

Minutes of the Sport England Board meeting of 22 March 2021 (held remotely by videoconference)

Members Nick Bitel (Chair)
Natalie Ceeney
Azeem Akhtar
Rashmi Becker
Ian Cumming (Items 8-15)
Chris Grant
Sue James
Andy Long
David Mahoney
Tove Okunniwa
Karen Pickering

Officers Stuart Armstrong, Strategic Lead-Workforce Transformation (Item 12)
Mike Diaper ED – Children, Young People and Tackling Inactivity
Jon Fox, Strategic Lead – Investment Design (item 14)
Tim Hollingsworth, Chief Executive Officer
Serena Jacobs, Director – Finance
Charles Johnston, ED – Property
Richard Mabbitt, Board Secretary
Lisa O’Keefe, ED – Insight
Chris Perks, ED – Local Delivery
Nick Pontefract, Chief Operating Officer
Phil Smith, ED – Sport
Lynsey Tweddle, Head- Corporate governance (item 9)

Guests: Katherine Grainger, Chair –UK Sport
Adam Conant, Head of Sport – DCMS

1. Chair’s Welcome and introductory comments

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, which was being held remotely due to continuing COVID-19 social distancing measures and thanked them for their flexibility.
- 1.2 The Board welcomed Katherine Grainger Chair of UK Sport, who was observing the meeting and Adam Conant, newly appointed as Head of

Sport at DCMS.

2. Apologies for Absence

2.1 No apologies for absence had been received.

3. Declarations of Interests

3.1 Nick Bitel reported that the register of members' interests had been amended to reflect the acquisition by Armstrong Teasdale LLP of his employer Kerman and Co. Natalie Ceeney reported that she was now longer a director of Countrywide PLC and that this had also duly been registered

3.2 David Mahoney flagged that the England and Wales Cricket Board, in which he had an interest as a senior executive, was a likely beneficiary of the Sport Survival Package (SSP). With the Board making no decisions on the allocation of funding under the SSP Package (that being a responsibility of the independent Board and the Secretary of State) it was content that members with an interest in organisations actually or potentially in receipt of SSP funding need not recuse themselves from any general discussion about SSP.

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

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

4.1 The Board **AGREED** the minutes of the previous Board meeting of 8 December 2020 (paper [MB21-11](#)) as an accurate record of events.

5. Matters arising

5.1 The Board reviewed the log of decisions and actions (paper [MB21-12](#)) and was content that matters arising from previous meetings were complete, being dealt with satisfactorily in the course of business, or would be addressed under later agenda items.

6. Chair and Member Appointment / Reappointment update.

6.1 Natalie Ceeney reported that the shortlist of candidates for the Sport

England Chair role was now being considered by the Secretary of State. taking into account the need for DCMS consultation with No. 10 and the desirability of a handover period for the new appointee, it was increasingly likely that the timing of the final decision would necessitate DCMS activating the option agreed with the current Chair to extend his term for a short period.

- 6.2 The Chair advised that the reappointment or otherwise of the three members whose terms expired in 2021 remained under consideration by the Secretary of State.

7. CEO Update

- 7.1 Tim Hollingsworth and Executive Team members spoke to paper [MB21.03](#)
- 7.2 Board members noted the support being provided at an unprecedented scale, level of complexity and pace by the Sport Winter Survival Package to sports clubs, leagues and venues across the country. The Board:
- a) acknowledged the continued hard work of Sport England staff supporting the independent SWSP Board in its decision-making, and in implementing its decisions, and of Natalie Ceeney and Tim Hollingsworth as Independent Board members. The Board welcomed the announcement in the March Budget of a further £300m to extend the principle of the support through to Spring/Summer, noting that more comprehensive staffing arrangements to support this were planned;
 - b) noted and continued to support Sport England' risk-based response to the challenge of delivering the SWSP, with the scale and immediacy of the problems facing sporting organisations justifying Sport England's high risk appetite. The Board advised that DCMS and HMT decisions in the matter of longer-term management of the SWSP loan book needed to have in mind Sport England capacity and capability in this field and the impact of active involvement here on its ability effectively to fulfill core functions. It was noted that the Audit Risk and Governance Committee had discussed this issue at its meeting of 16 March 2021;
 - c) welcomed the ongoing collaborative and constructive working relationship with DCMS officials. Adam Conant noted that Sport England's contribution to SWSP was warmly appreciated by Ministers, and that SWSP and Sport England's wider work was increasingly understood and seen as aligning strongly with the Government's COVID-19 roadmap;
 - d) acknowledged the challenges of a phased return to spectator sport. In some cases, costs of managing a small number of spectators at venues

