human resources are in place to meet objectives and regularly reviewing and where necessary challenging organisational performance.

Information to the Board

The Board of Sports Council has reviewed the quality of the information made available by the Executive Team for the purpose of effective decision making. The Board considers that the accuracy, timing and availability of the financial information and the support given to ensure that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee functions effectively is satisfactory.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Board is supported by an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. This Committee met on four occasions during 2019-20. Attendance by Members was 67% compared to 75% for the previous year.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee supports the Board and Accounting Officer by reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances on governance, risk management, the control environment and the integrity of financial statements and the annual report. A qualified accountant was appointed as an independent member to the committee to fulfil HM Treasury Audit Committee Handbook requirements.

Its terms of reference include supporting the Board and Accounting Officer by reviewing the comprehensiveness of assurances in meeting the Board and Accounting Officer's assurance needs, and by reviewing the reliability and integrity of these assurances; the activities of the internal and external auditors and overseeing the risk culture of Sport NI; and also reviewing its own effectiveness, constitution and terms of reference and reporting the results of that review to the Board.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Handbook (NI) 2018, issued under cover of DAO (DFP) 03/18, sets out five principles to be followed. These principles are:

- Principle 1: Membership, independence, objectivity and understanding;
- Principle 2: Skills;
- Principle 3: The role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee;
- Principle 4: Scope of work; and
- Principle 5: Communication and reporting.

The Board has formally considered these and confirmed it complied with the principles.

The Committee makes regular reports to the Board. Board Members are satisfied that the Committee is providing them with assurance.

Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee comprises four members and was chaired by the Chair of the Board. Members were appointed by the Chair of the Board. Its remit covers only remuneration and not functional staffing matters. The Committee has specific responsibility for:

- The appointment of the CEO;
- Terms and conditions of the CEO;
- Appraisal of the CEO; and
- Approval of performance appraisal of directors as recommended by the CEO.

The Remuneration Committee met twice in 2019-20: 19 June and 16 October 2019.

Executive Team

The Executive Team (ET) comprises me and three directors. It supports the Board and me, as Interim Chief Executive, by providing collective leadership and corporate collective responsibility for effective management of the organisation and taking ownership of Sport NI performance. Meeting weekly, it oversees how Sport NI plans, sets, communicates and monitors its corporate objectives.

Sport NI has developed systems of internal controls and risk management in line with best practice guidelines. Directors have the appropriate and relevant professional skills and competences to provide the assurance that these controls are operating efficiently and effectively.

Finance and Governance Sub-Committee

This committee comprises me and three directors. Its purpose is to support me, as Interim Chief Executive, through active dialogue and reporting on matters pertaining to financial management, internal control, risk and governance, and takes a collective corporate responsibility for effective finance and governance decision-making. Specific aspects of the Committee's work include reviewing the deployment of financial resources, ensuring sound systems of control and risk, overseeing compliance and managing the dissemination of key information.

Human Resources Sub-Committee

This committee comprises me and three directors. Its purpose is to support me, as Interim Chief Executive, through active dialogue and reporting on matters pertaining to the needs of staff, ensuring corporate, collective responsibility for HR decisions which meet employment law requirements, are consistently applied and reflect exemplar HR practice. From financial to legal matters, the Committee helps in maximising the efficiency of Sport NI.

Conflicts of Interest

Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013 also requires the Board to publish how it identified any conflicts of interest and potential conflicts and how these have been managed.

Several members of the Board of Sport NI and members of key management staff are also involved with other sporting organisations in Northern Ireland either directly or indirectly as a result of a family relationship, a close friendship or business relationship. All individuals make an annual declaration of their interests and do not take part in discussions and decisions to make grant awards to those organisations with which they have a declared interest. A list of awards made to the organisations concerned and details of who made the declaration of interest is detailed in Note 18. All of the transactions relating to the organisations were conducted at arm's length by Sport NI.

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The term 'Corporate Governance' describes the way in which organisations are directed, controlled and led. The purpose of a Corporate Governance Framework is to facilitate accountability responsibility for the effective and efficient delivery of an organisation's statutory responsibilities or aims and objectives. Sport NI is established to deliver on its statutory obligations under the Recreation and Youth Service Order (Northern Ireland) 1986 and is funded by public monies to do so. The Corporate Governance arrangements provide the framework to ensure that Sport NI delivers on its statutory obligations and that it does so in accordance with the requirements placed on all publicly funded bodies regarding the stewardship of resources.

Sport NI has an established system of internal control which is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise risks to the effective and efficient achievement of the organisation's key business objectives and priorities. The system of control also provides an assessment of the likelihood of risks being realised and the consequent impact for effective and efficient management of risks. This system of internal controls has been designed to manage risk to an acceptable level rather than to eliminate risk entirely and as such does not provide absolute assurance of effectiveness.

Governance Framework

There are six key organisational roles and structures defined within the corporate governance arrangements. These are the: Executive Team (ET); ET's Finance and Governance Sub-Committee; ET's Human Resources Sub-Committee; Board; Audit and Risk Assurance Committee; and the Remuneration Committee.

3 Business Planning, Risk Management and Assurance

Business Planning

Each year of the five-year strategic plan, amplified as necessary, forms the basis of the business plan for the forthcoming year. The business plan includes business actions, key performance indicators, milestones and targets linked to the Programme for Government and Public Service Agreements for the forthcoming year. It also links to budgeting information so that resources allocated to achieve specific objectives can readily be identified by the Department. The five-year strategy and annual business plan take into account the Department's priorities and is framed in that context.

The draft business plan is submitted to the Department as early as possible, but no later than 31 March. Sport NI's plans are submitted to the Department for approval and include measures of performance and annual targets in respect of each of those measures and the proposed annual efficiency. The business planning system incorporates the key Sport NI objectives and the associated targets to meet those objectives. The ET reports on these targets formally on a quarterly basis to me, and I in turn report to the Board and to the Department's Sponsor Team at the governance and accountability meetings.

A five-year corporate plan is currently being developed by the Board and the Executive Team for 2021-26, this is in line with the CEO's responsibility as accounting officer for Sport NI. Engagement with key stakeholders will focus on the need for a strong sporting system in Northern Ireland. It is envisaged that a draft plan will be approved by the Department in 2020 as the culmination of extensive engagement with all those with a vested interest in the sporting sector.

Risk Management

Sport NI assesses how the achievement of its policies, aims and objectives might be affected by the risks it faces, and a system of internal control is designed which mitigates those risks. The system is not designed to eliminate all risk but to strike a balance between control, cost of control and appropriate risk taking. A system of internal control was in place for the whole of 2019-20.

Sport NI's approach to risk management is guided by HM Treasury and other professional best practice and takes full cognisance of the context and environment in which it operates. Sport NI has in place a risk management strategy which sets out roles and responsibilities and determines procedures for risk identification, monitoring, reporting and escalation of issues. It addresses risk appetite and tolerance across the breadth of business activities.

The Corporate Risk Register is compiled and managed by the Executive Team and facilitates the identification, assessment and ongoing monitoring of risks significant to Sport NI. During 2019-20, the Corporate Risk Register was a standing item at each meeting of the Executive Finance and Governance Sub-Committee, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Board.

