

Cross Party Group on Sport

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015, 17.30-19.30

Committee Room 2, Scottish Parliament

Present

Alison Johnstone MSP, Liz Smith MSP, Rhoda Grant MSP, Mark MacDonald MSP, Kim Atkinson, Oliver Barsby, Craig Burn, Jane Campbell Morrison, Neil Champion, Lee Cousins, Richard Doherty, Bob Ellis, David Ferguson, Stew Fowlie, Alex Gladkov, Hugh Hall, Jane Harvey, Ciaran Kearney, Rick Kenney, David Laing, David Matthew, Ross McFarlane, Jim McIntosh, Ruth Mendel, Catriona Morrison, Ian Murray, Jennifer Pearson, Gail Prince, Charlie Raeburn, Catherine Ronald, Ronald Ross, Mason Rowan, Chris Sellar, David Sweetman, Stuart Turner, Fraser Walker, Victoria Ward.

Apologies

David Arnott, Melissa Berry, Dougi Bryce, Diane Cameron, Ian Findlay, Cllr Jeanette Gaul, Jim Gunn, Duncan Hamilton, Scott Hastings, Nigel Holl, Liza Linton, Julie Mason, Nanette Mutrie, Peter Nicolson, Keith Oliver, Tavish Scott MSP, Ronnie Sloan, Cameron Watt, Alastair Wilson.

Previous Minutes

Proposed by: Stew Fowlie

Seconded by Jim McIntosh

Next Meeting Dates

17<sup>th</sup> March 2015, 17.30-19.30

26<sup>th</sup> May 2015, 17.30-19.30

Opening

The meeting began at 17.45. Alison Johnstone MSP (Co-convenor) welcomed everyone and explained that the topic for this meeting was 'Sporting Opportunities: 2015 and Beyond'. Apologies were given that Mike Whittingham's presentation at the meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> November was too large for some to receive by email. Hardcopies were provided. Alison updated attendees on who was recognised in the New Year Honours for sport/contribution to sport.

Names of those Honoured



Jon Doig	Commonwealth Games Scotland	OBE
Euan Burton	Judo	MBE
Malcolm MacKay	Football	MBE

Prof Nanette Mutrie	Physical Activity	MBE
Janice Hendrie	Athletics	BEM
James Owens	Badminton	BEM
James Swanson	Rugby	BEM
Mark Wylie	Sport in Shetland	BEM
Francesca Osowska	Government (CG division)	OBE
Derek Bearhop	Government (CG division)	MBE
Diane McLafferty	Government (CG division)	MBE
Cllr Gordon Matheson	Glasgow City Council	CBE
Dr Bridget McConnell	Glasgow City Council	CBE
Mike Cantlay	Visit Scotland	OBE
Cllr Archie Graham	Glasgow City Council	OBE

Alison then introduced the evening's speakers.

#### Keynote speaker 1 – Stuart Turner, Events Director, EventScotland

The presentation began by looking back on the year just gone, highlighting that we had a 'joined-up Scotland' in 2014. Events like the Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cup focused public and private sectors and different bodies on working together. A key question is - how do we ensure this continues to happen going forward?

Stuart mentioned the re-launch of the National Events Strategy (Spring 2015) – a strong focus continues to be placed on truly making the most of Scotland's assets. This means making the most of our facilities and natural environment to maximise impact.

#### Key factors to consider going forward

Economic – Events with money spent on them that deliver a financial return generate trust in Scotland's deliverability

Identity – Events allow us to platform ourselves, our character or image, as a nation. This is a motivation for Government to invest in particular events.

Media and Profile – It's important that we are looking to maximise benefits, i.e. getting people into sports and community interaction.

Sustainability – We must take on board environmental considerations. We must also consider the longevity of the events themselves. For example, annual events are the gift that keeps on giving.

Stuart then gave an overview of the year ahead and events already secured, including the Davis Cup – it had to be held in GB but Scotland did well to secure it. 2015 is understandably not going to be as big a year as 2014, but there are plenty of blue ribbon events coming up. The job is to engage the public - he pointed to the Gymnastics World Championships as an example, for which half the tickets have already been sold ahead of October's event.

The bidding process for the likes of the Commonwealth Games was explained, including strong and resultantly successful bids for multiple curling events.

Thirty bid-scoping projects are currently ongoing, in addition to those events already secured. The aim is to bring the events that will have the biggest impact.

The Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cup received such great positive feedback – this has boosted Scotland's chances of securing new and continuing business. The infrastructure is in place.

Stuart noted too, the need to capitalise on the culture of volunteering seen during the Commonwealth Games.

