

Culture Committee CC 15-02 (p.2)

Date: 17 July 2002

Time: 9.00am - 12.15pm

Venue: Committee Room 1, National Assembly for Wales

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Purpose

1. The Culture Committee Secretariat has indicated that they would like to carry out a Review of Sport in Wales and have asked for a position paper.

This paper responds to that request.

2. Dr Huw Jones, Chief Executive, Sports Council for Wales will give a presentation to the Culture Committee on the Council's Annual Report 2001 and Corporate Plan 2003-2006 during their meeting on 17 July.

Summary

3. This paper:

- makes reference to the importance of sport;
- highlights some key issues from a recent report prepared by the Audit Commission on sport and the role of Government;
- presents some facts and figures on sport in Wales and the UK;
- summarises some areas of sport that the Assembly has been involved with since its inception in 1999;
- outlines the role of the Sports Council and some of its key initiatives;

4. The Importance of Sport

- Sport contributes to a range of local and national priorities;
- Sport can potentially generate benefits for individuals, communities and the country as a

whole;

- Sport can provide personal satisfaction through opportunities for stimulation and socialisation;
- Sport can help stimulate good citizenship amongst the young;
- Sport has been shown to improve physical and mental health;
- Sport can have an impact on cognitive, emotional and motivational development, which may lead to improved academic performance in young people;
- Sport can promote social inclusion and can help develop personal skills;
- Sport can have an important influence on our economy and can help stimulate investment. Consumer spending on sport in the UK has been estimated at £15.2bn, or 2.6% of total consumer spending.
- An average of 46% of the UK population participate in sport 12 times a year against 70% in Sweden and 80% in Finland;
- Total government spend on sport in the UK is estimated to be about £2bn per annum, most of which (85%) is delivered through local authorities.

5. Audit Commission Report on Sport

The Audit Commission recently prepared a report on sport and recreation in England arising from best value inspections in England and Wales. The report focuses largely on local authority provision and raises some of the following issues:

- How investment can best be deployed in order that communities benefit from key facilities requires a better understanding of the needs of communities;
- There are many drivers for change within sport and recreation, including a rapidly growing private sector (e.g. David Lloyd clubs). Attractive private sector facilities can lead to the risk of local authority facilities being less relevant for many people;
- Local authorities are key providers of sport and recreation but have no statutory duties in this regard and each authority is free to determine its own strategic priorities and spend

– with variable outcomes;

- There should be a willingness to change the mechanisms for service delivery in sport.
- Suggestions on how to improve include:
 - focus on purpose and priorities,
 - appropriate service delivery mechanisms
 - the need to consider practical steps
 - when local authorities develop a sport strategy it should be linked to a

local cultural strategy

6. Sport in Wales

- There are a number of organisations that are responsible for delivering sport in Wales. These include the Welsh Assembly Government; Local Authorities, Sports Council for Wales, Governing Bodies of Sport, Sports Clubs, Schools, Colleges and Universities, Community Clubs.
- In terms of gender issues, men are still more likely to participate in sport than women, with rates of participation of 53% compared to 41% in 1997/98. The Plan for Wales sets a goal, within the overall increase of participation, of halving the gap between men and women's participation by the year 2005.

7. Sports Participation Surveys

The Sports Council recently carried out a series of surveys involving all 22 local authorities in Wales and have since prepared a series of reports.

A summary chart showing sports participation levels throughout Wales is provided at **Annex 1, also provided are some sample copies of reports.**

The Sports Council will be following up this exercise with individual meetings with each local authority to establish and agree action plans. The Sports Council has set a goal of halving the gap in sports participation between the highest and lowest participating regions of Wales by the year 2005.

8. National Assembly for Wales/ Welsh Assembly Government

Listed below are some areas in sport that the Assembly has been involved with since 1999:

- Established the Healthy and Active Lifestyle Taskforce;
- Provided financial assistance towards the Special Olympic Games held in Cardiff;
- Established the Football Forum;
- Established the Wales Outdoor Activities Awareness Forum;
- Played a crucial role in winning the 2010 Ryder Cup bid;
- Provided financial assistance to Millennium Stadium plc towards staging the FA Cup final and associated events;
- Sets strategic priorities in Plan for Wales for participation in sport, especially by women and girls and young people.
- Launched the Culture Strategy which identifies several objectives involving sport, such as increasing the number of people taking part in sport;
- The Sports Council has provided financial support to the Commonwealth Games Council for Wales towards the team competing at the forthcoming Manchester Games;

- Sports Council and Welsh Assembly Government have appointed a PE in Schools Sport National Development Co-ordinator as part of the PE and School Sport Task Action Plan for Wales;
- Provided financial support towards Ynys Mon County Borough Council conducting a feasibility study in connection with submitting a bid to host the Island Games 2009.

9. Sports Council for Wales

Background

The Sports Council for Wales is an Assembly Sponsored Public

Body. The Sports Council was presented with its Royal Charter in 1972 and this was subject to minor amendments in 1997. During 1999 the Council petitioned Her Majesty the Queen to seek further changes to the Charter which enabled the transfer of powers from the Secretary of State for Wales to the National Assembly for Wales.

The Sports Council's grant in aid for 2002/2003 is £9.4m (£7.958m on a cash basis). Of the 76

governing bodies of sport in Wales recognised by the Sports Council, 58 are supported financially and 83 funded posts will account for about 52% of the budget. In its role as lottery distributor, the Sports Council will distribute this financial year over £11m to a range of projects throughout Wales.

The Sports Council's mission is to:

- increase participation, to encourage participation in sport both in terms of numbers of people and their frequency of activity;
- raising standards- to raise standards of performance and excellence in sport
- improving facilities
- providing technical information and advice and general understanding about sport and physical recreation.

The Sports Council has 14 members (including the chair) on its statutory board, appointed by the Assembly. Current membership is as follows:

Gareth Davies - Chair, Anne Ellis MBE - Vice Chair, Philip Lloyd Jones

Ieuan Lewis, Clive Thomas, Peter Huw Thomas, Keith Evans, Susan Williams

Lynette Harris, David Davies, Lynn Davies MBE, Christine Gittoes,

Delyth Morgan, Dr Sue Noake.

10. Sports Council Initiatives - Women in Sport

This area of development continues to be given additional emphasis in all aspects of the Sports Council's programmes. There are several initiatives in place, which are aimed at increasing participation. These include:

Girls First

This scheme offers up to £1,000 to secondary schools to help provide additional extra curricular opportunities for girls. Around 80% of all secondary schools in Wales have participated in the programme offering a range of over 30 different after school activities for girls.

Sportlot Support: Girls

The Sports Council for Wales has made a major commitment to invest £650,000 per annum of SPORTLOT funding specifically in support of the development of women and girls sport from 2002 onwards.

Women and Girls Poster Series

In order to increase the level of participation by women in sport the Sports Council has introduced a woman in sport poster series; these have been distributed to schools.

Women's Press Officer

The Sports Council have created a dedicated press officer whose role is to increase the number of press releases and media briefings involving women in sport.

July 2002