Areas of particular focus during 2019-20 were as follows:

- **Absence of Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive of Sport NI was suspended in March 2015, dismissed in November 2016 and subsequently re-instated in June 2017. The Chief Executive lodged a case with the Fair Employment Tribunal. This case was settled prior to hearing. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has been on an extended period of absence on full pay since July 2023. In the absences of the Chief Executive, the Department for Communities appointed interim Chief Executives and Accounting Officers, as detailed in the Remuneration Report.

- **Transformation Programme**

During 2016-17, new management arrangements were introduced which fostered and instilled the high standards of governance and public accountability that will be required to take the organisation forward.

This was predicated on the work by the Interim Executive Leadership Team (IELT) which was established by the then Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure. The IELT led on a review of Sport NI subsequent to which a series of recommendations were presented which the Board took forward through a Transformation Programme.

The Transformation Programme gave rise to a significant body of work, which continued to be embedded and changed the way that Sport NI operates, for example, On-Boarding to IT Assist exploration of On-Boarding to Account NI, and systematic improvements to governance, risk management and internal control. Through the Transformation Programme, for example, Sport NI has put in place a suite of HR Policies that reflect best practice, revised our procurement policy, procedures and practices. In addition, Sport NI has ensured that there are robust whistleblowing and raising concern policies and established an Internal Communications Strategy.

An independent review into the delivery of the Transformation Programme provided for a confident assessment of amber/green and stated that staff had an appetite for more radical change. Sport NI continued to actively progress the outworking of this Transformation Programme with a clear route map for change. This embedded new practices and developed further work on culture change, leadership skills and organisational restructuring

- **Delay in the Publication of the Annual Report and Accounts**

For a period, the publication of Sport NI's financial statements were delayed by a lack of expertise on accounts preparation to recognised public sector standards. As a result, currently the 2019-20 to 2024-25 accounts remain in backlog. The 2018-19 accounts were certified in the first quarter of the 2025-26 financial year.

Sport NI has agreed a provisional timeframe with the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) for the completion of the outstanding 2020-21 and 2021-22 Lottery Annual Reports. Discussion will then need to take place with the National Audit Office to complete the delayed audits of 2022-23 to 2024-25. This work remains a priority for the organisation and, when completed, will see a return to a regularised position with the regard to publication of Sport NI's Lottery Annual Reports.

Sport NI undertook an extensive review, as requested by the Permanent Secretary, of the reasons why this backlog has occurred to ensure that future financial statements are both of a high quality and submitted on a timely basis. A final "Lessons Learnt" was submitted to the Department for Communities and the NIAO in June 2019, following board endorsement. The review found a range of complex and inter-related issues impacting the annual accounts being published, which were exacerbated by the 2014-15 accounts not being submitted initially, creating a "knock-on" effect. Principal reasons for the delays included the following;

- Governance issues within Sport NI from March 2015 to July 2017 (Northern Ireland Audit Office prepared a separate report on these matters);
- A lack of expertise, in Sport NI at various times over the period, on the preparation of financial statements to recognised public sector standards;
- Difficulty in retaining corporate knowledge and memory on issues with regards the 2014-15 financial statements in particular; and,
- Northern Ireland Audit Office giving priority to other audits as Sport NI failed to meet the audit timetable.

- **Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) Report into Governance Issues**

As a result of the above issues, the NIAO published a report into governance arrangements in March 2020. Sport NI is committed to ensuring that the recommendations in this report are fully implemented and indeed the majority of recommendations attributable to Sport NI have already been implemented. It has invested considerable time and resources into a transformation programme, improving good governance; culture and strategy, which has already brought significant improvements over the past three years. Sport NI is committed to working in partnership with the Department for Communities to ensure standards of good governance are maintained and a highly performing culture and strategy are realised to deliver the necessary sporting outcomes and benefits of sport for the people of Northern Ireland.

- **Legal Action**

Two employees lodged Industrial Tribunal claims against Sport NI in 2019-20. One claim was withdrawn by the employee in February 2022. Sport NI is continuing to defend the remaining Industrial Tribunal claim relating to holiday pay. No date has been set for any hearing on this matter.

4. Governance and Accountability within ALB

Sport NI is an ALB of the Department for Communities. The Accounting Officer is accountable to the Department for the effective and compliant deployment of financial resources.

The business operations of Sport NI are governed by a Management Statement and Financial Memorandum which defines the relationship between the Department and Sport NI, and articulates the financial and administrative framework within which Sport NI operates. This document was superceded by a Partnership Agreement in September 2022.

Accountability is embedded into the governance framework of Sport NI. Accountability arrangements also include regular reporting to the Department for Communities and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and completion of Stewardship reports which inform quarterly accountability meetings with senior departmental officials.

5. Internal Audit

The achievement of strategic objectives is predicated on good governance, sounds systems of internal control and risk management and timely assurance. Timely and meaningful assurance provides confidence that opportunities are being exploited, and risks are being managed in order that strategic priorities can be delivered in an efficient and effective manner.

The Internal audit function is a key line of defence and assurance. The role of internal audit is to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the organisation's operations. It helps the organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

The annual internal audit plan is created on a risk basis. Our internal auditors, RSM, evaluated our risk management processes and considered that they could place reliance on our risk register to inform the audit plan. They used various sources of information and discussed priorities for internal audit coverage with the following people:

- Interim Director of Finance and Governance; and
- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC).

The sources of information included:

- Previous internal audit plan and Annual Assurance report;
- Requests from the senior management team;
- Corporate Plan 2015-20;
- ARAC requests;
- Board and ARAC minutes;
- Corporate Risk Register;
- Annual report and financial statements; and
- Specific areas requested by the Department for Communities for inclusion.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reviewed and approved the Internal Audit Plan 2019-20 and the Internal Audit Strategy 2018-21 at its meeting in December 2019. Sufficient flexibility was included in the plan to allow for changes to be made during the year to reflect any significant changes in the risk environment and the emergence of new risks. Following the December meeting a change to the plan was requested by the CEO; Internal Audit was asked to do a piece of work on Programme Funding – Data Analytics to identify any potential conflicts with key members of staff linked to sports over the last 5 years. Other pieces of work were substituted for this review.

All reports of the internal auditors were discussed by ARAC and with senior members of staff in attendance, including those whose departments were reported upon by the auditors. This gave me and members of the Committee the opportunity to discuss, in detail, the findings, recommendations and proposed management actions. Directors that had failings in their respective programme areas identified by the internal auditors were required to devise corrective action and set a completion date for that action in consultation with the internal auditors. I receive regular reports from the auditors notifying me of the progress my directors have achieved in clearing up points raised by both internal and external auditors in previous years.

RSM is the Internal Auditor for Sport NI and issued an internal audit assurance statement to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of Sport NI in respect of the year ended 31 March 2020. The report provided an annual internal audit opinion, based upon and limited to the work performed, on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance processes. The head of internal audit opinion for Sport NI was as follows: "Overall there is a satisfactory system of governance, risk management and control. While there may be some residual risk identified, this should not significantly impact on the achievement of system objectives."

6. External Audit

The Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) of the UK National Audit Office (NAO) is the external auditor of the financial statements of Sport NI Lottery Account. Their function is to audit and report on the financial statements to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of regularity, the accounting policies, significant accounting estimates and identifying any material inconsistencies in the Annual Report with the audited financial statements. The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) complete the audit on behalf of NAO.

As a result of the issues outlined in the risk management section of the Governance Statement, there has been a delay in the publication of Sport NI's, Lottery financial statements which has meant that NIAO has been unable to complete its audit. The expected timetable for completion of the audit of remaining backlog financial statements is during the 2025-26 financial year.