would be significantly disproportionate to the income thereby gained,

- 7.3 The Board noted progress on the National Leisure Recovery Fund (NLRF), with all funding decisions for the initial £100m funding round (December 2020 to March 2021) having been approved and with distribution of the funding on course for completion by the end of the financial year. The Board thanked officers for their effort and commitment. It recognised the significant benefits of Sport England's activity here, not just in ensuring that around 4,000 leisure centres would be able to reopen on 12 April 2021, but also in terms of data, insight and learning, and relationship-building with the sector and with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government,
- 7.4 Tim Hollingsworth reported on positive meetings:
- a) with the Minister for Sport and DCMS officials on 2 March regarding proposals for supporting a wider legacy and 'big national moments' through the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Board members noted the importance of co-ordinated and sustained activation of volunteers;
 - b) with the Minister for sport on 4 March to discuss the COVID Roadmap and our support for the sector and 'return to play'. The Board would be briefed further at [item 10](#);
 - c) jointly with UK Sport CEO Sally Munday with the Minister for Sport and DCMS and No. 10 officials on 16 March regarding progress on our joint review of the Code for Sports Governance and likely actions and changes that are emerging. The Board would be briefed further at [item 13](#).

Board members welcomed this positive engagement and felt that Ministerial attendance at a Board meeting would be timely. **Action Adam Conant and Tim Hollingsworth** to consider further.

- 7.5 The Board noted the action arising from a Round Table hosted by the Secretaries of State for Education and DCMS on 2 March for rapid scoping of how the sports sector might combine its efforts and support schools during the summer 'recovery term'. They noted the massive disruption to activity to both structured and informal children's activity clearly evidenced by *Active Lives* findings. Sport England with sector partners (primarily Youth Sport Trust; UK Active; Association of Physical Education; National Governing Bodies; Active Partnerships; School Games Organisers) had therefore proposed a three-point approach which would:

- a) accelerate plans to create within the School Games website an online hub of free resources comprising NGB and other providers' offers.
- b) a simple online guide or booklet to be circulated by DfE to all schools;
- c) with facilitation by Government, an uplift of School Games Organisers (SGOs) from working three days a week to full time during the summer term 2021 to support the promotion and roll out of the offers.

Board members supported the approach being pursued, noting: the emphasis on physical literacy, confidence-building, fitness and enjoyment; the wide range of activities proposed reflecting the diverse needs of individuals; links to Sport England's investment into Secondary Teacher Training; and links to the Department for Education's investment (via Sport England and Active Partnerships) to help targeted schools open and offer their sports facilities beyond the school day.

- 7.6 Nick Pontefract reported that discussions with DCMS officials continued on Sport England's new Framework Agreement with DCMS. This would replace the current management agreement which ran until the end of March 2021. The Board noted that DCMS was aiming for a more consistent approach across its ALBs and other sponsored bodies and that fundamental changes to the sponsor relationship was not envisaged. The Board recognised the importance of alignment between Sport England, DCMS and wider government priorities, but noted the ongoing importance of Sport England's Independence and license to operate (derived from its own expertise, insight and stakeholder relationships) in shaping these priorities. It looked forward to sight of the Framework Agreement views once discussions with DCMS had progressed further Adam Conant noted the discussion and thanked Sport England officers for their positive engagement in the process so far. **Action: Nick Pontefract**
- 7.7 Board members had seen the joint Sport England and UK Sport response to the interim findings of the Whyte Review. The Board noted the Sheldon Review and officers confirmed that Sport England had commented and would be responding to the very serious wider points it raised about safeguarding in Sport. Updates would be provided as necessary. **Action: Phil Smith**
- 7.8 With an anticipated relaxation of lockdown rules over the coming months, and from 2022 a move away from Sport England's 21 Bloomsbury Street head office, a more hybrid working model for the organisation was being

considered. An update would be brought to the May Board Meeting **Action:**
Charles Johnston

