

Minutes of the Sport England Board meeting of 8 December 2020 (held remotely by videoconference)

Members Nick Bitel (Chair)
Natalie Ceeney
Azeem Akhtar
Rashmi Becker
Ian Cumming
Chris Grant
Sue James
Andy Long
David Mahoney
Tove Okunniwa
Karen Pickering

Officers Mike Diaper ED – Children, Young People and Tackling Inactivity
Ali Donnelly, ED – Digital Marketing and Communications
Jon Fox, Strategic Lead – Investment Design (items 12-14)
Tim Hollingsworth, Chief Executive Officer
Cathy Hughes, Head of Equality and Diversity (item 11)
Serena Jacobs, Director – Finance (items 12-14)
Charles Johnston, ED – Property
Richard Mabbitt, Board Secretary
Simon Macqueen, Director – Strategy
Sarah Milton, EA to Chair and CEO
Lisa O’Keefe, ED – Insight
Chris Perks, ED – Local Delivery
Nick Pontefract, Chief Operating Officer
Naomi Shearon, Strategic Lead – Strategy (items 12-14)
Phil Smith, ED – Sport
Lynsey Tweddle, Head- Corporate Governance (items 10-11)
Rhiannon Varnam, Governance Officer (items 10-11)

Guests: Anna Deignan, Head of Sport – DCMS

1. Chair’s Welcome and introductory comments

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees. The meeting was being held remotely under ongoing COVID-19 social distancing measures.
- 1.2 The Board noted that this was Anna Deignan’s last attendance as DCMS

Head of Sport and thanked her formally for her commitment and the effectiveness of the sponsor support she had provided in this role. Board members wished her well for her new post.

2. Apologies for Absence

2.1 All Board members were present.

3. Declarations of Interests

3.1 Natalie Ceeney declared a new interest as a Director of the San Fairy Ann Cycling Club (Company Registration Number 13033225).

3.2 No further declarations of interests were made by members additional to those already registered.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

4.1 The Board **AGREED** the minutes of the previous Board meeting of 3 November 2020 (paper [MB20-66](#)) as an accurate record of events.

5. Matters arising

5.1 The Board reviewed the log of decisions and actions (paper [MB20-67](#)). Board members were content that matters arising from previous meetings were either complete, satisfactorily in hand, or to be addressed under later agenda items.

5.2 One decision paper ([MB20-64](#) Project Arena) had been agreed by correspondence since the last meeting . One formal information paper ([MB20-65](#) National Leisure Recovery Fund) had been circulated prior to discussion of this matter by Investment Committee at its meeting of 25 November. No further comments were made in relation these papers.

5.3 Summary proceedings of: the Investment Committee of 25 November 2020 (paper [MB20-76](#)); the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee of 26 November 2020 (paper [MB20-77](#)); and the Sports Council Trust Company meeting of 3 December 2020 (paper [MB20-78](#)) had been shared for information only along with the pack of Board papers. No further comments were made in relation to these papers.