7. Review of Effectiveness of the Governance Framework

The Accounting Officer has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. This review is informed by the work of the internal auditors and senior management within Sport NI who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports. As a result of their work during the year, the internal auditors have produced an annual certificate of assurance with regard to the adequacy of the systems and the operation of internal controls within Sport NI.

I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Board and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the internal control system is in place.

The Board and interim management have since taken proactive steps to put in place new financial governance procedures, including the hiring of a G7 Accountant to oversee the finance function and monthly reporting processes.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reviews its effectiveness and questions the activities of risk owners. Furthermore, our internal audit function reviews the risk-management processes as part of its work and can provide the benefit of its experience of other organisations' risk-management activities.

All policy papers put to the Board for decision contain a discussion of the risks associated with taking the possible courses of actions. The Board also regularly discusses the risks on the Corporate Risk Register with the risk owners. The Board has considered the quality of data used by the Board across all business areas and finds the information provided by management suitable for the purposes of making effective decisions.

Department for the Communities partnership arrangements

There were four governance meetings held during the year between the sponsor Division of Department for Communities and Sport NI in line with the provisions of the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) to discuss and monitor performance against the 2019-20 Business Plan throughout the year. In addition, Sport NI responded to a significant number of requests for information and to the requirements to submit returns to the Department on a regular basis on a range of matters to satisfy the governance requirements of the Department.

There were no ministerial directions given during the financial year.

Approval of Expenditure

After an internal review of procurement documentation in 2023, Sport NI identified projects where baseline activity had taken place without the necessary approvals laid out in the Management Statement / Financial Memorandum (Partnership Agreement from 2022) with DfC and the organisation's Scheme of Delegation. Retrospective approval was sought and provided for two projects.

Management is continuing to work with DfC to ensure that adequate controls are in place and that staff are fully aware of expenditure approval requirements going forward.

8. Emerging Issues

Covid-19

With the outbreak of Covid-19 and resulting restrictions put in place during March 2020, Sport NI closed all three sites and made provision for staff to work remotely and safely from home. In terms of supporting the sporting sector, which faced (and continues to face) significant challenges, Sport NI put in place, as of April 2020 a range of phased support mechanisms, as follows:-

- Phase 1 **Safeguarding** through issue of prompt payment of end of year funding (2019-20) and 2020-21 funding under existing 'Sporting Clubs' and 'Sporting Winners' programmes.
- Phase 2 **Sustaining** through the launch and delivery of the 'Sports Hardship Fund' in partnership with DfC.
- Phase 3 **Strengthening**; improved resilience and increased capability through an NLDF support worth of approximately £3m to open at the end of June 2020, augmented by a range of expert services to sport.

In addition, Sport NI supported the sector and the NI Executive by publishing a Framework for the 'Return to Sport', providing high level guidance to the sporting communities as to interpretation and implementation of the NI Executives 5 step process for lifting of restrictions put in place for Covid-19 purposes.

Sport NI also launched, in April 2020, a Sport Well-being Hub providing a range of mental health and well-being online resources to support the sporting community (players/athletes, coaches; managers, volunteers and club members) to access support during this challenging time. This further augmented a range of materials placed online to help the NI public stay active whilst staying at home.

Olympics

Both the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games had been scheduled for July-September. On 24 March 2020 the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games were postponed until 2021.

Departmental Strategic Review

The Department for Communities has employed Deloitte to conduct a strategic review of Sport NI to identify and understand the cause of the governance and control issues, with a focus on the roles and responsibilities of the Sport NI Board and Executive Leadership Team (ELT). A final report is anticipated in 2025-26.

9. Conclusion

Given the unavailability of the Chief Executive, this statement has been signed by both the Interim Chief Executive, in the capacity of the Accounting Officer, and the Chair of the Sport NI Board.

**Richard Archibald
Accounting Officer
Sports Council for Northern Ireland**

Date: 16 December 2025

**Gavin Boyd
Chair
Sports Council for Northern Ireland**

Date: 16 December 2025

Remuneration and Staff Report

Introduction

The Remuneration and Staff Report sets out Sport NI's remuneration policy, reports on how it has been implemented and sets out the amounts awarded to the senior officers and members of the Management Committee. In addition, details are provided on remuneration and staff that are key to Sport NI's accountability as a Non-Departmental Public Body.

1.0 Remuneration Report

1.1 Remuneration Policy

The pay remit (for the NI public sector and SCS) is normally approved by the Minister of Finance. In the absence of an Executive at the time the remit was being finalised, the Department of Finance (DoF) Permanent Secretary set the 2019-20 NI public sector pay policy, in line with the overarching HM Treasury parameters and in a manner consistent with the approach taken by the previous Finance Minister in 2016-17.

Within Sport NI, the Chief Executive is employed on terms similar to those of the Senior Civil Service. A pay remit for the Chief Executive's pay from 2014 to 2021 was approved by the Department of Finance during 2022-23. All Executive Leadership Team (ELT) members are employed analogous to Grade 6 or 7. The Chief Executive assesses the performance of Directors. The Remuneration Committee is responsible for approving the Chief Executive's salary and assessing performance.

All staff costs are incurred by Sport NI Exchequer Account, and an amount is recharged to Sport NI Lottery Account. The apportionment is made at full economic costs and calculated on the basis of full-time equivalent staff.

1.2 Service Contracts

Sport NI staff appointments are made in accordance with the Sport NI Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures, which requires appointment to be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments, which are open-ended. The notice period or compensation for early termination (other than for misconduct) of a contract is three months for the Chief Executive and Directors. Policy relating to notice periods and termination payments is contained in Sport NI Staff Handbook and individual Terms and Conditions of Employment.

1.3 Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; overtime; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation and any gratia payments.

1.4 Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. Benefits in kind of £NIL were paid in 2019-20 (2018-19: £NIL).

1.5 Payments to Past Directors (Audited Information)

During 2019-20 £5,097 was paid to past directors for backdated pay awards (2018-19: £NIL).

1.6 Salary, Bonus, Benefit in Kind and Pension Entitlements – Senior Staff (Audited Information)

The following section provides details of the remuneration and pension entitlements of the Chief Executive and Directors of Sport NI.

Employee	2019-20				2018-19			
	Salary* £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Pension Benefits** (to nearest £'000)	Total £'000	Salary* £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Pension Benefits** (to nearest £'000)	Total £'000
Antoinette McKeown Chief Executive	85-90	-	28	115-120	85-90	-	25	110-115
Leigh Brown Acting Director of Finance & Governance (until 31 March 2019)					60-65	-	21	80-85
Adrian Doherty*** Interim Director of Finance & Governance (From 7 May 2019)	45-50 (50-55 full year equivalent)	-	20	65-70 (70-75 full year equivalent)	-	-	-	-
Christine Kerr*** Interim Director of Human Resources (from 16 May 2016 until 4 June 2018)					5-10 (50-55 full year equivalent)	-	38	45-50 (90-95 full year equivalent)
Peter McCabe Interim Director of Performance (from 21 May 2018)	55-60	-	31	85-90	45-50 (50-55 full year equivalent)	-	24	70-75 (75-80 full year equivalent)
John News Interim Director of Participation (from 21 May 2018)	65-70	-	17	80-85	55-60 (60-65 full year equivalent)	-	41	95-100 (100-105 full year equivalent)

*Salary costs include salary arrears from previous financial years.

