



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SPORT NI BOARD HELD ON 22nd APRIL
2020 AT 9:10AM – ZOOM MEETING
DRAFT**

Present: Board members: George Lucas Jay Colville Jackie Bryson Richard Bullick Wilma Erskine Kyle Ferguson Kieran Harding Catherine O'Mullan Darryl Petticrew	In attendance: Sport NI Officials Antoinette McKeown, CEO John News, Director of Participation and Facilities (from Item 10) Peter McCabe, Director of Performance Adrian Doherty, Director of Finance & Governance Ali Campbell, Executive Unit Manager Gillian Gilliland, Board Secretary Laura Carland, Personal Secretary Nicola Algie, HR Manager (for Closed Session)
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Agenda Item	Record of main discussion
CLOSED SESSION OF BOARD & CEO	The Board had a closed session with the CEO and HR Manager to receive an update on the organisation restructure.
1. Apologies	The main Board meeting commenced at 9:40am. There were no apologies to note.
2. Register of Member's Declaration of Interest	The Chair asked members to complete any outstanding 2020/21 DOIs before the end of April. There were no new declarations to note for today's meeting.
4.Minutes of meetings on 11 March 2020 and 7 April 2020 (emergency meeting)	Members approved the minutes of the 11 March 2020 and the emergency meeting held on 7 April 2020.
4.1. Action Points 11 March 2020	Action points of 11 March 2020 were circulated to members and officers prior to the meeting.
Chair's remarks	The Chair acknowledged the efforts of the CEO, Executive Team and Staff in supporting the NI Executive's response to Covid-19 - Stay safe, Save lives and protect NHS.

	<p>The background work and timely implementation in formulating the Hardship Fund in partnership with DFC, is a noteworthy example of seeking to address an urgent need and support our Community.</p> <p>The Board papers highlight and evidence the wide range of programmes, initiatives and Governance undertaken by SPNI, in optimising the power of sport to change lives and support Communities.</p> <p>The Chair asked for the Board's appreciation and thanks to be passed on to all staff for their expertise, endeavours and passion in seeking to develop a quality and engaging experience for all involved in sport and physical recreation particularly among under-represented groups.</p> <p>The need for Board meetings to be held via Zoom presents an opportunity to improve our Teamwork and interaction on questions and answers.</p> <p>The Chair asked members to make use of the Zoom Chat facility for today's meeting and signal to everyone when they had a comment or query to raise. Members noted Laura would be providing support to manage any comments and queries from members during the meeting.</p> <p>It was highlighted that members' queries which had been raised and answered via email in advance of today's meeting wouldn't be discussed again during the meeting, in the interest of keeping the agenda moving. This will optimise the time on Zoom and improve the focus and quality of discussions. It was advised these questions would be saved as formal Board discussions in SharePoint.</p>
<p>5. Covid-19 Update SNI 20 11</p>	<p>Members received paper SNI 20 11 which sets out what SNI have done to financially support the sports sector to date and also includes a proposal for a strengthening fund to build sector resilience, using Lottery NLDF balance. The proposal is deliberately high level and meetings are planned with the sector over 22, 23 and 24 April to hear in more detail what the current challenges are. A further paper will be worked up for Board input and approval and today's decision required is for an "in principle" approval to work up a detailed funding package at Phase 3.</p> <p>Members noted the progress to date in terms of Phase 1 and 2 and the huge effort from staff to release £2.4m of existing funding.</p> <p>Members received an update on the Hardship Fund which was over-subscribed and currently suspended. Members heard a letter had been issued to the Minister requesting an additional £750k and a response is awaited. Members noted the £250k SNI funding is an uplift in this year's budget which was put into the Hardship Fund.</p> <p>Members queried the process of the Hardship Fund in terms of equality impact assessment and it was advised as this was a project these funding amounts were not subject to Section 75 but assurance was provided to members of the wide geographic spread of applications across a wide range of sports.</p> <p>Members approved the recommendations within the paper.</p>