8. UK Sport Chair's Update

8.1 Katherine Grainger provided an oral overview of current and anticipated UK Sport Activity and strategy:

- a) Support for athletes competing in the postponed Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic games as a priority, and managing the challenges of training, preparing for and competing under conditions of social distancing. At the same time UK Sport was in the final stages of decision-making and contracting with sports organisations in readiness for the Paris 2024 Games.
- b) UK Sport welcomed the incremental steps to a return to elite sports set out in the Government's COVID roadmap. Most sports remained in good shape at elite level, but UK Sport's planning echoed Sport England's in that a 'snap back' to pre-COVIC conditions was not expected.
- c) There had been excellent recent collaboration with Sport England, notably on SWSP; the Code for Sports Governance (to be discussed further at item 13); on tackling racism and racial inequality in sport; and on transgender inclusion in sport.
- d) UK Sport faced similar issues to Sport England in respect of its own operations as lockdown relaxation progressed, and the experience of working in lockdown had changed the perceptions of many staff about preferred ways of working.

8.2 Board members looked forward to further constructive collaboration with UK Sport in the year ahead.

9. Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Report

9.1 Rashmi Becker, as Board Champion for EDI introduced this report on Sport England's internal and external-facing EDI activity (paper [MB21-14](#)). She highlighted good progress on Sport England's Diversity Action Plan, and its emphasis on supporting inclusive leadership to drive change. She drew Board members attention to the recruitment update within the report.

9.2 In terms of Internal activity, Board members:

- a) discussed gender pay gap data and the further insight into these that

would be provided throughout the forthcoming Equal Pay Audit, mandated for public bodies;

- b) welcomed sight of recruitment data and noted that Sport England continued to work to a target of 20% of employees who identifying as being of Black, Asian or ethnic minority* backgrounds as representative of the anticipated results of the 2021 Census. Board members emphasised the importance of employer branding in attracting suitably qualified applicants and were pleased that this was under active discussion as part of wider transformation planning. Members flagged the need for ongoing review of progression and senior representation as well as recruitment. Members highlighted the protected characteristic of Religion or Belief, and asked that this be given due consideration, including in terms of its intersection with other protected characteristics, in analysing recruitment, retention and progression;

*as defined by ONS and census categories

- c) remained supportive of the external advertisement of Level 5 and higher posts as a way to broaden the representativeness of leadership roles (while acknowledging the potential impacts on internal progression);
- d) noted that stakeholder networks and internal staff groups provided a means of informing and monitoring the impact of Sport England's efforts to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

9.3 In terms of external-facing activity, Board members

- a) discussed the recent widespread concern and significant media coverage of sexual harassment and the safety of women particularly in informal exercise settings but also reflected in the experience of elite athletes. Members noted that this collective experience was borne out by Sport England insight and research. It was being addressed in *This Girl Can* marketing and support work, which was mindful of acknowledging women's perception about safety and harassment (and the experiences that shaped them) without inadvertently further normalising misogynistic behaviours. Members felt this could be a pivotal moment in challenging gender assumptions and welcomed the setting up of a Sport England Women's Network in supporting staff members and contributing to this insight;
- b) were pleased that the Home Country Sports Councils' joint work on Tackling Racism and Racial Inequality in Sport was nearing conclusion. The Data Gathering and Analysis (Sheffield Hallam University) and Lived Experience (AKD Solutions) draft final reports had been circulated internally to key colleagues for additional comments. The objective was to draw out challenging but achievable recommendations, backed by

robust insight. Board members were content that a clear direction of travel was being set and thanked officers and Chris Grant for their leadership here;

- c) supported ongoing *This Girl Can* work summarised in the paper;
- d) noted Sport England's disability-related activity;
- e) noted and supported work ongoing with core market partners, particularly the formal commitments to EDI in goal setting under their 'rolled forward' funding arrangements;
- f) noted continued work on the Code for sports Governance (to be discussed at [item 13](#));
- g) welcomed the positive outcomes from the Perret Laver partnership aimed at promoting Sports bodies' diversity at Board level, noting that discussions were underway to build on this success. The Board felt that this exemplified the aspiration to convene groups and create space for change set out in *Uniting the Movement*;
- h) Noted and supported engagement with the Black Swimming Association, Sporting Equals, and the Leading for Renewal consortium.