**The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.

***During 2019-20 there was one Senior Staff (2018-19: one Interim Senior Staff) seconded to Sports Council.

Fair Pay Disclosures	2019-20	2018-19
Range of Salaries (£000)	4-89	4-88
Band of Highest Paid Director's Total Remuneration (£000)	85-90	85-90
Median Total Remuneration* (£)	31,070	29,317
Ratio	2.82	2.98

1.7 Median Remuneration (Audited Information)

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest paid director in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

The median remuneration of the staff is the total remuneration of the staff member(s) lying in the middle of the linear distribution of the total staff, excluding the highest paid director. This is based on annualised, full-time equivalent (FTE) remuneration as at the reporting period date.

In 2019-20, 0 (2018-19: 0) employees received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director.

Total remuneration includes salary; performance pay and bonuses. It does not include employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions. Total remuneration is calculated on an annualised basis to remove any fluctuations caused by employee turnover, which do not reflect changes in pay policy.

The FTE measurement of staff is specified to ensure a level of comparability that would otherwise be distorted, if a member of staff represented a whole unit, irrespective of the hours worked.

The ratio is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Midpoint in highest paid director's pay band}}{\text{Median remuneration of Sport NI's staff}}$$

1.8 Board Members' Honoraria (Audited Information)

The Chair received honorarium during 2019-20 totalling £26,880 (2018-19: £26,880). The Vice-Chair received £3,500 (2018-19: £3,500). These costs are included in the Sport NI Exchequer Account. Board Member's honoraria were not directly recharged to Sport NI Lottery Account during 2019-20 and 2018-19.

No emoluments were paid to other Sport NI Board members in respect of Lottery activities. Sport NI does not pay any pension contributions on behalf of the Chair or Vice-Chair as they did not meet the relevant criteria for auto enrolment.

All Board members are also recompensed for their vouched expenses incurred in carrying out their duties.

1.9 Bonuses

No bonus payments for performance were made in 2019-20 (2018-19: NIL).

1.10 Exit Packages (Audited Information)

No directors of Sport NI received any compensation for loss of office during the year 2019-20 (2018-19: 0).

Pension Entitlements (Audited Information)

Employee	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/3/20 and related lump sum	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age	CETV at 31/3/20	CETV at 31/3/19	Real increase in CETV
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Antoinette McKeown Chief Executive	10-15 plus Nil lump sum	0-2.5 plus Nil lump sum	148	121	18
Peter McCabe Interim Director of Performance (from 21 May 2018)	25-30 plus 50-55 lump sum	0-2.5 plus 0-2.5 lump sum	636	592	29
John News Interim Director of Participation (from 21 May 2018)	20-25 plus 25-30 lump sum	0-2.5 plus (0-2.5) lump sum	350	324	15
Adrian Doherty Interim Director of Finance & Governance (from 7 May 2019)	15-20 plus 30-35 lump sum	0-2.5 plus (0-2.5) lump sum	275	252	11

1.11 Sport NI Pensions (Audited Information)

Sport NI participates in the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Pension Fund (LGPS) and made contributions for 93 employees. The pension scheme is administered by the Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC). The pension scheme is a funded multi-employer defined benefit scheme. The Scheme Actuary, AON Hewitt, is responsible for carrying out full valuations every 3 years. The latest full actuarial valuation was 31 March 2019. The outcome of this valuation was used as the basis for the valuation at 31 March 2020 and to set the level of contributions for employers from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022.

The benefits paid under the Scheme are based on length of membership and final salary. NILGOSC maintains a fund to provide for the payment of current and prospective benefits to members of the Scheme. In order to ensure that this objective is achieved, the Committee must determine a suitable investment strategy, which provides both a high return on investments and an acceptable level of risk.

For any membership accrued before 1 April 2009, benefits will accrue at a rate of 1/80th of the employee's final year pensionable pay and an automatic tax-free lump sum of three times their pension. For all membership accrued from 1 April 2009, benefits accrue at a rate of 1/60th of final pensionable pay for each year of service but with no automatic lump sum (members can choose to give up some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) can be paid through the NILGOSC in-house AVC provider, Prudential.

All assets, liabilities and operating costs relating to the pension scheme are processed through Sport NI Exchequer Account, and a recharge is made to Sport NI Lottery Account for any pension costs incurred on its behalf. During the year 17 staff were recharged to Lottery (2018-19: 17).

Employee contribution rates for all members for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 were as follows:

Band	Range	Contribution Rate
1	£0 - £14,800	5.5%
2	£14,801 - £22,600	5.8%
3	£22,601 - £37,700	6.5%
4	£37,701 - £45,700	6.8%
5	£45,701 - £90,400	8.5%
6	>£90,400	10.5%

The employer contribution rate for 2020-21 is 20% plus individual employer deficit amount.

Further details about the NILGOSC pension scheme can be found in Sport NI Exchequer Accounts and at www.nilgosc.org.uk.

Secondees are members of the PCSPS (NI). Further details on this scheme can be found at www.finance-ni.gov.uk.

1.12 Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-04 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the NILGOSC pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

1.13 Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period. However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effect of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

2.0 Staff Report

Staff Costs and Numbers (Audited Information)

Staff Costs

The following section is subject to audit.

The following staff costs were incurred by Sport NI Exchequer account and recharged to Sport NI Lottery Account:

	Direct 2019-20 £	Recharge 2019-20 £	Total 2019-20 £	Total 2018-19 £
Staff Costs:				
Wages and Salaries	6,183	587,632	593,815	650,461
Social Security Costs	473	50,112	50,585	64,924
Pension Costs	-	133,876	133,876	140,616
Other Staff Costs	-	-	-	134,085
Staff Costs	6,656	771,620	778,276	990,086

Average Number of Persons Employed (Audited Information)

The average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed during the year was as follows.

Sport NI

	2019-20			2018-19
	Permanently Employed	Others		Total
		No.	No.	
Directly employed	83	6	89	86
Seconded In	-	5	5	5
Seconded Out	-	-	-	-
Agency	-	20	20	19
Total	83	31	114	110

All of the staff were employed by Sport NI and the proportion in relation to Sport NI Lottery Account is based on percentage of Officer's time spent on Lottery work activities.

Sport NI Lottery

	2019-20			2018-19
	Permanently Employed	Others		Total
		No.	No.	
Directly employed	17	-	17	17
Seconded In	-	-	-	-
Seconded Out	-	-	-	-
Agency	-	-	-	-
Total	17	-	17	17

Number of Directors (Audited Information)

Director's Salary (Actual)	2019-20	2018-19
£5,000-£10,000	-	1
£10,000-£15,000	-	-
£15,000-£20,000	-	-
£20,000-£25,000	-	-
£25,000-£30,000	-	-
£30,000-£35,000	-	-
£35,000-£40,000	-	-
£45,000-£50,000	1	1
£50,000-£55,000	-	-
£55,000-£60,000	1	1
£60,000-£65,000	1	1
£65,000-£70,000	-	-
£70,000-£75,000	-	-
£75,000-£80,000	-	-
£80,000-£85,000	-	-
£85,000-£90,000	1	1
£90,000-£95,000	-	-
£95,000-£100,000	-	-
Total Number of Directors	4	5

The table above includes temporary seconds to Sport NI. Only a proportion of each director's salary is recharged to Lottery.