6. CEO Update

- 6.1 Tim Hollingsworth drew members' attention to paper MB20-68 and briefed Board members on other key issues and developments since their last meeting.
- 6.2 Board members had been updated before the meeting on Sport England's one-year Government Spending Review settlement (Tim Hollingworth's email of 26 November 2020 filed as paper MB20-68A refers). This included the confirmation of its baseline for both capital and revenue exchequer funding on a 'flat cash' basis with the anticipation of a Comprehensive Spending Review in around a year. The Board noted that while (as a non-inflationary settlement) this represented in real terms a slight decrease, this had been a satisfactory outcome for Sport England given the circumstances and economic climate.
- 6.3 The Board noted the change in publication date of the Year 3 Active Lives Survey Results to 14 January. Further to papers presented at the Investment Committee meetings of 14 October and 25 November 2020 (IC20-25 and IC20-32 refer), Lisa O'Keefe reported on Sport England's Keeping the Nation Active work strand, and the evidence gathered between each Covid-19 lockdown. The Insight Team had noted a decline in the public's motivation to exercise and the Board discussed the reasons behind this including local lockdowns and seasonal factors. This insight had also fed into the Sport England Winter Toolkit. Board Members reflected on the variances between behaviours and reactions across different areas of the UK, in particular the decision by the Lancashire FA to suspend grassroots football in eight local authority areas until January. This would be raised with the Lancashire FA by DCMS representatives.
- 6.4 Charles Johnston briefed the Board on the outcome of the fourth staff wellbeing survey, which covered staff workload, caring responsibilities, and flexible working. The Board noted positive scores on most areas aside from workload. Support to staff, including Health and Safety training and increased Mental Health First Aid capacity, was being provided. In addition, staff had shown an appetite to continue working flexibly after the end of the lockdown period. Board members and attendees noted their appreciation of the workload demands on staff, and the volume of work undertaken since the first lockdown in March.
- 6.5 The Board noted the updates on the Whyte Review, and on Secretariat matters with no further comments.

7. Coaching elements of FA Parklife Project

- 7.1 Phil Smith introduced the Investment Recommendation Report at paper MB20-69 for Board approval of a further £2 million ring fenced exchequer investment into the Football Association (FA) to support work to enhance the quality and diversity of the coaching workforce in football.
- 7.2 Board members noted that this was the fifth and final stage of exchequer funding allocated from DCMS to the FA on an annual basis. Sport England had over this period worked collaboratively with the FA to shape its investment in strategic initiatives and programmes across its grassroots education provision to improve coaching and support standards and to increase the number of coaches from under-represented groups. While the FA's current model had served the game well, this investment would support transformation in its coach education and development programme, based on building capacity, a focus on user experience, and digitalisation of its coaching offer.
- 7.3 Board members:
- a) noted the alignment of this approach with Sport England's new strategic priorities, and the learning that this collaboration with the FA had generated;
 - b) asked for the opportunity to review impact data being generated by the project in terms of both its prior emphasis on increasing numbers and representation in coaching, and on its objectives going forward;
 - c) advised that officers needed to monitor the operational capacity of FA Learning, given the forthcoming restructure within the FA as a whole;
 - d) asked for further details about the IP being generated through the project and its wider applicability.
- 7.4 Notwithstanding these comments, the Board **AGREED** the recommendation for funding in the terms set out in the paper. **Action: Phil Smith** to progress the investment and to advise Board members offline on the queries raised at the meeting.

8. COVID-19 Sector Response Update

National Leisure Recovery Fund

- 8.1 Charles Johnston updated the Board orally on work led by Sport England

with sector organisations to support DCMS and The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government in order to develop and deliver a fund (agreed as £100m of funding within the £1bn allocated to Local Authorities in the fourth tranche of COVID-19 support to local government) to support reopening and sustainable recovery of public sector leisure service provision.

8.2 Government had determined that the approach would be a biddable fund over which DCMS would retain programme-level Accounting Officer responsibility. It would delegate to the Sport England CEO Accounting Officer responsibilities for fund administration. Given the scale, complexity and urgency of the programme, a business case for the procurement of specialist administrative support had been signed off by Investment Committee at its meeting of 25 November 2020 (paper [IC20-37](#) refers). Final formal confirmation that funding would be released was expected from HMT imminently, with a soft launch of the fund anticipated for 9 December 2020 and the fund open for a ten-day application window on 14 December 2020. Interest was expected from around 250 local authorities with outsourced leisure provision (around 200 facilities in total) eligible for funding.