10. Finance Report

- 10.1 Serena Jacobs introduced paper MB21-15. This finance report had also been reviewed by Audit Risk and Governance Committee at its meeting of 16 March 2021. Board members noted and were content with the management information provided with regard to key financial measures; Monthly lottery income; award summaries (excluding SWSF and NLRG); and non-awards expenditure.
- 10.2 The Board noted the expected £25k Exchequer underspend for the year and was content that this provided for sufficient flexibility to manage end year audit adjustments.
- 10.3 The Board discussed Sport England's ability to forecast income and expenditure given the ongoing uncertainty of the operating environment and new networks and new funding models. It was noted that while Sport England had historically suffered from optimism bias in initiating and seeing through to completion expenditure programmes, over the last year it had made highly effective use of Lottery underspend to manage the immediate COVID response. Nonetheless, although Sport England had made considerable improvements to the throughput of funds, there was still scope for improvement, including minimising any residual 'placeholder' behaviour by budget owners. The Board acknowledged that forecasts would for a number of months needed to take into account a wider and more volatile

range of variables than pre-COVID.

- 10.4 The Board was pleased to see positive trends in Lottery ticket sales. It felt that on balance, the tendering of a fourth lottery licence was likely to militate towards consolidation of current positive responses to COVID-19 by the current operator, or adoption of these by potential new operators. The impact on National lottery sales of any liberalisation of the society lottery operating environment remained uncertain.
- 10.5 The Board was content with the finance report, and thanked officers in the Finance Team for their hard work under often difficult circumstances over a challenging year of increased volume and complexity of activity.

11. COVID-19 response update

- 11.1 Phil Smith spoke to paper [MB21-16](#). This summarised Sport England's COVID-19 response work to date as having been brigaded into:
- a) 'Return to Play': working with DCMS to influence government decisions and timing and working with partners to implement decisions and interpret lockdown guidance.
 - b) 'Supporting the Sector': helping partners and community sport and activity organisations to survive and come through the COVID-19 period able to help Sport England deliver against *Uniting the Movement*.
 - c) 'Keeping the Nation Active': informing and encouraging consumers to be active in ways that are permitted, safe and appropriate.
 - d) The SWSP and NLRG which came online late in 2020 as further responses to COVID-19 and in which Sport England played a very substantial role.
- 11.2 He reported that the 'Return to Play' strand would remain in place as COVID-19 restrictions were gradually eased, with significant activity around the milestone dates in the Government's COVID-19 roadmap. However, the remaining strands were now being integrated. This sought to ensure that both demand and supply sides of the sector were joined up, efficient and effective. An internal 'COVID Response' group had been formed and was currently considering key insights. The COVID-19 Response work plan would form the content of the "Help the population keep moving and safe and effective delivery during COVID-19 restrictions" Transition Year Goals (to be discussed further at [item 14](#)).
- 11.3 The Board endorsed the principle of bring supply and demand sides together and felt that this would formalise and amplify what was beginning

to happen organically. It would provide a firm basis from which to deliver against *Uniting the Movement*. Board members also saw merits in such a refocussed approach by way of adding freshness and impetus after a hard year of largely reactive work.

- 11.4 Reflecting on the summaries of supply side and demand side activities appended to the paper, and Sport England's public commitment to £50m of further investment to COVID response in 2021, the Board acknowledged that existing activities would dominate the deliverables, but were pleased that there was some scope for new work, including additional support for the sports workforce and for a further iteration of the Tackling Inequalities Fund (TIF). With regard to TIF, Board members noted the key role of Active Partnerships, but flagged their finite capacity in replicating the TIF delivery model for other programmes.
- 11.5 The Board highlighted the important role of local authorities on the supply side. Examples were cited where some hard-pressed local authorities had defaulted to a precautionary approach that had hampered planning for Parkruns and other activity. The Board discussed the need to make the wider societal case for sport and physical activity as well as arguing on behalf of specific activities. Equally there were good examples and learning to share from Local Delivery Pilots and core cities of a horizontal approach where sport and physical activity played into a number of elements of COVID-19 recovery programmes including through engaging often-excluded groups.
- 11.6 Board members welcomed Sport England's engagement with the DHSC work being led by Sir Keith Mills on an incentives and reward approach to encouraging healthy behaviours. They felt there was much scope for collaborative insight and learning including on how best to design programmes that reached communities who were not yet part of the conversation here.

