

**Board Meeting 30 September 2024**

Sport Park, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough LE11 3QF

**Members**

Chris Boardman, Chair	*David Mahoney
Mel Bound	Elena Narozanski
*Michelle Cracknell	Tove Okunniwa
Natalie Daniels	*Helene Raynsford
Jason Fergus	

**Executive Officers**

Jeanette Bain-Burnett – Executive Director, Policy and Integrity  
Lisa Dodd-Mayne – Executive Director, Place  
Lizzie Hanna – Chief Finance Officer  
Tim Hollingsworth – Chief Executive Officer  
Nick Pontefract – Chief Strategy Officer  
Phil Smith – Executive Director, Partnerships  
Ben Wilson – Executive Director, Digital, Marketing and Communications

**Officers**

Mel Bennett – Strategic Lead, Place Relationships (item 11, 12, 13 and 14)  
\*Emma Bernstein – Strategic Projects Lead, Place Development (item 15)  
Tom Burton – Strategic Lead, Health & Wellbeing (item 18)  
Alex Darbon-Cole – Head of Campaign Activation (item 19)  
\*Kate Dale – Director of Marketing (item 18, 19 and 20)  
\*Sarah Forster – Director, Finance (item 10)  
Simon Macqueen – Director, Strategy  
Jitendra Patel – Strategic Lead, Corporate Governance  
\*Helen Price – Principal Analyst Quantitative Research Insight (item 16)  
Adam Rigarsford – Director, Place Relationships (item 11, 12, 13 and 14)  
Ed Sandham, Strategic Lead – Partner Relationships (item 11)  
Viveen Taylor – Director, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion  
Lucie Unsworth – Strategic Lead, Place Relationships (item 11, 12, 13 and 14)  
Louise Upton – Strategic Lead Place Collaboration & Learning (item 11, 12, 13 and 14)

**Attendees**

Ben Dean – Director, Sport and Gambling, DCMS

\*Attending via MS Teams

## **1. Board Effectiveness Review [Board + CEO only]**

The Board noted that the Chairs and Remuneration Committee will oversee findings and next steps on the BER report.

## **2. Chair's Introduction**

The Board noted the significant activity (Olympics, Paralympics and change in Government) over the summer period; advised that investment and assurance related items had been scrutinised through preceding Investment Committee and ARGC meetings.

## **3. Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies. The meeting was quorate.

## **4. Declarations of interest**

Noted that there were no new declarations and agreed that Helene's association as a member of International Advisory Board was not a conflict relating to required investment decisions. Resolutions for recusal accepted.

## **5. Minutes of Meeting of 25 June 2024**

The Board **approved** the minutes of the previous meeting.

## **6. Matters Arising – Action Log**

The Board noted progress on the action log and **agreed** that the meeting at which actions had been originally identified should be clearly presented, and timeframes for action completion should be identified by leads. On specific actions:

### **Board Member roles**

Noted that outstanding roles will be complete actioned by the December Board meeting

### **System Partners/Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA)**

Noted the response following the communication to the SRA in June, with a meeting scheduled for 24th October 2024. The risk of resistance to a change in the historic principles of funding arrangements were noted.

### **British Ju-Jitsu Association (BJAAGB) recognition**

Noted the update from Phil, with assurance from BJJAGB to comply with recognition conditions and agreed to close the action.

## **7. CEO's report**

The Board noted the update including Jason Fergus's assurance on the EDI report:

- An update on the comprehensive spending review process.
- Progress on the Implementation Plan 2025-28, shaped by Board engagement

and focussed on the operational capacity to deliver.

- The work to review and prioritise the current Business Plan to ensure delivery within financial parameters, aligned to a reforecast process.
- Congratulating Chris Boardman on being shortlisted for the Evergreen Athlete of the Year award at the BBC Green Sports Awards.
- Context for the scope of the Government's Grants Continuous Improvement Assessment Framework process, leading to improvement on the grant management maturity assessment by our internal auditors.
- The refreshed EDI steering group, with Executive and senior leadership representation, providing oversight of the EDI roadmap.

