

**Board Meeting 10 December 2024**

Room 1.15 10 South Colonnade, Canary Wharf

**Members**

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Chris Boardman, Chair | David Mahoney     |
| *Mel Bound            | Elena Narozanski  |
| Michelle Cracknell    | *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**

Rosie Benson – Head of Clubs (item 15)  
\*Richard Clarkson – Sport and NGB Recognition Manager (item 16)  
Greg Clements – Director of Partner Relationships (item 10)  
Simon Macqueen – Director, Strategy  
Ruth Marshall – Head of Legal (Interim)  
Kevin Mills – Director, Place Development (item 12)  
Jitendra Patel – Strategic Lead, Corporate Governance  
Adam Rigarsford – Director, Place Relationships (item 13 and 14)  
Naomi Shearon – Strategic Lead, Strategy (item 11)  
Viveen Taylor – Director, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion  
Duncan Truswell – Strategic Lead, Talent and Performance (item 10)

**Attendees**

Adam Conant – Head of Sport and Gambling, DCMS  
Heather Sinclair – Head of Diversity and Sport Integrity, DCMS  
\*Geoff Wilson – SCTC Chair (item 8)  
*\*Attending via MS Teams*

## **1. Chair's introduction**

The Board noted the significant activity over the previous quarter and were advised that investment and assurance related items had been scrutinised through preceding Investment Committee and ARGC meetings.

## **2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies noted from Tove Okunniwa and Natalie Daniels. The meeting was quorate.

## **3. Declarations of interest**

Noted that there were no new declarations and agreed the management, through recusal, of Jason Fergus's interest relating to the Essex deepening decisions.

## **4. Minutes of Meeting of 30 September 2024**

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

## **5. Matters Arising - Action Log**

The Board noted progress on the action log, including to close the action related to This Girl Can.

## **6. CEO's report**

The Board noted the update, including Jason Fergus's assurance on the EDI report. The following areas were particularly highlighted:

- Comprehensive Spending Review, with the need to demonstrate Sport England's alignment and contribution to Government's missions.
- The creation and impact of a more directive EDI steering group in collaboration with Task and Finish Groups with Executive sponsors, supporting the approach to EDI, shaping DIAPs and the roadmap.
- The update on the SRA, engagement with wider system partners and Active Partnerships.

## **7. Chairs' reports**

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

Nick Pontefract highlighted key points of the previous IC. Board noted discussion on Business Plan progress and delivery, and considerable discussion on the System Partner investment prior to Board, in addition to approvals and assurance on investment decisions (Business Cases) in line with delegated authority levels and / or scrutiny prior to Board discussion. The Board noted the intention to streamline and mitigate duplication of discussion at IC and Board.

Michelle Cracknell highlighted positive progress from a risk and counter fraud perspective at ARGC, assurance on budget re-forecasting and the SSP. Areas for improvement included the need to support the ambition for the three sets of Annual Report and Accounts (Sport England, SCTC and ESDT) to be concluded in-year.

David Mahoney reported on the ESDT, highlighting the appointment of three new Board members, with a strategy meeting planned for January 2025 to consider the outcomes of the next phase and focus on measurement and evaluation. The Board **approved** the change to the Terms of Reference, noting that Ben Wilson would no longer be a Board member but including 3 Independent Members.

Lisa Dodd-Mayne, on behalf of its Chair Geoff Wilson, reported on SCTC highlighting the recruitment process for a new Trustee.

The Chair updated on the CRC, with further meetings planned for 2025.

## **8. Plas y Brenin**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne and Geoff Wilson provided an update on the approach, including scrutiny at SCTC over the options for the direction of travel for Plas y Brenin, as part of the proposed recommendation for Board.

The Board

**Approved** a budget envelope of **up to £6.75m** (over a 5-year term from March 2026) to extend the contract for the operation of Plas y Brenin National Outdoor Centre. Comprised of:

- **Approval** of SCTC's recommendation to develop an extension of the existing operating contract (lease) for up to 5 years with Mountain Training Trust (via Mountain Training Ltd), with an appropriate subcontractor for the delivery of specific support functions, at a contract cost of up to £5m.
- **Approval of up to £1.75m** (over the five-year term) of Sports Development budget for the administration costs associated with Sport England's responsibilities under the contract extension. Comprising asset lifecycle costs and landlord responsibilities.