#### Keynote speaker 2 – Craig Burn, CEO, Scottish Cycling

Craig highlighted that cycling has a unique place in our lives, as it's not only a sport – “you can't hockey to work”. It touches on many areas from health to jobs and more besides.

Tour de France success for British riders boosted cycling hugely. Craig continued, explaining the distinct aspects of cycling that are covered by the various bodies, including Sustrans.

He pointed to a few questions to consider: how do you grow your sport? As a priority - how does Scottish Cycling reduce its reliance on public funding as it grows and requires more investment (at the moment it is 46% publicly funded)? One option is to make itself more attractive to private sector funding.

Amongst discussion of the ambitions for growth, a focus on volunteering was highlighted.

Craig pointed to the importance of inspiration - role models like Sir Chris Hoy and Danny MacAskill will continue as a means to get people into cycling, taking cycling to the public.

He highlighted too, the importance of supporting and develop talent – both sportspeople and those in roles across the organisation.

Craig stated that the job is to 'build a system'. The challenge with cycling (in schools and communities especially) is around getting people to 'participate' and 'explore'. It is particularly important that they continue to develop and grow female participation.

He spoke of how clubs are at the forefront of how the membership is supported - their role is diversifying away from clichéd ideas of old middle-class men in lycra.

Risk-management, particularly in a voluntary scenario, is important so safety on the roads – people are more likely to participate if they feel assured that cycling is a safe sport.

The successes of Scotland's track cyclists were highlighted, along with the need for more dedicated – traffic-free - cycling venues.

Aside from the Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome and Broadwood, investment in cycling has not been huge comparatively.

Scottish Cycling's aim is to reach the 50,000 membership mark.

Ideas to attract new people included mass participation include Ride Scotland, and a similar approach to school swimming, with a badge system.

Looking beyond traditional funding is important as government only has so much to give (from various budget areas – health, tourism, economic development). A 'Manifesto for Cycling', campaigning (Road Share for example) and the CPG on Cycling were also mentioned as important assets for encouraging participation. The benefits of data-capture for follow-up were also highlighted.

### Growth priorities

Club activity / Competition / Events

- Focus on safety
- Taking part requires organised events

Marketing –It's important to make cycling relevant to new potential participants, not just the traditional cycling audience.

New facilities – see above.

Mass-participation – Craig stressed the importance of the various different cycling groups having a joint, common focus.

*Alison then introduced the next speaker, and invited Rhoda Grant MSP to take over chairing duties.*

### Keynote speaker 3 – Ian Murray, CEO, High Life Highland

Ian explained that High Life Highland is an arm's-length organisation co-operating with Highland Council. It took over the Culture and Leisure remit from Highland Council.

The reasons the High Life Scheme Concept came about in 2001.

- There was a mass family market that wasn't being catered for
- A system that was easy to use was needed

- Local people needed affordable access to local facilities (leisure facility car parks weren't reflective of the market that needed to be engaged – working families were being priced out of the market).

## 2001 - 2014

Since High Life Highland began, visits through facility door increased by 81% - budget participation specifically, went up by 257%

Income grew by a huge 92%.

The scheme operates by giving full access to all facilities, there are no additional costs – membership includes absolutely everything a facility can offer.

The cost is £19 or £27 per month, which compares well against figures like £100 per month in parts of the central belt.

They also offer a budget scheme in which everything costs 50p per visit – this allows those who don't want or can't afford a full membership, to still get opportunities to access facilities for low cost. They also offer happy hours where anyone can turn up to participate and pay just 50p.

The scheme gives the public a lower cost means to access. Whilst other councils with similar schemes have around 15% of their population as members, in the Highlands it's estimated that around 43% of the population have a High Life Highland membership card.

Ian explained that the intention is not to compete with the private sector for the 'leotard market' – rather, the aim is to achieve mass participation.

## Working in Partnership

Ian went on to explain that High Life Highland has approached partners/councils to demonstrate the value of the scheme in prevention of health problems etc – a focus on preventative funding.

As part of High Life, children in care have their card cost covered - half by the Council and half by High Life. This is to ensure the same opportunities are available to all.

## Reaching non-participants through partnership working

- The Otago exercise programme works with elderly people to cater their exercise routines according to the ability of participants.
- One care home case-study suggests this programme has resulted in 20% fewer falls in the home
- Resultantly this brings savings for the NHS through less bed-blocking.
- All young people who sign up for youth work and employability skills courses also get access to cheaper High Life schemes.
- One card can be used for travel, school meals, libraries etc, as well as the leisure facilities.