12. 'Retrain to Retain' Workforce Support

- 12.1 Stuart Armstrong introduced proposals to support the retention in the sport and physical activity workforce of those paid workers most vulnerable to the economic impacts of COVID -19 and lockdown ([paper MB21-17](#) refers). The proposals had benefitted from prior sight by the Investment Committee at its meeting of 26 February.
- 12.2 Stuart Armstrong highlighted the sectoral impacts set out in the paper on both employed and self-employed frontline workers (in terms of

unemployment, loss of income, and job security) and on sector capability. This included significant threats to the capacity of the sector to provide services on the relaxation of lockdown, including sport and physical activity for children. The funding package would therefore aim to reduce substantially or eradicate operating costs for individuals restarting work. It would also support individuals rendered unemployed through opportunities to gain access to training and develop job skills attractive to employers as the sector recovered and rebuilt. It would also support the reopening of community leisure provision by addressing skills shortages and funding costs of essential training.

12.3 The Board **AGREED** the proposal to provide an investment of £5M to create a unique workforce retention and support package as set out in the paper. The package would be administered by the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) and a consortium of trusted workforce development strategic partners including the National Coaching Foundation (UK Coaching) and EMD UK C.I.C. It would provide targeted support for the 25,000 most vulnerable members of the workforce.

12.4 In making this decision, Board members considered the alignment of the proposals to Sport England's strategic objectives and values. It noted the equality and participation impacts, delivery options analysis, timescales and resource requirements; risks, legal and governance considerations and approaches to measurement, evaluation and performance management as set out in the paper. Board members noted the potential for alignment with *Uniting the Movement* and:

- a) felt the evidence and insight from partners on which the proposals were based were sound;
- b) emphasised the need for smart communications and marketing, (including by CIMSPA) to ensure support reached those in greatest need;
- c) were pleased that support for inclusive practice and safeguarding was integral to the package;
- d) noted the potential for strong links with *Join the Movement* activity;
- e) felt that while the proposals were novel (in terms of bringing together delivery organisations and the breadth of support proposed) individual elements of the package were largely tested and proven, building – for example – on the Sport England / CIMSPA *Reactivate* programme;
- f) saw opportunities in encouraging fundees to share delivery data in an online and open source way. There was scope for this young, diverse and flexible-working community of interest to build a strong digital network to provide mutual support and share learning.

12.5 The Chair thanked discussants and asked officers to take the programme forward. The Board was content that officers take a view on the optimal timing for launching the programme having in mind restrictions required by the upcoming pre-election period, but asked to be kept aware of progress.

Action: Stuart Armstrong, Phil Smith

13. Code for Sports Governance review

13.1 Nick Bitel referred members to prior discussions at the Board meeting of 3 February 2021 which had focussed specifically on the diversity and inclusion elements of the Code. The Board had here agreed arrangements for diversity targets which had subsequently also been agreed by the Board of UK Sport, with both Boards' decisions being potentially subject to further consideration and discussion with Government in the light of any relevant conclusions from the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities later in the month.

13.2 Lynsey Tweddle introduced paper MB21-18 which presented for the Board's agreement the full suite of Code review recommendations and outlined proposed next steps. A parallel submission would be made to the Board of UK Sport on 30 March 2021. The key features of the revised Code were:

- a) new diversity targets, as noted above;
- b) three proposed new areas (cascading good governance; safeguarding/duty of care/welfare of people; environmental and social governance);
- c) other adjustments which, while not substantively altering the compliance position, sought to embed more inclusive practices, make requirements easier to understand or better reflect how they could be interpreted in practice. Existing requirements for Tier Three remained substantively unchanged but had been streamlined down from 58 to 47 requirements. The number of Tier One requirements had increased from seven to eight;
- d) a number of cross-cutting themes and issues covered in the introductory narrative to the Code, throughout its guidance and support package, and in ongoing support and messaging about the Code. These included the importance of culture (beyond the technical and practical elements of the Code) and a shift from 'mandated' to 'owned' governance;
- e) no proposed changes to the minimum percentage (25%) for independent non-executive directors.