Assurance was provided on the principles of supporting community cohesion and engagement being embedded through investment decisions, and that the plan for digital innovation will be aligned to the development of the Implementation Plan, with a wider recognition of capability considerations to operationally deliver.

**Agreed** that the Chairs and Remuneration Committee will be used to provide oversight on immediate priorities for organisational change to ensure an efficient and effective operating model.

Noted the update from Ben Dean, including the focus to ensure alignment and impact with the Government's missions and local communities through partnership working where applicable, and the likely increasing importance of data, to demonstrate value, in informing the next spending review.

Noted the EDI Board Champion update from Jason Fergus, including the establishment of a Task and Finish group led by Jeanette to scope the new DIAP with the aim to have this in place by the end of March 2025, and the focus of the EDI roadmap to ensure momentum.

**Action 01-300924 Nick Pontefract** to circulate Pearn Kandola's report following a review of our approach to recruitment to be circulated to the Board by the end of October.

## **8. Chairs' reports**

The Board noted verbal summaries of recent Investment Committee (IC), Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC), English Sports Development Trust Ltd (ESDT) and Sports Council Trust Company (SCTC) activity.

Tove Okunniwa highlighted key points of the previous IC. Board noted discussion on delivery projects including Place progress (including supporting the recommendation for Board approval of the National Evaluation and Learning Partner); Open funding pilot; and We are Undefeatable, in addition to approvals and

assurance on investment decisions (Business Cases) in line with delegated authority levels and / or scrutiny prior to Board discussion.

Michelle Cracknell particularly highlighted scrutiny at ARGC on budget pressures and a resultant requirement for re-forecasting and the work on prioritisation to support a balanced budget and effective future operating model.

David Mahoney reported on the ESDT meeting, highlighting the next steps and priorities following approval of the Terms of Reference by SE Board, including the process to recruitment Independent Members as part of the new membership and supporting the process to procure a Media Planning and Media Buying agencies; with context around the balance to ensue appropriate reactive social media responses.

Lisa Dodd-Mayne, on behalf of its Chair Geoff Wilson, reported on SCTC highlighting the recruitment process for a new Trustee, progress on the NSC contract extensions and options for the direction of travel for Plas y Brenin, with a recommendation planned for December Board.

## **9. Performance Reporting**

Simon Macqueen presented an overview of the of performance reporting against the agreed KPIs and outlined that the presentation had been updated to reflect previous Board advice to be less narrative based. The online dashboard was well received by Board.

The Board:

**Noted** progress on the dashboard reporting, including the information on targeted investments, which informs an agile approach with a review and course correction as required.

**Noted** assurance, with a greater focus, on the percentage of football and multi-sport facility projects in the most deprived areas, in the plan to reach the 50% target by June 2025.

**Action 02-300924 Nick Pontefract** to provide Mel Bound with information from the Movement Fund on the gender data of applicants, notwithstanding the focus on women and girls participation, by the end of October.

**Agreed** that annual aspirations will be included for the next round of reporting, including the online dashboard to support visibility of annual related targets.

## **10. Sport England Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24**

Sarah Forster outlined that the ARGC reviewed the Annual Report and Accounts (ARA) at their September meeting and recommended Board approval. It was noted

that the NAO had started their audit in September with no issues raised to date or anticipated changes to the ARA.

The Board:

**Approved** the Annual Report and Accounts 2023/24, including the Analytical Review which provides a summary to the ARA.

**Agreed** that the CEO and the ARGC Chair may sign off any non-material amendments to the ARA, should they be required between the date of Board approval and the laying of the ARA before parliament.

#### **10.1 ARGC Chair's Annual Report 2023/24**

The Board **approved** the report including the functions of the ARGC over 2023/24.

#### **11. Sport England's work with Active Partnerships**

Phil Smith and Lisa Dodd-Mayne, supported by colleagues provided context for the current position of our relationship with Active Partnerships, aligned to the Place approach, highlighting the challenges and opportunities for improvement in supporting overall performance and impact, ahead of the next phase of investment in 2027. It was noted subsidy control considerations are in progress.

The Board discussed the challenges, nature of co-dependent relationships with associated risks, and the need for triangulation of impact to support outcomes.