## **9. Performance Reporting**

Simon Macqueen presented an overview of the performance report and outlined that the KPIs will develop to reflect the refreshed Implementation Plan and policy priorities. The Board noted the rationale behind the rating for the Managing Public Money KPI, and that it will be subject to an annual review to reflect the updated Head of Internal Audit Opinion accordingly.

In response to assurance sought on contribution modelling it was noted that the first cut of the methodology against the four investment areas is expected later in December with an update to Board thereafter, dependent on the confidence

against the model given the complexities associated.

It was noted that the Active Lives indicators will be updated following results in April 2025, as part of the annual review cycle, with the need to demonstrate Sport England's direct contribution.

#### **Action 01-101224**

Provide an update on the spending review at the next Investment Committee to discuss and consider the evidence base required to support the process.

#### **10. Stage 3: System Partners Delivery and Talent Investment**

Phil Smith, supported by Greg Clements and Duncan Truswell provided background information on the approach to support System Partner Investment, noting the performance framework for each system partner, and context to support the Board recommendations.

The Board noted the strategic intent and alignment, along with the challenges in tackling inequalities with regard to talent pathway funding. The Board noted that the talent awards were included in the Medium-Term Plan and are Exchequer awards agreed in-principle, with allocations confirmed on an annual basis, and the conversion of the awards subject to confirmation by DCMS.

The Board approved:

- **Delivery Investment** award increases for 27 System Partners, for a 2-year period, totalling £19,019,984 from April 2025 to March 2027, as set out in the Future Funding Annex.
- **Talent Investment** award increases for 41 System Partners for a 4-year period, totalling £109,206,187 for the period April 2025 to March 2029, as set out in the Talent Funding Annex.

#### **11. Implementation Plan 2025-28**

Tim Hollingsworth set the context for the Implementation Plan update to the Board, including incorporating feedback from the Board to inform the framing of the approach, aligned to interactive annual business plan which supports the overall journey of Uniting the Movement as a strategy. It was noted that feedback from the sector and stakeholders had been part of the process for development and there was no appetite for course correction. In summary, the aim was to enable greater focus and prioritisation to key parts of the Sport England portfolio, with a commitment to resolving operational and deliverability challenges, through continuing implementation through the five major types of investment (place, partnerships, campaigns, open funding and specific Government directed programmes).

Nick Pontefract, supported by Simon Macqueen and Naomi Shearon provided further detail on the proposed approach, in seeking the Board's support to continue the direction in ensuring focussed and clear policy ambitions (including policy priorities) in line with the prioritisation of resource challenges and consideration of wider government missions.

The Board's assurance role in holding the Executive to account, through the performance framework and related operationalisation of the Business Plan including KPIs, was noted.

The Board's feedback in supporting what Sport England was not going to do was also noted, to ensure operational effectiveness, focus, and clarity of ambitions and prioritisation. DCMS's feedback in terms of the development of the Implementation Plan and alignment with the spending review process was also noted, with an increasing expectation of impact / return of investments, and why Sport England would be best placed to deliver those investments as influencing headline factors.

The Board supported the overall principle of the approach.

The Board:

**Agreed** the headline implementation plan approach for 2025-28.

## **12. Active Environments Framework**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne and Kevin Mills set the context and outlined the benefits in leveraging the framework in optimising reach for resources with local authorities accessing the framework.

The Board:

- **Approved** the re-procurement of the Active Environments Framework (contract value of up to £4.5M) over a two-year period with an option to extend by up to two further years to deliver the proposal as set out.
- Within the £4.5m contract, a total budget of up to £2m (£1.5m Lottery Award and £500K Sports Development spend) is **approved** over the four-year period which will be subject to approvals under the Decision-Making/Delegated Authorities Policy.

