

Communities and Culture Committee

Making the Most of Major Sporting Events in Wales

Recent Activity: Hosted the European Nations Hockey Trophy for Men 2009

This was the most prestigious hockey event ever staged in Wales. As well as providing home advantage for the National Team, aims included improving the visibility of hockey in N Wales, increasing participation of young people, creating new and sustainable activity in school aged children and increasing the volunteer base.

Specific points arising;

The WHU approached the MEU (following advice of its existence) in Dec 2008, having been awarded hosting responsibility for the event by the European Hockey Federation in Nov. It seemed as though we were having to make all the running; possibly from three perspectives - we were 'late' in the cycle of consideration, although a major event in hockey it was not a major event in commercial terms and the MEU was finding its feet. We had to commit resources before funding was confirmed and received payment retrospectively. Hosting any activity is financially a high

risk activity. The less commercial the sport, the greater the risk.

Recommendations;

The system of application and reporting is more clearly specified

The level of bureaucracy is reduced / commensurate with the level of support offered

The definition of a major event is revisited for amateur sports (ie other than golf, tennis, rugby, football and cricket)

More generically:

Publicising and marketing events to an audience beyond those already involved in a sport is essential for success in the widest terms; increased involvement and commercial benefit. It is costly and resource intensive for small NGBs to operate independently. If there is to be a concerted effort to maximise investment in promoting all sports under a variety of banners/activity headings leading up to the 2012 Olympics with a mind to increasing representation at future Olympic and CWGs as well as improving levels of participation, there is a need to improve the collaboration between government, sports council, authorities and NGBs. The NGBs are well placed to contribute new activities as part of an overall push for growth in participation and manage improvements in performance.

Recommendation:

A collective approach to reducing risk and maximising benefit by drawing on expertise from a centrally provided unit with the Knowledge, contacts and 'door opening' capability