The Board:

**Noted** the update on the overall effectiveness of Active Partnerships (APs) network based on monitoring and evaluation. The related challenges of capability and capacity were discussed, and learning will inform the development of our next Implementation Plan and future system partner investment.

**Noted** the positive nature of the co-dependent relationship with the security of multi-year funding, and the conditions required to ensure impact aligned to outcome expectations and mitigating delivery risks.

**Noted** the continuing challenge of AP leadership to be reflective of communities served, with targets/outcomes potentially built into the conditions of funding.

**Agreed** the need for a more joined- up approach, recognising the capacity challenges within APs, with fewer Sport England touchpoints with clarity of expectations and support.

**Supported** an agreed peer review approach, as part of an improvement plan for APs is required through the Active Partnerships National Organisation.

#### **12. Place Expansion**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne, supported by colleagues, outlined the approach and rationale in supporting the Phase 2 stage of Place Expansion, based on need but also

geographic spread and other determinant investment factors (e.g. quality of leadership). The need for effective communications and engagement with stakeholders was noted by Board in discussing the approach, in addition to supporting actions offered to Places where there were identified needs and opportunities.

The Board:

**Approved** the proposed methodology to select the remaining places for Place Expansion.

**Endorsed** the approach to expanding in up to 80 places, whilst ensuring mitigation of reputational risk through appropriate communication, including awareness of broader funding streams.

**Noted** the list of places for Phase 2 will be brought to Board for approval in December, including an analysis of the overall portfolio.

**Agreed** the need to objectively seek assurance on the quality of leadership, with mechanisms to support and/or intervene where required.

### **13. Place Universal Offer**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne and Louise Upton outlined the context for the development of the PUO approach, which had been developed based on evidence and insight, designed with 10 Active Partnerships, and the intention to join-up with Place expansion investments, but to ensure that double funding was mitigated. Assurance was provided on the capacity to support the approach, and an update on progress will follow in early 2025.

The Board:

**Agreed** to extend the approach to work through Active Partnerships to deliver a Place Universal Offer, with the aim to allocate all AP PUO investments by 2025-26 through the appropriate delegated decision-making processes, with the wider PUO investment being finalised in 2026-27.

**Noted** the remainder of the Place Universal Offer investment (£1.6M) will be utilised to implement the wider 'Offer' in the form of national tools, resources and support.

**Noted** the robust process carried out which has resulted in a co-produced, evidence led approach to the recommendations.

**Noted** the assurance provided on the model, the internal resource in place to support the approach, and the mitigations against potential double-funding.

### **14. Greater Manchester Place Deepening Proposal**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne and Adam Rigarlsford outlined the proposal to deepen and expand GM's place-based systemic working, and highlighted successes which have been proportionate to investment provided.

The Board acknowledged the relative positive impact on children and young

people, recognising the system approach., and discussed the need to mitigate against deteriorating local authorities' financial positions that may impact on place related commitments.

The Board:

**Approved** an award of £6,306,345 to Greater Manchester Sports Partnership for their Place Partnership Deepening work (April 2025–March 2028).

**Approved in Principle** an award of £647,167 for a Community Investment Fund and agreed to **delegate final approval** to the Executive Director, Place.

- The decision is subject to further due diligence including but not limited to consideration for the administration cost and implications of operating the local fund. Further specific conditions may be applied as required subject to due process.

## **15. Moving Communities Stage 2 Business Case**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne and Emma Berstein provided background and context on the Moving Communities programme. The Board praised the quality and clarity of the paper.

The Board:

**Approved** the procurement for up to £4m to deliver the Moving Communities service over a 2-year period (1st April 2025 – 31st March 2027) with an option to extend by up to two further years.

**Approved** the total Lottery award budget of £1.5m over the 4 years of the contract period which will then be subject to an Investment Recommendation report and the Delegated Authority policy.

## **16. Active Lives Re-Procurement**

Helen Price provided context around the procurement for Active Lives and the wider impact of the programme. The Board discussed other departmental contributions to the survey.

The Board discussed the scope of the survey to potentially include data from the growing wearable technology market, with a blend of sources in the design to include objective measurements and futureproof the survey by transitioning away from postal methodologies. Assurance was provided in seeking a statistically valid representative sample of respondents.