## **13. Place Expansion (Phase 2) and Deepening Decisions**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne, supported by Adam Rigarlsford, outlined the methodology and data driven approach to support the Board Place expansion recommendation.

The Board:

**Agreed** the list of 27 Place Expansion areas, specified in Annex B, which will complete the 'Expanding our Place Partnerships' commitment within the current

Implementation Plan (2922-25) Years 2-4.

**Noted** and **agreed** that the Executive Director, Place will agree the timing and rollout of Phase 2, subject to capacity within the Place team.

**Noted** the verbal update provided on Birmingham.

### **Place Deepening Decisions**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne and Adam Rigarlsford provided rationale on the deepening decisions for Doncaster, Calderdale and Essex with common themes across each submission, including strategic influencing and delivery, community empowered decision making, and alignment to the health agenda Government mission.

The Board advised for consistency of evidence across each paper on metrics to support deepening decisions.

### **Doncaster Investment Proposal**

The Board:

**Agreed** an award of £2,767,400 to City of Doncaster Council for their Place Deepening work (April 2025 – March 2028).

### **Active Calderdale Investment Proposal**

**Agreed** an award of £3,415,000 to Active Calderdale for their Place Deepening work (April 2025 – March 2028).

### **Essex Place Investment Proposal**

**Agreed** an award of £4,754,843 to Active Essex for their Place Deepening work (April 2025 – March 2028).

## **14. Moving Communities – Procurement Recommendation**

Lisa Dodd-Mayne set the context following previous Board approval (Stage 2) for the Moving Communities platform.

The Board:

**Agreed** to award a contract valued at up to £3,568,400 (split Sport England £1,968,400 sports development and third party spend £1,600,000) to 4GLOBAL Consulting Limited as the lead supplier of a consortium of suppliers to deliver Moving Communities over a 2-year period (from 1st April 2025) with an option to extend by up to 2 years.

**Agreed** an additional Lottery award budget of £1.5m over 4 years of the contract. Awards will be solicited and be subject to individual investment recommendation reports according to the Delegated Authority process.

## **15. Buddle Re-procurement 2025-2028**

Rosie Benson outlined the positive impact on metrics and the context of the cross-

functionality of the platform and provided assurance on the due diligence of the procurement process. Assurance was also provided around the evaluation process to assess strategic impact and relevance of the platform by 2026/27.

The Board:

**Approved** the procurement recommendations to secure delivery services for Buddle until April 2028 with an optional one-year extension to 2029.

- This includes £2,037,245 of non-cash grant and £298,415 of Lottery Sports Development budget. Total for approval £2,335,660 including VAT

## **16. Recognition Papers**

Phil Smith, supported by Richard Clarkson outlined the context for each of the recognition decisions. Following extensive discussion at the previous Board meeting which recognised Pickleball as a sport, the Board discussed the recommendations regarding the recognition application for the governing body of Pickleball. Assurance, including from the Head of Legal, was provided that the application from Pickleball England met the criteria of the recognition policy, which also aligned with respective decisions taken at the other Home Country Sports Councils.

### **Pickleball Recognition**

The Board:

**Approved** the application from Pickleball England to be recognised as the sport's NGB in England, subject to it addressing the matters in respect of its Safeguarding Action Plan by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

**Rejected** the Lawn Tennis Association's application to be recognised as the sport's NGB in England.

### **Taekwondo Recognition**

The Board:

**Agreed** to recognise British Taekwondo Limited as the National Governing Body for the Olympic & Paralympic (World Taekwondo) style of Taekwondo.

### **Cheerleading Recognition**

The Board:

**Agreed** to recognise Cheerleading as a Sport.

## **17. Retiring the English Sports Council Seal**

Ruth Marshall presented an overview of the process following the Board's agreement in December 2023 to amend the English Sports Council Royal Charter and remove the requirement for Sport England to use the corporate seal when executing deeds.

The Board:

**Approved** the amendment of the English Sports Council Royal Charter, as set out in the paper.

**18. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.