



Press Release

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## **New Chief Operating Officer appointed at Sport England**

Nick Pontefract, Executive Director of the Commonwealth Games Delivery Unit at DCMS, has been appointed as Sport England's new Chief Operating Officer (COO).

Nick brings a wealth of sports sector experience to Sport England. As Head of Sport at the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport, he led the work to develop and deliver the *Sporting Future* strategy to increase the number of people engaging in sport. Most recently he was responsible for the government's contribution to the successful Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games bid.

Nick will replace current Chief Operating Officer Rona Chester, who will retire this spring after 8 years in post. In the new role, he will take overall responsibility for the key functions of finance, grants management, human resources and IT, and will work closely with Chief Executive Jennie Price on the detailed execution of Sport England's strategy.

### **Commenting on the appointment, Jennie Price, Chief Executive of Sport England said:**

"I am absolutely delighted that Nick will be joining us as our new Chief Operating Officer. He came through a highly competitive process with a strong field of well over 100 applicants, and brings a huge amount of relevant experience and enthusiasm, coupled with a genuine passion for tackling inactivity. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Rona Chester for her service and dedication to Sport England's work. She leaves a strong foundation for Nick to build on as we continue to deliver on our vision of a more active nation for all."

**Nick Pontefract said:** "Sport England is a fantastic organisation, with a really important job to do. Getting more people from all backgrounds involved in sport is a big challenge but if we get it right the impact could be enormous. Being part of the development of *Sporting Future* and *Towards an Active Nation* has given me a passion for the positive impact that sport can bring, and so the opportunity to be involved in delivering that strategy from within Sport England is incredibly exciting. I can't wait to get started, and to work with the brilliant people in Sport England and across the sport and physical activity sector to make a real difference to people's lives."

Nick Pontefract will join Sport England in March.

**-ENDS-**

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**Notes to editors:**

### **About Sport England**

Sport England is a public body and invests more than £300 million National Lottery and government money each year in projects and programmes that help people get active and play sport.

It wants everyone in England, regardless of age, background, or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. That's why a lot of its work is specifically focused on helping people who do no, or very little, physical activity and groups who are typically less active - like women, disabled people and people on lower incomes.