8.3 The Board welcomed these developments and thanked officers for their efforts. Board members:

- a) acknowledged the intensive and effective collaboration with DCMS officials and asked Anna Deignan to extend its thanks to them also;
- b) noted that the collation of a convincing business case had provided insight and surfaced other areas of concern relating to the sustainability of local authority leisure provision;
- c) felt that although the £100m budget was unlikely of itself to support full recovery across the piece, the data from applications and ongoing monitoring would significantly strengthen the case for further Government investment. The process of making the business case had in many cases had a transformative effect on local authority attitudes to sharing data and insight;
- d) were content that close communication and engagement with stakeholders from the outset had mitigated the risks around the proposed short application window;
- e) noted that a further paper on potential support for local authority leisure service provision that fell outside the Fund criteria would be taken to a future Investment Committee meeting.

Sport Winter Survival Fund

- 8.4 Simon Macqueen summarised key governance changes to the fund since the update at the Board meeting of 3 November. Government had determined that the fund (now announced by Government as £300m, with formal HM Treasury confirmation of release expected imminently) would no longer be delivered through a special purpose vehicle. Decision-making on the allocation of funding within parameters set by Government would be made by a decision-making board to be appointed by the Secretary of State and with an Independent Chair (Sir Ian Cheshire). Natalie Ceeney and Tim Hollingsworth would be voting members. An orientation meeting was proposed for decision-making board members on 11 December 2020, with its first meeting on 17 December 2020. While the forensic accounting and auditing services of Deloitte had been retained, the administration of the fund itself would now be taken in-house by Sport England.
- 8.5 Board members noted the ongoing challenges faced by officers in getting the fund up and running. These included:
- a) urgent turnaround times for applications;
 - b) dealing with Sports and organisations within those sports who were new partners to Sport England (e.g. greyhound racing, horseracing and motorsport);
 - c) the complexities of determining the urgency of financial need and optimal sequencing of loan and grant payments across different sports;
 - d) managing loans rather than grants (which were a more typical way of working), especially given the Governments direction towards the former and lobbying for the latter by many organisations;
 - e) The additional administrative burden from taking elements of the administration in-house. It noted the significant cost savings and potential efficiencies but flagged the capacity and capability demand on Sport England staff as a risk.
- 8.6 Board members noted the importance of public clarity about the respective roles of DCMS and Sport England. The fund (and what it could not support) risked being seen as Sport England's sole responsibility. It was noted that direct speculative requests for information and solicitations for funding were already being received.
- 8.7 Board members thanked Simon Macqueen and Lizzie Hughes, and the numerous officers from across the organisation who had been progressing this challenging initiative with DCMS and partners. DCMS officials'

constructive and committed approach to engagement here was again cited.

Sport England Sector support – update

8.8 Phil Smith spoke to paper MB20-70 which summarised progress across the range of sectoral support provided by Sport England. He reported:

- a) that the Tackling Inequalities Fund was reaching its target audiences, including 85% of awards being made to partners completely new to Sport England. Lessons learned from TIF on engagement and trust-building had informed the new Strategy. The Board noted the effective use of the Smartsheet application and the risk-based approach to the administration of smaller grants. The Board welcomed progress here;
- b) on the challenges facing the sport and leisure workforce. Compared to other sectors, the sport sector had a very high proportion of furloughed employees and employees at risk of redundancy or moving from the sector. The Board noted that the Investment Committee meeting of 25 November 2020 had discussed Sport England’s work to understand and support the workforce essential to the sport and physical activity ‘ecosystem’ and agreed that this was a priority concern. The Board highlighted the importance of volunteers in the workforce and how their role was being affected directly and indirectly by COVID-19, and encouraged the exploration of innovative ways of helping;
- c) on calls from the sector for some form of Government community sport recovery fund (e.g. #SaveourSport). Sport England was scoping with partners what support could be needed for the medium term beyond existing Sport England plans, with the aim of informing a collective, realistic and evidence-based sector ask of government. Any campaigning was encouraged to wait until 2021 at the earliest;
- d) on the open funding element of the Return to Play funding stream. The board discussed the high proportion of rejected applications to this programme. It was content that these largely represented speculative applications for projects that fell outwith the fund’s criteria and that further application guidance was being put in place.