6. CEO Report SNI 20 13	<p>Members received paper SNI 2013 for noting.</p> <p>Members heard there had been a considerable amount of work on the Route Map for Change. Culture work has continued with staff sessions held yesterday in terms of wellbeing. The financial procedures have been re-written to respond to the challenges of Covid-19; huge thank you to the Finance Team. The restructuring project and the Board Effectiveness review are moving forward.</p> <p>Members noted the Corporate plan is currently with the department for approval; a meeting is needed in order to finalise this however members noted Covid-19 was the department's main priority currently. Members noted there needed to be alignment with the department and this was subject to ongoing discussion.</p> <p>The CEO reported on her conversation yesterday with Kyle Ferguson regarding the corporate plan which clarified matters and highlighted that some of the issues discussed were around the language used. Members understood the department are carrying out a piece of work to define language, however members were content with the broad approach to the corporate plan. Members agreed to have ongoing dialogue on the corporate plan.</p> <p>Members queried in terms of the responses to queries regarding the DfC consultant had there been the opportunity to influence their thinking. It was noted SNI were already working closely with them and they were in agreement with our thinking process.</p> <p>Members noted some comments received regarding the current Elevator Speech; it was agreed these would be discussed by the ET and adjustments made where appropriate before circulation to members for information.</p>
7. Covid-19 Crisis Communication Plan SNI 20 12	<p>Members received paper SNI 20 12 for noting.</p> <p>Members heard this paper contained the ongoing plan as we work through phases, based on advice from the Chief Medical Officer and PHA advice.</p> <p>Members queried in terms of presenting the data for coverage whether there was the potential to benchmark against other organisations for analysis and it was noted data analytics are carried out every month in terms of our reach. Members noted there are other organisations we can loosely compare to and we can look at this; however assurance was given to the Board that SNI continually outperform.</p>
8. Communications Plan SNI 20 14	<p>Members received paper SNI 20 14 for noting.</p> <p>Members congratulated Ali and the Communications Team for the excellent communication plans.</p>
9. Revised Business Plan 2020/21 SNI 20 15	<p>Members received paper SNI 2015 for approval.</p> <p>Members noted this had been submitted to the department and there was ongoing discussion with K Hill to continue to revise the plan; in terms of good governance we review every aspect of the plan, however these are changes required in terms of Covid-19.</p>

	<p>Members discussed comments being received from members and changes coming back from the department, as we go into more detail this could potentially bring different interpretation to the plan. Members agreed it was important that we do not re-open the entire business plan previously approved.</p> <p>Members approved the paper.</p>
10. NLDF Balance SNI 20 16	<p>Members received paper SNI 20 16 for approval.</p> <p>Members noted this paper provides policy proposals around the NLDF balances and new proposals for investment over the period of the new Corporate Plan 2020-25; the spreadsheet within the paper provides greater detail. As previously advised to members, the balance has been £14.4m for some time and this paper addresses this.</p> <p>Members discussed the proposed funding proposals and risks associated in terms of potential double funding from exchequer and lottery and queried how confident the ET were that the proposals could be managed and what level of resource would be required.</p> <p>Members heard there were existing commitments for programmes coming to an end with letters of offer already issued totalling £3.7m and these are low risk. There are other further commitments and project level business cases totalling £7.9m. Members noted the area of risk was the new proposals; these are currently high level proposals for 2020-21 in terms of Covid-19 Phase 3 proposals. These proposals are in principle for the Board to approve the ET to work up detailed plans which will include risk assessment. Members heard the plan is to spend £30m of investment on four plans which need to be worked up.</p> <p>Members agreed they were content with the detail contained within the spreadsheet associated with the paper. Members noted this would also be discussed at ARAC and the detail would be included within the Corporate Plan. The Board will be asked to approve the detail as this is developed. Members noted the Board need to approve the NLDF balance and the planned spend.</p> <p>Members noted the NIAO are going to raise the process of governance shortcoming a few years back in terms of the level of decommitment but this has been addressed.</p> <p>Members were advised the Board are being asked to approve up to £3m, the phase 3 response to Covid-19 as well as approval for the 5 year spend in principle.</p> <p>Members noted the risk appetite in terms of £1m threshold as income may go down. This paper is responding to the needs of the sector as it emerges from lockdown and currently is not split across outcome 1 and 2. There are other issues we will need to look at in terms of the Business Plan. Members noted there would be meetings held over next few days with GBs to understand their issues and information gathering to ensure Phase 3 funding is targeted where it is required.</p>