The Board:

**Approved** the re-procurement of the Active Lives Adult and Children and Young People surveys for a further 5 years (estimated budget £22m), with an option to extend for a further year (estimated budget £5m)

**Noted** the rationale for the estimated £5m cost for the extra year.

Suggested the team link in with John Franklin (Independent Member, Investment Committee) for independent oversight at an appropriate time in the process.

**Agreed** with the value in building relationships with wearable technology companies.

## **17. Recognition of Pickleball**

Phil Smith presented the paper. Following extensive discussion, and noting that two recognition applications had been considered against the criteria of the recognition policy by the UK Officer Recognition Panel (comprising officers from all four Home Country Sports Councils and UK Sport), the Board:

**Agreed** to recognise Pickleball as a sport.

**Noted** that the Lawn Tennis Association's application did not meet the criteria set out in the recognition policy.

The Board were not satisfied in confirming support for the recommendation to recognise Pickleball England as the NGB for the sport and sought further information from Pickleball England to support their capability, as assurance to deliver on its application, before the December Board meeting.

**Advised** officers to seek legal advice in order to support the NGB decision-making process.

**Noted** that the recognition policy is subject to review by June 2025.

**Noted** that there will be no communication with the parties as the decision is subject to decisions at the respective Boards of the three Councils (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).

**Action 03-300924 Phil Smith** to seek legal advice on the NGB for Pickleball decision-making process, and update the Board at the December meeting,

## **18. We are Undefeatable Campaign**

Kate Dale and Tom Burton outlined that the decision proposed had been supported following considerable discussion at the previous Investment Committee which supported Board approval. The importance of ensuring focus on outcomes, and measurement of the effectiveness of the campaign was noted. Assurance on the mechanism being supported by the consortium of charities and Age UK's role was noted.

The Board:

**Approved** the allocation of £6million Lottery funding to deliver the We Are Undefeatable campaign (WAU) between 2025-2028.

Agreed to combine the WAU investment with the Richmond Group of Charities (RGC) System Partner investment of up to £2million which formed part of the System Partner portfolio business case in June 2024.

**Agreed** to solicit Age UK, on behalf of the RGC, to develop a three-year proposal for up to £8million through a single Lottery Funding Award, to deliver WAU and their

influence and advocacy work as a System Partner.

Following discussion, Natalie Daniels abstained from the decision-making process.

The Board advised papers should articulate a successful outcome for the specific programme(s) being presented for investment approval, rather than wider societal issues.

Assurance was provided on the role of Age UK acting on behalf of the wider consortia (RGC) as opposed to the campaign being branded as Age UK.

**Noted** the challenge for the next stage of the campaign should focus on supporting behavioural change outcomes, and a procurement exercise to support the evaluation of campaigns would follow.

**Agreed** that the Board would benefit from an update on Sport England's health-based work.

**Action 04-300924** Jitendra Patel to organise an update session for the Board to raise awareness of the health agenda and related integrated work within Sport England.

## **19. Play Their Way**

Phil Smith and Alex Darbon-Cole provided context for the programme which was discussed at the previous Investment Committee which supported Board approval.

The Board discussed the principles and rationale for the campaign, sought assurance on the mitigations with the identified increase in the risk assessment from medium to high, and the capability to mobilise a movement of coaches from partners.

The Board:

**Approved** an award increase of £4million to UK Coaching for Play Their Way over three years from 1st October 2024 – 30th September 2027.

**Noted** that UK Coaching has received £16,706,435 of Sport England funding over the past three years.

## **20. This Girl Can award to ESDT**

David Mahoney and Mel Bound were recused.

Ben Wilson and Kate Dale outlined the background including the need for strengthened governance following s27 approval.

The Board:

**Approved** the Investment Recommendation Report and award £21.6m of National Lottery funding to the English Sport Development Trust Ltd (ESDTL) to invest in paid

media to support Sport England's This Girl Can campaign.

**Noted** the strengthened governance arrangements and related conditions around s27 agreement to provide scrutiny over the investment.

**Action 04-300924 Kate Dale** to consider the delivery of a Board update session during 2024/25 around campaigns to support wider understanding and assurance.

**21. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.