## Going forward

- Is the scheme transferrable to other Local Authorities – Ian suggests it is.
- Western Isles and Moray Councils are adopting or moving towards similar schemes, this will allow the Councils to effectively compare and contrast.
- Ian highlighted that financial pressure equates to a commercial mind-set, so it is important to overcome any perceived financial risk and focus on the community outcomes and wider preventative savings.

*The Chair thanked the keynote speakers and opened discussion to the floor.*

- 1) Councillor Bob Ellis (SALSC) asked about affiliation fees and risk assessment, with Craig Burn explaining it is around £140 per year as standard, with individual rates ranging from £20 to around £80. He highlighted that liaison with police and organisers was important for getting licenses.
- 2) Mason Rowan (Scottish Youth Parliament) asked about support for local youth-led sports councils. Stuart Turner explained that that it is not something they come across often, but EventScotland would be happy to work with those wanting to use particular events to increase participation.
- 3) Stuart Turner discussed the tendency to steer clear of throwing money at bids for events, following a question from Rick Kenny (SALSC). The focus is on demonstrating competence in running the events, and emphasising the feeling that local areas and sports themselves are improved by an event. The benefit we get (economic, identity, participation) makes people want to give events to Scotland.
- 4) Charlie Raeburn asked about corruption and drugs in sport, and governing bodies asking for ‘extras’ during the bidding process. He asked if this is still an issue. Stuart Turner didn’t see it as a big barrier – he said that it’s about delivering the best bid. Unfortunately the best bid won’t always win, and it is important to assess whether an event is winnable in the first place. Stuart pointed out too, that the International Federations provide guidelines on correct bid procedure.
- 5) Responding to Catriona Morrison (Winning Scotland Foundation), Stuart Turner highlighted that benefits of an event at the time (financial benefits for example) are one thing, but other key benefits are longer-term, as with mountain bike events leaving behind a new facility for ongoing public use. Rates of participation up massively since facilities came about as a result of events. An event on its own won’t increase participation. What matters is the longer-term participation and the platforms and partnerships that enable that.
- 6) Chris Sellar (Herriot Watt Community Sports Hub) asked about volunteering, and how well set up to capitalise on recruitment and volunteering both regionally and nationally. Stuart Turner explained that more people have expressed an interest in volunteering since the 2012 London Olympics, but many tend to gravitate directly to particular sports or events, for example, rather than for a general, everyday volunteer role. He suggested that Volunteering Scotland’s website is not enough to deal with the culture change that is required in this respect.

Craig Burn added that with governing bodies, trusts, clubs etc, we need to know who is succession-planning. We need to have skilled, possibly professional, people supporting the various clubs etc to build capacity.

Ian Murray suggested that, done properly, Active Schools is a key route in attracting long-term volunteers – especially in identifying young ‘Sports Leaders’: these young people act as ambassadors for participation.

- 7) Jane Harvey asked whether we look at volunteers are officials, or officials as volunteers - whose responsibility it is to train officials – governing bodies? Craig Burn responded that some of the best placed people to train volunteers are fellow volunteers – he gave the example of Scottish Cycling, who, with 20 staff, would collapse without the service of volunteers. Professional staff, Craig Burn said, need to be in place, with appropriate pathways to do the right thing.

Stuart Turner suggested that evaluation of volunteering is built into the pre-bid/pre-event scoping process.

### Closing discussion

Chair, Rhoda Grant MSP, asked more about High Life Highland, with discussion on how it fits into the wider picture in Scotland. David Ferguson (Sporta Scotland) highlighted that Trusts that have been around for some time are teaching the newer trusts what has worked, allowing each Local Authority to develop its own model. He explained that Trusts’ boards now attract very skilled people. Sporta is

- Evaluating various challenges locally
- Assessing how Trusts work with shrinking budgets
- Creating workshops for trusts to improve their running and sustainability.

Chair, Rhoda Grant MSP, asked each keynote speaker what their 1 big ask for 2015 is.

Stuart Turner: Bottle community spirit and coalescence of 2014 to continue it going forward.

Craig Burn: Cycling funding is a challenge. Could the Scottish Government help to create a National Cycling Strategy? He’d like commitment, not just from the Transport Minister, but all members of the Scottish Government’s Cabinet. Government, Craig suggested, should set an example for Local Authorities to follow.

Ian Murray: More health spending moving from treatment to prevention – this would allow more people to get active earlier and stay active throughout their lives.

### Closing

The Chair thanked all the speakers, and gave details of the next meeting on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March. The meeting closed 19.36.