8.9 The Board noted the updates on: the now completed Community Emergency fund; the guidance and expertise programme currently under review; the Sector Partner fund; rolled-forward funding arrangements for key partners; intelligence gathering activity; Sector Renewal Funding; and the Innovation and Technology Fund with no further comments.

- 8.10 The Board remained satisfied with the suite of funding and support measures in place to support the sector through the ongoing COVID-19 challenges, and asked to be kept aware of developments, particularly in respect of the Sport Winter Survival Fund and the National Leisure Recovery Fund. **Action: Charles Johnston, Phil Smith and Simon Macqueen.**

9. Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report

- 9.1 The Board reviewed paper [MB20-71](#). This was the first standing update on EDI in Sport England's internal and external work, as requested by the Board.

Board EDI champion's Overview

- 9.2 Since the Board meeting of 8 September, Rashmi Becker as the Board's EDI champion had held a number of positive and open meetings with key staff across Sport England, including attending the internal EDI Group meeting of 1 December 2020. She reported impressive levels of staff commitment and activity. The following themes had emerged over these meetings which she had shared with officers.
- a) The importance of leadership and high-level ownership. The CEO chairing the internal EDI Group had given the group impetus and been widely welcomed. The adoption of EDI objectives by Executive Team members was also seen as positive and impactful.
 - b) While much activity was happening, it was recognised that deeply embedding best practice across the organisation was challenging and needed imaginative approaches.
 - c) Officers in key EDI roles relished the opportunity this provided but had noted that this was often being carried out in addition to 'regular' work, with consequent capacity impacts.
 - d) There was evidence of lingering negative external perceptions about Sport England as a potential workplace and as a body interested in the whole spectrum of participants in sport and physical activity.
 - e) Staff representative groups felt that they could be involved more actively and upstream in policy and programme development.
 - f) There had been some reports of stakeholders' discriminatory behaviour when engaging with Sport England staff, which were not necessarily picked up by internal processes.
 - g) There was potential for greater use of third parties (including non-executives) to assist in diversifying recruitment panels.
 - h) Across the piece, the acceleration of activity in this area had been well received, but there remained scope for further joining-up and innovation.

9.3 The Board welcomed this insight.

Internal Actions

9.4 In terms of internal actions, Board members acknowledged and supported the work being undertaken in the areas of leadership; attracting diverse talent; retaining diverse talent; and wider staff engagement as summarised in the paper.

9.5 Board members discussed the need for innovation and lateral thinking in seeking to increased diversity in senior leadership and across teams in addition to 'natural' turnover. Reflecting on the nature and purpose of diversity targets, comments from Board members included:

- a) the importance of using targets intelligently and formatively and not as analogous to quotas. Tokenism would be counterproductive, and meeting diversity targets without addressing systemic underlying issues was unsustainable. At the same time, however, there should be space for talented people to grow into roles, and lived experience and the insight it brought would of itself be an asset for many roles;
- b) the key role of internal and external diversity targets in prompting critical analysis of the whole-organisation career pathway from recruitment through development and promotion. That pathway might need augmenting by an 'inspiration' stage;
- c) caution against 'quick fixes', in recognition that longer-term transformative action that secured a diverse pipeline of talent would reap more substantive and sustainable results.

9.6 Some Board members also suggested that Sport England should further strengthen its "employer brand". Interventions here would help break any vicious circle of an insufficiently diverse organisation not attracting diverse new talent. Members agreed that this should not be viewed as a 'HR issue' or 'Comms issue': it required systemic, meaningful and visible action across the organisation. Investment in the Tackling Inequalities Fund, for example, was a convincing demonstration of how Sport England was not solely interested in 'traditional' sporting activities and audiences, and could be used to enhance the employer brand

9.7 The Board was pleased that the director of diversity and inclusion role had attracted a large, diverse and high-quality pool of interest. It was noted that the majority of applicants for this role had approached the application

through mainstream rather than specialist recruitment fora. They felt it important that the role was supported by adequate capability and capacity in change management and close engagement with the senior Executive Team and was not seen in the organisation as the sole owner and driver of EDI.