Chief Executive's Remuneration (Audited Information)

The remuneration received by the Chief Executive during the year was between £85,000-£90,000 (2018-19: £85,000-£90,000). The Chief Executive's salary is incurred by Exchequer Account with a proportion recharged to Sport NI Lottery Account.

Staff Composition (Audited Information)

The actual composition of staff employed by Sport NI at 31 March was as follows:

	Male	Male	Female	Female
Directly Employed	2	42	1	44
Board*	-	-	-	-
Agency/Seconds	1	15	-	8

	Male	Male	Female	Female
Directly Employed	3	40	1	49
Board*	-	-	-	-
Agency/Seconds	-	12	-	14

*Board Members are employed by the Department for Communities. The Chair and Vice Chair are the only Members to receive honorarium from Sport NI.

Sickness Absence Data

The number of sick days reported in 2019-20 was 415 (2018-19: 542). Sport NI had an average of 5.03 days absence per full time equivalent person in 2019-20 (2018-19: 6.15).

Staff Policies Applied During the Financial Year

Employee Consultation

On matters of policy and procedure which affect the employees of Sport NI, the Council normally consults with the recognised trade union of which staff are members. This trade union is also a member of the Whitley Council which negotiates the terms and conditions of members with the Northern Ireland Department of Finance.

During 2019-20 Sport NI revised a number of new staff policies in consultation with NIPSA. These policies included:

- Declarations of Interest Policy
- Travel Policy
- Sickness Policy.

Equality of Opportunity

Sport NI is committed to the development of positive policies to promote equal opportunity in employment based on practices which are non-discriminatory as between people of differing abilities, religion, political view, nationality, race, colour or sex. An equal opportunities policy has been in place since March 2004.

Employees with a Disability

Sport NI ensures that people with a disability are given opportunities for suitable employment and that they are not discriminated against on the grounds of disability for recruitment, training or promotion purposes.

Health and Safety

Sport NI is committed to providing staff with an environment that is as far as possible, safe, and free from risk to health. In accordance with this commitment, Sport NI has complied with relevant legislation.

Expenditure on Consultancy

In 2019-20, Sport NI Lottery Account did not incur any direct consultancy costs (2018-19: NIL). Consultancy costs for the actuary report (included in the table below) were incurred by Sport NI Exchequer and were included in the costs recharged.

	2019-20	2018-19
	£	£
Actuary Report	2,040	778
Total Expenditure on Consultancy	2,040	778

Off-Payroll Disclosures

Off-payroll engagements are those where individuals, either self-employed or acting through a personal service company, are paid gross by the employer. In line with HM Treasury requirements, the Department of Finance requires disclosure of such engagements that cost more than £245 per day and that last for longer than 6 months. Sport NI had no such off-payroll engagements commencing or operating during 2019-20 (2018-19: NIL).

Reporting of Exit Packages (Audited Information)

No redundancy or other departure costs were paid in 2019-20 (2018-19: NIL).

**Richard Archibald
Accounting Officer
Sports Council for Northern Ireland**

Date: 16 December 2025

Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report

Parliamentary Accountability Disclosure Notes

Introduction

The Parliamentary Accountability Report provides details of losses and special payments, fees and charges and remote contingent liabilities.

1. Losses and Special Payments (Audited Information)

There were no losses or special payments during the year which required disclosure in the accounts (2018-19: NIL).

2. Fees & Charges (Audited Information)

There were no fees or charges during the year which required disclosure in the accounts (2018-19: NIL).

3. Remote Contingent Liabilities (Audited Information)

There were no remote contingent liabilities during the year which required disclosure in the accounts (2018-19: NIL).

**Richard Archibald
Accounting Officer
Sports Council for Northern Ireland**

Date: 16 December 2025

THE CERTIFICATE OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account for the year ended 31 March 2020 under the National Lottery etc. Act 1993.

The financial statements comprise the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account's

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2020;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Income, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Equity for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account's affairs as at 31 March 2020 and its net operating income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the National Lottery etc. Act 1993 and Secretary of State directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 *Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom* (2022). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's *Revised Ethical Standard 2019*. I am independent of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other Information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions issued under the National Lottery etc. Act 1993.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions made under the National Lottery etc. Act 1993; and
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Statutory Other Information.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;
- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the Sports Council for Northern Ireland from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view in accordance with Secretary of State directions issued under the National Lottery etc. Act 1993;
- preparing the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with Secretary of State directions issued under the National Lottery etc. Act 1993; and
- assessing the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the National Lottery etc. Act 1993.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account's accounting policies.
- inquired of management, the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's policies and procedures on:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account's controls relating to the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account's compliance with the National Lottery etc. Act 1993 and Managing Public Money;
- inquired of management, the Sports Council for Northern Ireland's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
 - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
 - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- discussed with the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals, complex transactions, bias in management estimates and grant expenditure. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland Lottery Distribution Account. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included the National Lottery etc. Act 1993, Managing Public Money, employment law, pensions legislation and tax legislation.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and legal counsel concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board and internal audit reports;
- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP

17 December 2025

THE REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Delays in certifying the accounts

1. It is very unusual for there to be such a delay in certifying a set of accounts. The certification of the 2019-20 Sports Council for Northern Ireland (SCNI) Lottery Distribution Account has been impacted by the delay to the certification of the 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 accounts. I included a report on the 2014-15 and subsequent years' accounts setting out the reasons for the delay, the knock-on impact on the timing of the certification of subsequent accounts, and the actions SCNI is taking to ensure it has the appropriate expertise to prepare financial statements which are both high quality and delivered on a timely basis.
2. SCNI have set out the factors contributing to the delays in the publication of the lottery distribution annual report and accounts within the governance statement on page 54 of the annual report. SCNI has also stated its commitment to ensuring it now has the appropriate expertise to prepare financial statements which are both high quality and delivered on a timely basis.
3. The 2019-20 accounts have been prepared in line with my expectations in respect of quality. My audit approach is designed to obtain sufficient assurance that accounts are free from material error. I planned my audit to achieve this through sample testing of account areas.
4. SCNI have been able to present 2019-20 accounts that are free from material error, in a reasonable timeframe, following my certification of the 2016-17 accounts on 10 September 2024, 2017-18 accounts on 7 December 2024 and 2018-19 accounts on 29 May 2025.
5. I am working with SCNI to finalise my audits of the subsequent years' accounts.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP

17 December 2025

Financial Statements

Statement of Comprehensive Net Income For the year ended 31 March 2020

	Notes	2019-20 £	2018-19 £
Income from Activities	4	9,280,318	8,362,703
Total Operating Income		9,280,318	8,362,703
Staff Costs	3	778,276	990,086
Other Operating Expenditure	3	579,967	531,092
New Grants Made in Year	3	6,699,543	6,768,544
Grants De-Committed in Year	3	(257,103)	(546,042)
Total Operating Expenditure		7,800,683	7,743,680
Net Operating Income for the Year		1,479,635	619,023
Comprehensive Net Income for the Year		1,479,635	619,023

The notes on pages 85 to 95 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2020