13.3 The Board reviewed the detailed account of the Code revisions set out in the

paper and annex. It agreed that the proposals were based on a solid foundation of insight and evidence from the sector. It felt that the volume and detail of changes felt balanced and proportionate. Members were satisfied that the requirements were led by outcomes rather than process and drew on an understanding of how in-scope organisations operated in practice. It welcomed the emphasis on culture and ownership rather than 'check-box' compliance. The exemplary role of Sport England in here was noted, particularly in respect of diversity targets.

- 13.4 Board members supported the new requirements related to environmental and social governance. They acknowledged that these sought to prompt formative discussion rather than mandate specific approaches but felt this was an area where sometimes organisations' aspiration was not matched by specificity in implementation. It would therefore need particularly careful and supportive monitoring.
- 13.5 Board members reiterated the need for ongoing support and encouragement of meaningful and long-term improvements to organisation's Board diversity and inclusion. It was noted that further work was being scoped here building on successful Perrett Laver work on broadening the pool of appointable candidates to board. Board members were pleased that organisational diversity and inclusion action plans were mandated and that these would require clear timelines, with the aim for tangible progress by March 2024, with annual progress updates.
- 13.6 Across the piece, Board members felt that communications and active support arrangements for the Code would be critical to its success (for example training and capability improvement in relation to safeguarding would be provided in the support package). Board members noted:
- a) the need for powerful but nuanced communications in respect of diversity targets where there would be a great deal of interest and some contention. They felt it important to highlight good progress across protected characteristics that had already been made, without undermining the need for further substantive action or in any way appearing complacent. Approaching intersectionality also posed challenges;
 - b) the importance of an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to addressing social inequalities and noted that DCMS ministers had been directly engaged with Sport England's approach. Board members awaited with interest the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. They were nonetheless satisfied that the thinking and

- stakeholder consultation which had informed the proposed approach to Targets was robust, and drew on a sound understanding of the sector;
- c) that safeguarding failings by Sporting organisations were rightly receiving increased publicity. The consequent risk of wider public scepticism about the ability of sports bodies to keep their houses in order, was mitigated by the demonstrable improvements that had followed the Code's introduction;
 - d) the need to present the code not as a standalone, in the context of and effective governance culture generally, and that good governance was in turn seen in the wider context of *Uniting the movement*. The potential use in communications of representatives from improving organisations who had seen the benefits of increased diversity was suggested.
- 13.7 Board members recognised the importance of leadership within in-scope organisations. It noted too the wider leadership role – both of challenge and of support – that fell to Sport England and UK Sport, and their importance in convening, building relationships creating mechanisms to support leadership and governance. For Sport England (and UK Sport), the sweet spot between over-prescription and under-engagement would vary with the nature of partners and the stage of their governance journey.
- 13.8 The Board was content with the next steps set out in the paper with an announcement of the outcomes of the Review in April 2021 and the full revised Code being available late June/early July 2021. Partners would then be expected to start to be compliant with the revised Code by April 2022, with some changes having a longer compliance timeline.
- 13.9 Therefore, subject to (a) a specific amendment, exempting Nomination Committees from the requirement for Chairs not to sit on Committees, and (b) officers taking into account the general points of feedback above around the communications, support, and implementation arrangements for the Code, the Board **AGREED** the proposals set out in Paper MB21-18 with the Code also being put to the Board of UK Sport for its approval on 30 March 2021
- Action: Lynsey Tweddle** to progress

14. Transition year budget and approval

- 14.1 Jon Fox, Nick Pontefract and Tim Hollingsworth introduced paper MB21-19A. With the Board having already agreed that Sport England's work and priorities for 2021/2 should be planned and positioned clearly as a Transition Year, the Board was now asked to approve the goals, objectives and priority