- 9.8 The Board asked officers to consider how Sport England's own commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion was represented in its strategy (to be discussed further at [item 13](#)).
- 9.9 The Board noted the importance of age diversity, particularly given the range of audiences with whom Sport England sought to connect. In terms of recruitment, this could mean critically evaluating Sport England's use of specific levels of educational attainment as criteria for certain roles.
- 9.10 The Board strongly endorsed diverse recruitment panels, augmented where necessary with third parties, including non-executives.
- 9.11 Board Members suggested the idea of 'reverse mentoring' for senior staff.

External Action

- 9.12 In terms of external actions, Board members acknowledged and supported the work being undertaken on the Code for Sports Governance (to be discussed further at [item 11](#)); the Sport England Strategy (to be discussed further at [item 12](#)); and work with other Home Country Sports Councils.
- 9.12 The Board welcomed the work being done on Talent Inclusion. They asked for further information about the results of quantitative and qualitative research here and the insight it provided into the people's experiences and the barriers and support they had encountered at different stages. **Action:**
Phil Smith

Concluding

- 9.13 The Board felt that its 'Let's talk about race' session of 3 December 2020 facilitated by Sandra Kerr of Business in the Community had been a useful opportunity collectively and individually to reflect on and improve values, attitudes and behaviours.
- 9.14 Nick Bitel thanked Rashmi Becker, Members and officers for their contributions to this discussion and asked officers to take on board

Members' feedback (**Action: Nick Pontefract and Phil Smith**). The Board considered that good progress was being made overall. However, this remained an area critical to Sport England's effectiveness and ability to lead and exemplify and demanded continued attention.

10. Risk report

- 10.1 Lynsey Tweddle introduced the Strategic Risk Register and covering paper (MB20-72)
- 10.2 The Board was satisfied that the format and detail provided in the risk register afforded it an appropriate level of assurance about the identification and management of risks by officers. It was noted that it was broadly comparable in scope to risk registers of other non-departmental public bodies with which members were familiar.
- 10.3 The Board noted:
- a) that the risk register presented was an update of the version seen at its meeting of 6 May 2020 (paper MB20-26 refers) and re-incorporated the 'on hold' corporate risks into the COVID-19 risk register as considered by the Audit Committee on 6 October 2020 (paper AC20-65 refers);
 - b) the updated controls and mitigations set out in the paper.
- 10.4 The Board felt that the four wide-ranging risks helpfully conceptualised how risks intersected and the pervasive influence across all areas of COVID-19. However, it felt that on balance, the risks presented could usefully be subdivided to facilitate discussion and better understand the effectiveness of mitigating actions. Aside from this, the Board was content that the Register captured key strategic risks; reported on mitigations that were in hand; and identified future mitigation appropriately.
- 10.5 The Chair thanked officers and asked for the Board's feedback to be taken into account in Sport England's ongoing management of strategic risks.
Action: Lynsey Tweddle.

11. Governance Code

- 11.1 The Board discussed the current review of the Sport England and UK Sport *Code for Sports Governance*, progress on which was set out in paper MB20-73.

11.2 Board members noted:

- a) the governance arrangements for the review, particularly the close integration of its diversity and inclusion strand with other workstreams;
- b) the approach to evidence gathering to inform the review and the emerging findings of the board diversity audit undertaken as part of this work (presented orally at the meeting by Cathy Hughes). The Board was pleased that the direction of travel on diverse representation at board level was positive, particularly compared to more historic levels. While acknowledging that there were many areas for further improvement, it felt it important that this success was cited as evidence of the Code's transformative influence;
- c) that the first phase of the project (internal review of all three tiers of bodies falling under the Code) was nearing completion. This had identified a number of areas where adjustments could be made to embed more inclusive practices; to make Code requirements easier to understand; or better to reflect how the Code requirements had been interpreted in practice. The internal review had also highlighted some areas to test further as part of the consultation.