	Notes	2019-20	2018-19
		£	£
Current Assets:			
Investments - balance held in NLDF	6	14,499,804	14,136,849
Trade and other receivables	8	1,331	116
Cash and cash equivalents	9	1,097,226	309,785
Total current assets		15,598,361	14,446,750
Total assets		15,598,361	14,446,750
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	10	(857,497)	(539,742)
Grants payable	11	(3,136,191)	(3,781,970)
Total current liabilities		(3,993,688)	(4,321,712)
Total assets less current liabilities		11,604,673	10,125,038
Total assets less total liabilities		11,604,673	10,125,038
Equity:			
General reserve		11,604,673	10,125,038
Total equity		11,604,673	10,125,038

The financial statements on pages 81 to 84 were authorised on 16 December 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

Richard Archibald
Interim Chief Executive

Date: 16 December 2025

The notes on pages 85 to 95 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 31 March 2020

	2019-20	2018-19
	£	£
Notes		
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net operating Income	1,479,635	619,023
Adjustments for non-cash transactions		
Decrease / (Increase) in trade and other receivables	8	(1,215)
Increase/(Decrease) in trade and other payables <1yr	10	317,755
Increase/(Decrease) in grant payables <1yr	11	(645,779)
Increase/(Decrease) balances held in NLDF	6	(362,955)
Net cash inflow from operating activities	787,441	268,435
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period	787,441	268,435
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	309,785	41,350
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	1,097,226	309,785

The notes on pages 85 to 95 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Equity

As at 31 March 2020

	General Reserve £	Revaluation Reserve £	Total Equity £
Balance at 31 March 2018	9,392,502	113,513	9,506,015
Comprehensive Net Income for the Year	619,023	-	619,023
Other reserves movements including transfers	113,513	(113,513)	-
Balance at 31 March 2019	10,125,038	-	10,125,038
Comprehensive Net Income for the Year	1,479,635	-	1,479,635
Balance at 31 March 2020	11,604,673	-	11,604,673

The notes on pages 85 to 95 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the accounts

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

a. Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in a form directed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport with the consent of the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland and the approval of HM Treasury in accordance with Section 35(2)-(3) of the National Lottery etc. Act 1993 (as amended).

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2019-20 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context.

Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of Sport NI Lottery Account, for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by Sport NI Lottery Account are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material to the accounts.

b. Accounting convention

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets.

The accounting policies for all material items are outlined below:

c. Income

All income received, whether Lottery proceeds, grant recovered or other income, is credited to income in the year to which it is receivable.

d. Capital and revenue grants payable

Sport NI Lottery Account pays grants in accordance with the terms and conditions inherent in the respective funding agreements. Grants awarded to organisations and individuals are charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Income in the year in which the underlying activity giving entitlement to the grant occurs. Any amounts of unpaid grant at 31 March are classified as 'Current Liabilities' in the Statement of Financial Position.

e. Property, plant and equipment and intangible assets

Sport NI Exchequer Account has been responsible for all non-current asset purchase and maintenance since 1 April 2009.

f. *Depreciation and amortisation*

Depreciation / amortisation has been provided using the straight-line method to apportion the cost of each asset over its estimated useful economic life. Depreciation / amortisation is charged from the month acquired / coming into use, rather than in the month of disposal.

Assets are depreciated over their useful lives as follows:

Information Technology	4 - 9 years
Intangible Assets	2 - 9 years

g. *Leases*

Finance Leases

Leases where substantially all of the risks and rewards are held by the lessee are classified as finance leases. The Sport NI Lottery Account does not hold any finance leases.

Operating Leases

Leases where substantially all of the risks and rewards are held by the lessor are classified as operating leases. The Sport NI Lottery Account does not hold any operating leases however lease costs are recharged from Sport NI Exchequer Account and disclosed in Note 14 to the Accounts.

h. *Employee Benefits*

Under IAS 19 an employing entity should recognise the undiscounted amount of short-term employee benefits expected to be paid in exchange for the Service. The Sport NI Lottery Account has recognised annual leave entitlements and flexi leave that have been earned by year end but not yet taken. These are classified as 'Current liabilities'.

i. *Pension Costs*

Past and present employees are covered by the provision of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee Scheme (NILGOSC). Pension and Employee benefit costs are recharged from Sport NI Exchequer Account to Sport NI Lottery Account's Statement of Comprehensive Net Income.

j. *Financial instruments*

The Sport NI Lottery Account has adopted IFRS 9. There has been no impact on the net assets of the organisation as a result of this.

The Sport NI Lottery Account does not use financial instruments to manage financial risks associated with its underlying business activities and the financing of those activities, nor does it undertake any trading activity in financial instruments. Therefore, there is no impact on the financial risk of the organisation.

k. *Balances held in the National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF)*

Balances held in the National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF) remain under the stewardship of the Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. However, the share of these balances attributable to Sport NI Lottery Account is as shown in the accounts and, at the year end, has been certified by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport as being available for distribution by it in respect of current and future commitments.

The National Lottery Distribution fund balance is classified as investments in the Statement of Financial Position. This is in line with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport accounting policy. National Lottery Distribution Fund investments are therefore held at amortised cost.

I. Financial Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash held in the bank and at hand. Cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to cash and are subject to a low risk of changes in value. Cash held in the bank is a liquid resource.

m. Financial Liabilities

Trade and Other Payables

Trade payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided to Sport NI Lottery Account prior to the end of the reporting period, which are unpaid. Purchase orders are not included as trade payables. Payables are not interest bearing and are recognised at their nominal value, which equates to their fair value.

Grants Payable

A grant commitment is deemed to be a commitment from the date on which the Letter of Offer is issued to a grant recipient. The commitment will remain as such provided the grant recipient continues to meet the conditions of the award. The Sport NI Lottery Account commitments are disclosed in Note 11 to the accounts as 'Grants Payable' and recognised as 'Expenditure' in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Income.

n. Provisions

The Sport NI Lottery Account provides for legal or constructive obligations as a result of a past event, which are of uncertain timing or amount at the year end, on the basis of the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation.

o. Estimation Techniques Used and Key Judgements

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires the use of accounting estimates and assumptions. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying Sport NI Lottery Account accounting policies. The Sport NI Lottery Account continually evaluate the estimates, assumptions and judgements based on available information and experience however as the use of estimates is inherent in financial reporting, actual results can differ from these estimates. The estimates and assumptions which have the most significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities are discussed below:

Recharge to Lottery

The apportionment of staffing and indirect costs transferred from the Sport NI Exchequer Account to Sport NI Lottery Account is based on a Service Level Agreement. This is reviewed annually to ensure recharges are appropriate and reflect the time which staff spend on Sport NI Lottery Account activities and the proportion of indirect costs which relate to Sport NI Lottery Account activities.

p. Impending application of newly issued accounting standards not yet effective

Sport NI has reviewed new accounting standards that have been issued but are not yet effective, nor adopted early for these accounts. The Sport NI Lottery Account considers that these are unlikely to have a significant impact on the accounts in the period of initial application.

q. Changes in accounting policy/estimate

There were no material changes in accounting policies or accounting estimates which require separate disclosure in the accounts.

r. Reserves

General Reserve

This is the balance arising from monies attributed to Sport NI as a Distributing Body for the National Lottery Distribution Fund as certified by the Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the net income as reported in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Income for the year.

2. Operating Segments

In line with IFRS 8, Sport NI Lottery Account does not have any segmental data to disclose. The Board Members of Sport NI review the financial performance on a bi-monthly basis, based on similar information contained with the Statement of Comprehensive Net Income of the financial statements.