- work programmes that would form the basis of Sport England's internal business plan and budget for 2021/2 and for the publicly released Transition Plan (given pre-election period restrictions, this would most likely be in early May).
- 14.2 The Board reviewed in parallel paper [MB21-19B](#) which presented the 2021-22 budget, an update on the expected outturn for the current strategy period ending March 2021, and financial projections for Sport England's Lottery income and cash flow forecasts.
- 14.3 The Board noted:
- a) the four strategic goals:
 - RESPOND: Help the population to keep moving and support the right partners to deliver safely and effectively during Covid restrictions;
 - TRANSFORM: Sport England's way of working to be consistent with Uniting the Movement, with a primary focus on cultural change and leadership;
 - PLAN: Create a plan for the implementation of Uniting the Movement to 2025, using the foundations laid in the transition year and with a 10-year horizon to 2031;
 - TRANSITION: Review and manage existing business commitments, functions, and responsibilities to concentrate on delivery of Uniting the Movement;
 - b) the 2021/2 planning process to date, and how objectives and activities had been prioritised under each goal;
 - c) investment implications and current spending commitments.
- 14.4 Investment Committee had reviewed and was content with emerging proposals shared at its meeting of 26 February 2021, and had provided some additional points of feedback and challenge. The Committee had felt that the "transform" objective was particularly significant and challenging.
- 14.5 Board members welcomed the clear articulation of the transformation ambition. They were reassured that a meaningful shift in corporate 'thinking and doing' had been initiated, such that the organisation was starting to reimagine itself as a body that went beyond a role as a national funder to be a curator of relationships (existing and new), and as an advocate, champion and enabler. Board members noted that in some cases 'new' ways of working were happening already within existing programmes. Elsewhere, new approaches were already planned into forthcoming activity (for example in respect of 'system partners'); or acknowledged as being required even if the nature of the approach itself would be developed in-

- year. Nonetheless the Board emphasised that embedding new ways of thinking and working remained a key challenge for the executive team, and asked that this be tracked in reporting during the transition year,
- 14.6 Board members recognised the continued significance of the Local Delivery Pilots in the transformation year and beyond. Sustaining, developing and spreading the impacts and benefits of these, including to areas outside the pilot geography, should remain a high priority.
- 14.7 Board Members noted that DCMS officials had been well sighted on the emerging proposals and were broadly supportive. They noted the importance of the measurement work strands in terms of Sport England's relationship with DCMS and wider governments agendas. There was interest from officials in the potential for 'live' readouts of progress and learning to inform wider policy making.
- 14.8 The Board remained content with an acceleration of spending in the first few years of the Strategy period. The Board remained content with an acceleration of spending in the first few years of the Strategy period. Board members noted that Sport England had tended to be over-optimistic in its forecast of levels and timing of commitments. Reversion to these patterns in future years presented a risk that the lottery bank balance would not reduce to a level near to the £50m minimum balance during the 10-year strategy period. The modelling showed that a reduction to £60m was expected which is above the £50m minimum balance level set by the Board for planning purposes, Cultural and behavioural change, including greater responsiveness, new partnerships and risk appetites would be important in ensuring that money was spent effectively at the right time on the right activities. The Board noted that the executive was improving modelling and reporting for financial information to plan more accurately forecast commitments and to provide greater assurance to ARGC and the Board.
- 14.9 The Chair thanked officers for developing these proposals. He asked for members observations above to be taken into account in implementing the transition year plans. Otherwise, the Board:
- a) **AGREED** the goals, objectives and priority work programmes set out in Pare MB21-19A as the basis of Sport England's internal business plan and budget for 2021/2
 - b) **AGREED** that these form the basis of a publicly released Transition Plan, most likely to be published in early May (following the end of election restrictions)
 - c) **AGREED** the 2021-22 budget as set out in paper MB21-19B

Action: Nick Pontefract to progress plans for the Transition year.

15. Any Other Business

- 15.1 Due to Secretariat Team capacity issues and the short intervals between meetings, the proposed information papers MB 21-20 (Draft minutes of Investment Committee meeting of 26 February); MB 21-21 (Summary of Audit Risk and Governance Committee meeting of 16 March 2021) and MB 21-23 (Summary of English Sports Development Trust Limited Board meeting of 17 March) had not been part of the pack of Board papers and would instead be circulated by correspondence after the meeting.
- 15.2 Board members noted the draft Minutes of Sports Council Trust Company Board meeting of 10 February (paper MB21-22), with Charles Johnston providing a further contextual summary.
- 15.3 Board members were content that Nick Bitel remain as a trustee of the English Sports Development Trust Limited during the remainder of his tenure as Sport England Chair, with Tove Okunniwa taking on his role as ESDTL Chair with effect from 1 April 2021.
- 15.4 The Chair thanked all attendees for their contributions and with no further business items being raised closed the meeting. The Board would next meet on 5 May 2021.

[Minutes agree by the Board at its meeting of 5 May 2021]