11.3 The Board was particularly interested in the diversity and inclusion-related elements of the Code. Referencing earlier discussion on targets at [item 9](#), they felt it important that board diversity was not seen as an end in itself, but as part of wider and longer-term systemic change in how organisations worked.

11.4 Board members provided initial thoughts on the outline target proposal included in the paper. Board members commented that:

- a) the 'blended' target approach was sound in principle, it afforded a helpful degree of flexibility in responding to local demographics, and there was no disagreement with the ratios proposed;
- b) as presented, there was scope for misinterpretation of the target, and it was important that the workings were explained and justified clearly to stakeholders. Some members felt that the race and disability minima within the blended target could be used by some organisations to justify an approach of minimal compliance rather than seeking best practice;
- c) more broadly, the code should explain clearly the consequences of failing to meet targets, and what mitigating factors might reasonably be cited, including in situations where organisations were actively making systemic improvements likely to yield sustainable longer-term results.

- 11.5 The Board noted the complex and contested nature of sexual and gender identity as it pertained to a workable Code target. Sport England should be clear in its target setting that it was not itself setting definitions or categories, but reflecting positions determined by law. To do so would itself offer helpful clarity to stakeholder organisations.
- 11.6 The Board noted the timescale for the review. Given that a number of stakeholder organisations' Annual General Meetings would take place in April to June, it asked officers to consider trailing the likely content of the code (especially the more challenging ask on Board diversity) in advance of publication to put organisations on alert.
- 11.7 The Chair thanked members for their feedback and asked officers to take it into account in the ongoing review process. **Action: Lynsey Twedde**

12. Strategy Finance Overview

- 12.1 The Board was pleased to note that that the Parliamentary Under-secretary of state for Sport, Tourism and Heritage had earlier in the week signed off the consolidated Sport England Annual report and Accounts for 2019-20, and that these would be progressed for C&AG sign-off and laid in Parliament.
- 12.2 Serena Jacobs spoke to paper MB20-74 which summarised the analyses (covering exchequer income; lottery income; lottery commitments and lottery cashflow/predicted lottery bank balance) undertaken to establish the funding available for the ten-year strategy period. It also reviewed the risks and opportunities to the level of funding available for commitment. The Audit Risk and Governance Committee had reviewed separately and was content with the analyses here presented (paper AC20-77 refers).
- 12.3 The Board was content with:
- a) the projected range for exchequer income, given the uncertainty due to only a one-year Spending Review settlement for 2021/22;
 - b) The projected range for lottery income. It noted that lottery income had thus far proven to be resilient against the stress of COVID-19 and wider economic circumstances. The Board acknowledged the further uncertainty beyond September 2023 (at which time a fourth National Lottery licence operator would be appointed). The Board noted that there was a risk to income should the current operator not be

reappointed and scale back investment in the final period of its tenure and while a new operator bedded in.

- 12.4 The Board was content with the scenario analysis of Lottery commitments and Lottery bank balance and the impact of different funding programmes. The Board noted that the extraordinary circumstances of the initial lockdown period and the pressing and continuing demands of the sector for support had mitigated the risk of a high bank balance by the end of 2020-21. The Board agreed that Sport England would be acting with undue caution if it sought to build up a reserve sufficient to cover the loss of Lottery funding at the most pessimistic modelling scenario. Adopting the right measures to understand performance (an area of particular interest for Audit Risk And Governance Committee) and developing a more responsive approach whereby the intensity of programmes and initiatives could be dialled up or down according to circumstances and strategic priorities would be more effective than retaining a buffer.