3. Operating Expenditure

	Direct 2019-20 £	Recharge 2019-20 £	Total 2019-20 £	Total 2018-19 £
New Grants Made in Year	6,699,543		6,699,543	6,768,544
Grants De-Committed in Year	(257,103)		(257,103)	(546,042)
	6,442,440		6,442,440	6,222,502
Staff Costs:				
Wages and Salaries	6,183	587,632	593,815	650,461
Social Security Costs	473	50,112	50,585	64,924
Pension Costs	-	133,876	133,876	140,616
Other Staff Costs	-	-	-	134,085
	6,656	771,620	778,276	990,086
Other Operating Expenditure¹				
SNI Exchequer Overhead Charge	-	457,651	457,651	409,703
External Audit Fee	47,500	-	47,500	47,000
Running Costs	2,729	-	2,729	16,997
Publicity & Promotion	2,442	-	2,442	13,564
Professional Fees	32,698	5,500	38,198	7,920
Membership Fees	12,434	-	12,434	6,606
Meeting & Seminar Costs	5,411	-	5,411	6,734
Training	-	-	-	4,494
Travel and Subsistence	-	9,961	9,961	18,074
Donations	3,641	-	3,641	-
	106,855	473,112	579,967	531,092
Total	6,555,950	1,244,733	7,800,683	7,743,680

4. Income

	2019-20 £	2018-19 £
Income from Activities		
Proceeds from National Lottery	9,235,646	8,320,066
Investment Income	44,672	42,637
	9,280,318	8,362,703

¹ Costs totalling £1,244,733 (31 March 2019: £1,405,444) within the total for 2019-20 were initially incurred by The Sport NI Exchequer account and recharged to the Sport NI Lottery Account

5. Financial Instruments

Sport NI's Lottery Account financial instruments comprise of cash liquid resources; investments held in the National Lottery Fund Distribution Account (NLDF); receivables, trade payables; and grant commitments to applicants which arise directly from Sport NI Lottery Account's operations. The main purpose of these financial instruments is to provide finance for the operations of Sport NI Lottery Account. There are currently no borrowings or embedded derivatives.

Liquidity Risks

In 2019-20, £9.280 million (100%) of the Sport NI Lottery Account income was derived from the National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF). This included income of £0.045 million (0.5%) derived from investment returns from the balance held with the NLDF. Sport NI Lottery Account considers that the Fund is not exposed to significant liquidity risks; and is satisfied that sufficient liquid resources are held within the NLDF Investment and in the bank, a total of £15.598 million, to cover all current contracted commitments of £3.994 million.

Interest Rate Risks

The financial assets of the Fund are invested in the NLDF, which invests in a narrow band of low-risk assets such as government bonds and cash. The Sport NI Lottery Account has no control over the investment of Funds in the NLDF. At the 31 March 2020 the Market Value of investment in the NLDF was £14.500 million (31 March 2019: £14.137m). The annual return on the NLDF for the year ended 31 March 2020 was 0.72% (31 March 2019: 0.67%). Cash balances which are drawn down from the Fund to pay grant commitments and operating costs are held in a non-interest-bearing current account, as it is part of the Northern Ireland government pooling agreement. The cash balance at the year-end was £1.097 million. Sport NI considers that the Fund is not exposed to significant interest rate risks.

Foreign Currency Risk

The Fund is not exposed to any foreign exchange risks.

Commodity Risk

The Fund is not exposed to any commodity risks.

Credit Risk

The Fund is not exposed to any credit risk.

6. Investments - balance held in NLDF

The funds held in the NLDF are invested on its behalf by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt.

The balances below are classified as investments in the Statement of Financial Position. This is in line with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport accounting policy. National Lottery Distribution Fund investments are therefore held at amortised cost. Interest earned on the sums invested is apportioned to each of the twelve Lottery Distributors on the basis of their percentage of the total remaining NLDF Funds at the time the interest is received.

Sport NI is charged under the 1993 Act with responsibility for distributing 2.8% of the money allocated to sport. However, as of July 1999 Sport NI received a reduced contribution of 2.6% as a top sliced contribution of 0.2% became payable to the United Kingdom Sport NI in respect of the United Kingdom wide World Class Performance Programme for elite athletes.

The closing market value of investments held at 31 March 2020 by the NLDF under the National Lottery Act as amended on behalf of Sport NI's Lottery Account was £14,499,804 (31 March 2019: £14,136,849).

Balances Held in NLDF

	2019-20	2018-19
	£	£
Proceeds from Lottery	9,235,646	8,320,066
Investment income	44,672	42,637
Drawn down in year	(8,917,363)	(8,919,958)
Increase in Funds	362,955	(557,255)
Balance at 1 April	14,136,849	14,694,104
Balance at 31 March	14,499,804	14,136,849

7. NLDF Balance Policy

In August 2003 DCMS issued 'National Lottery Guidance Note 1/03: Management of NLDF Balances'. This guidance note proposes that each Lottery Distributor should have an NLDF balance policy and should publish a statement on its policy in its Annual Report and Accounts. This should include a target for the size of its NLDF balance based on an assessment of needs over the next three financial years.

The following is the policy as approved by Sport NI:

Sport NI aims to keep NLDF balances at a prudent level that will maximise its ability to achieve its strategic objectives, and to ensure the effective progress of existing and future commitments. In setting its target balances, Sport NI will seek to ensure that it neither compromise existing commitments nor unreasonably constrain its ability to make future commitments.

In April 2020, Sport NI agreed that the NLDF target balance should be as follows:

- by 31 March 2021 to achieve a NLDF balance of £9.617m;
- by 31 March 2022 to achieve a NLDF balance of £6.541m.
- by 31 March 2023 to achieve a NLDF balance of £5.543m;
- by 31 March 2024 to achieve a NLDF balance of £5.395m; and
- by 31 March 2025 to achieve a NLDF balance of £4.397m.

At 31 March 2020 Sport NI Lottery Account NLDF balance was £14.499m.

The target for the year of £5.793m was not achieved as a result of deferrals in programme activity. Expenditure and income profiles have been updated and revised policies have been approved by the Board since. The latest policy was approved in March 2023 with the £17.9m balance expected to be reduced to £1.0m by 31 March 2028.

8. Trade Receivables, Financial and Other Assets

	2019-20	2018-19
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Prepayments and Accrued Income	1,331	116
Total	<hr/> 1,331	<hr/> 116

9. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2019-20	2018-19
	£	£
Balance at 1 April	309,785	41,350
Net Change in Cash and Cash Equivalent Balances	787,441	268,435
Balance at 31 March	<hr/> 1,097,226	<hr/> 309,785

The following balances at the 31 March were held at:

Commercial Banks	1,097,226	309,785
Balance at 31 March	<hr/> 1,097,226	<hr/> 309,785

10. Trade Payables, Financial and Other Liabilities

	2019-20	2018-19
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade Payables	1,800	2,608
Amount Payable to SNI Exchequer Account	533,071	287,859
Accruals and Deferred Income	322,626	249,275
Total Trade and Other Payables	<hr/> 857,497	<hr/> 539,742
Grants payable at 31 March	3,136,191	3,781,970
Total	<hr/> 3,993,688	<hr/> 4,321,712

11. Grants Payable

	2019-20	2018-19
	£	£
Grants payable at 1 April	3,781,970	4,876,286
Grants paid during the year	(7,088,219)	(7,316,818)
Grant de-commitments	(257,103)	(546,042)
New Grants made in year	6,699,543	6,768,544
Grants payable at 31 March	3,136,191	3,781,970

All commitments under grants are expected to be paid within one year. Sport NI considers that it has sufficient liquid resource within the NLDF and cash balances as well as forecasted NLDF income to cover all current contracted commitments. The forecasted NLDF income is based on projections received from DCMS.