	<p>Members were advised a risk has been identified within the paper regarding income levels; there is a concern that Covid-19 will reduce the income. The Gambling Commission will report in 3 months' time and the Board will be presented with an update paper at that stage.</p> <p>Members agreed this was a movable feast; members welcomed the paper and potential plan for spending these funds over 5 years with more detail for 2020/21, subject to what happens with Covid-19 and requested this is kept under review by ARAC and the Board.</p> <p>Recommendations within the paper were approved subject to ongoing review. A query was raised in relation to references to NGB investment and whether that included other sporting organisations such as DSNI ORNI etc, for example. It was clarified that provision for these organisations currently comes from another budget line. If we want to invest in others under NLDF we can also do this.</p> <p>Members approved the recommendations contained within the paper, subject to ongoing review.</p>
11. Revised Procurement Plan SNI 20 17	Members received paper SNI 20 17 and approved the revised Procurement Plan.
12. Risk Register SNI 20 18	<p>Members received paper SNI 20 18 for approval.</p> <p>Members noted the Risk Register had been updated in respect of the impact of Covid-19.</p> <p>Members highlighted there was no mention of fatalities within Risk 6; it was agreed this would be amended.</p> <p>Members suggested that Covid-19 should also be included within Risk 1 in terms of business continuity and wellbeing; it was agreed this risk would be amended.</p> <p>Members approved the Risk Register subject to the requested amendments.</p>
13. Bi-Annual Assurance Statement SNI 20 19	Members received paper SNI 20 19 and noted its contents.
14. Finance & Governance Report SNI 20 20	<p>Members received paper SNI 20 20 for noting.</p> <p>Members queried the position regarding the increase in short terms absences and sought clarification on whether all staff were working from home and if any staff had been furloughed.</p> <p>Members noted the absence management had been discussed at length at the last ET meeting and this was being monitored. Members noted for the first time</p>

	<p>the paper showed a breakdown of reasons for sick absence. Members heard return to work interview information is being looked at to ensure compliance with the policy.</p> <p>Members were advised no staff had been furloughed, this was not a possibility within the public sector and all staff were working from home; not all staff had laptops available but were being deployed to work on projects. It was noted some agency staff were not able to carry out their function but were still employed. It was also noted there were some staff at TNOC on zero hours contracts who were currently not getting any work from SNI.</p> <p>Members queried the issue regarding the £300k underspend currently being assessed; members were advised that although this money cannot be carried over an explanation has to be provided to the board regarding the underspend; this has to be reported on internally and externally. Lessons learned for next year will also be addressed. The Finance & Governance Director detailed the breakdown of the £300k underspend; members congratulated the team for savings on inefficiencies in terms of the underspend and stated this process would hopefully generate funding earlier next year.</p>
15. AOB	<p>There was no other business to discuss.</p> <p>The Chair queried was everyone happy with today's meeting; everyone agreed it had been a good meeting.</p>
16. Date of next meeting	<p>The Chair advised that subject to any change regarding Covid-19 it would be assumed for the next six months that Board meetings would be take place at 9am via Zoom; members agreed.</p> <p>Members queried the position on Zoom meetings in terms of being GDPR compliant; the Finance & Governance Director confirmed he would investigate this and report back to the Board.</p> <p>The meeting finished at 11:10am.</p>

Approved by:
Sport NI Chair

George Lucas.

Date: 10 June 2020