13 Strategy

- 13.1 The Board reviewed paper [MB20-75](#), which introduced the full final draft version of the Sport England Strategy (at [Annex A](#)).
- 13.2 Board members reflected on the strategy development process (summarised at [Annex C](#)). This had been based on around 18 months of extensive engagement with Board, Committees, colleagues, DCMS Minister and Officials and over 800 partners and stakeholders. The Board agreed that the process had demonstrated Sport England's commitment to co-production and collaborative practice. It was therefore content that the resulting strategy would be based on sound evidence and insight about what the wider sport and activity 'ecosystem' should look like, and the role that Sport England should play in that transformation.
- 13.3 Board members reviewed the Strategy Document. They agreed that the Strategy text had improved further since their last review at the Board meeting of 3 November 2020 (paper [MB20-61](#) refers). They felt that its structure was clear and persuasive. They noted its compelling narrative. They commented that it was an exciting and inspiring read. The extensive and inclusive consultation was reflected in the text, and Members reported that their own networks had commented favourably on the engagement process and the way their views had been valued in the co-creation of the strategy.

- 13.4 The Board noted that a full copy edit for consistency of language and tone of voice (including complementary quotes, statistics, and case studies) and further design, formatting and layout of the document (imagery and graphics) would follow. The Strategy document itself would also be supplemented by additional creative assets, including accessible versions. The Board agreed that this would offer further opportunities to illustrate, emphasise and exemplify key points (for example the role of Local Delivery Pilots) and running themes in the strategy. Officers would follow up with Rashmi Becker her specific drafting suggestions relating to disability and to volunteering; with Tove Okunniwa on references to internal diversity targets; and with Chris Grant on his drafting suggestions relating to adding focus to some sections of text. Other minor offline drafting comments could be taken into consideration by correspondence. **Action: Simon Macqueen**
- 13.5 Notwithstanding these presentational issues, the Board was happy to **AGREE Annex A** as the substantive text of the Strategy, and congratulated officers on its delivery.
- 13.6 The Board discussed next steps. It noted ongoing engagement with DCMS (including on a ministerial foreword) and other Government Departments. It noted and was content with the outline launch and communications arrangements set out in the paper and looked forward to further sight of these in early January. **Action: Ali Donnelly**
- 13.7 The Board briefly discussed implementation planning. Investment Committee at its meeting of 26 November 2020 had provided additional scrutiny of the proposed approach and underlying assumptions (paper IC20-34 refers). The Board noted the importance of early mapping and sequencing of activity, and that difficult decisions remained to be made about priorities in the early stages of delivery. The Board noted the need for internal resources and systems to be well set-up for effective delivery. Officers would provide a full update of progress in implementation planning at the Board meeting on 3 February. **Action: Nick Pontefract**

14. Any Other Business

- 14.1 Natalie Ceeney reported that the advertisement for a new Chair of Sport England had been published by the Cabinet office on 23 November 2020. Members were encouraged to disseminate this through their networks. Shortlisting was scheduled for the end of January with interviews at the beginning of March. The Board noted the risk of over-run, given the tight

schedule and the complexities of Ministerial approval. Natalie Ceeney would provide further reports as necessary: **Action Natalie Ceeney**

- 14.2 Nick Bitel reported that he was preparing advisory material to inform the Secretary of State's decision on the potential reappointment of those members whose first terms of appointment expired in 2021.
- 14.3 The Board reflected on discussion in the 'Let's Talk about Race' session of 3 December 2020 around the contested semantics of race and racism. It acknowledged the challenges of balancing appropriate and sensitive terminology with the need to avoid obfuscating the substance of challenging issues. It felt that while some terminology was clearly outdated, in many other cases intelligent judgement of circumstances and empathy to the individuality of human experience (on which Culture Crew provided a valuable sounding board) was key to getting the balance right. Similar principles applied to discourse on disability, sexual orientation and other dimensions of personal identity. The Board asked officers to reflect further on this. **Action: Ali Donnelly**
- 14.4 Nick Bitel thanked attendees. The Board would meet privately for a short debrief after the meeting, to be followed by a meeting of the Chairs and Remuneration Committee. The next meeting of the Board was scheduled for 3 February 2021.

These minutes were agreed by the Board at its meeting of 3 February 2021