12. Contingent Liabilities

Grants are disclosed as contingent liabilities if they do not satisfy the criteria to be treated as liabilities. We have recognised a contingent liability of £0.789m at 31 March 2020 (31 March 2019: £0.248m) in respect of awards approved but not included in the calculation of grants payable in the Statement of Financial Position as letters of offer had yet to be made to the applicants at the year end.

13. Retirement Benefit Obligations

All assets, liabilities and operating costs of the Sport NI Lottery Account's pension scheme are recorded in the Sport NI Exchequer Account. Details of pension liabilities can be found in the Remuneration and Staff Report.

14. Leases

While the Sport NI Lottery Account has no direct lease commitments, the Sport NI Exchequer Account has lease commitments, of which a proportion is charged to the Sport NI Lottery Account as they are incurred.

	2019-20	2018-19
	£	£
Total rent recharge	15,972	19,350

15. Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments as at 31 March 2020 (31 March 2019: NIL).

16. Other Financial Commitments

There were no other financial commitments as at 31 March 2020 (31 March 2019: NIL).

17. Contingent Assets

The National Lottery Distributors (including the Sports Council of Northern Ireland) are entitled to receive a share of receipts from the sale of land on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in return for their contribution of an additional £675 million to the funding of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This was announced in 2007. The arrangements are set out in a legal agreement between the Secretary of State and the Greater London Authority dated 29 March 2012 which sets out the distribution of funds between the GLA and the lottery distributors (via DCMS). Land sales are likely to take place over a lengthy period, estimated to be from 2016-17 to 2036-37. DCMS estimates the first payments to the Lottery Distributors to come through in 2026-27.

18. Related Parties

Several members of the Board and Senior Staff (Executive Team) are also involved with suppliers or other sports organisations in Northern Ireland either directly or indirectly as a result of a family relationship, a close friendship or business relationship. These individuals make an annual declaration of their interests and do not take part in discussions and decisions to make commitments to those organisations with which they have had a declared interest. A list of the commitments made to the organisations concerned and details of who made the declaration of interest is shown below. All of the transactions relating to the organisations were conducted at arm's length by Sport NI.

Board Member	Grantee	Commitments to Grantee (£)	Payments (£)	Balance at 31 March 2020 (£)	Relationship of Staff Member to Grantee or Supplier
Jackie Bryson	Mountaineering Ireland	55,500	53,029	39,625	Observer on Mountain Training UK Board which includes rep from MI.
Richard Bullick	Netball NI	209,233	231,101	18,825	Honorary Officer & Non-executive Director
James Jay Colville	Royal Yachting Association	210,740	222,122	46,605	Subscribing Member – Current
George Lucas	UB Tennis Ireland	39,520	23,183	16,337	Person Connected – Honorary Officer – Current
Executive Team Member	Grantee	Commitments to Grantee (£)	Payments (£)	Balance at 31 March 2020 (£)	Relationship of Staff Member to Grantee or Supplier
John News	Cycling Ireland	307,984	250,077	145,242	Subscribing Member – Current

Sport NI is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department for Communities (DfC). The Lottery Account operations of Sport NI are funded from the National Lottery Distribution Fund through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). DfC and DCMS are regarded as related parties. During the year the Sport NI Lottery account received £8,917,363 cash (2018-19: £8,919,958) from DCMS and had no material transactions with DfC.

Sport NI's Exchequer Account makes recharges to Sport NI's Lottery Account for salaries and other administrative costs. Whilst not considered a related party, the following transactions with the Sport NI Exchequer Account are made in the interests of transparency. During 2019-20, £1,244,733 was recharged (2018-19: £1,405,444). At 31 March 2020 a net amount of £533,071 (2018-19: £287,859) was owed by Sport NI Lottery Account to Sport NI Exchequer Account.

As a matter of policy and procedure, Sport NI maintains a publicly available register of interests where Board Members and staff declare any direct interest in grant applications made to Sport NI or any commercial relationships of Sport NI Board Members. Grants were paid during the year to a number of organisations in which Board Members declared an interest. Having declared an interest Board Members and staff are required to leave meetings while the relevant application is discussed, and a decision is made.

19. Third Party Assets

There were no third-party assets as at 31 March 2020 (31 March 2019: NIL).

20. Events After the Reporting Period

Events after the balance sheet date are those material events, both favourable and adverse, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the accounts are authorised for issue.

There have been no such events requiring adjustment to the financial statements. The impact of COVID and EU Exit have been considered in the Performance Summary on page 14 and Governance Statement on page 45.

Date of Authorisation for Issue

The Accounting Officer authorised the issue of these financial statements on the date the Comptroller and Auditor General certified these accounts.

Appendix A – Lottery Accounts Direction

SPORTS COUNCIL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Department for Communities (formerly DCAL), on behalf of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 26(1) of the National Lottery etc. Act 1993 and having consulted the Sports Council for Northern Ireland (Sports Council for Northern Ireland) pursuant to section 26(5) of that Act, hereby gives the following directions:

1. In these Directions any reference to a section is a reference to a section of the National Lottery etc Act 1993.
2. In determining the persons to whom, the purposes for which and the conditions subject to which it distributes any money under section 25(1), Sports Council for Northern Ireland shall take into account the following matters:-
 - A. Its assessment of the needs of sport and its priorities for addressing them (having regard to government strategies/policies in force).
 - B. The need to inspire children and young people, awakening their interest and involvement in sport.
 - C. The need to foster local community initiatives which bring people together, enrich the public realm and strengthen community spirit.
 - D. The need to support volunteering and encourage volunteering in sport.
 - E. The need to encourage new talent, innovation, and excellence and help people to develop new skills.
 - F. The need to involve the public and local communities in making policies and setting policies and setting priorities.
 - G. The need to ensure that money is distributed for projects which promote public good rather than private gain.
 - H. The need to further the objective of sustainable development.
 - I. The need to ensure that all those receiving Lottery money acknowledge it using the common Lottery branding.
 - J. The need to require an element of partnership funding, or contributions in kind from other sources to the extent that this reasonable to achieve for different kinds of applicants.
 - K. The desirability of:
 - (a) increasing access and participation for all;
 - (b) ensuring that all areas have access to funding; and
 - (c) reducing economic and social deprivation.
 - L. The desirability of working jointly with other organization, including other distributors.

M. The need:

- (a) to set time limits for which grants are payable;
- (b) to ensure that Sports Council for Northern Ireland has the necessary information and expert advice to make decisions on each application; and
- (c) for applicants to demonstrate the financial viability of projects.

N. Where capital funding is sought, the need:

- (a) for a clear business plan showing how any running and maintenance costs will be met for a reasonable period; and
- (b) to ensure that appraisal and management for major projects match the Office of Government Commerce's Gateway Review standards.

O. The need to ensure that its powers to solicit applications under section 25 (2A) are used in connection with the pursuit of strategic objectives.

Signed on behalf of the Department for Communities (formerly DCAL):

PAUL SWEENEY
Permanent Secretary

16 April 2008

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