

MINUTES (DRAFT)

Date: 28 November 2002

Time: 2.00 – 3.30pm

Venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly for Wales

Attendance:	
Members	Rhodri Glyn Thomas (Plaid Cymru, Carmarthen East and Dinefwr, Chair) Jenny Randerson (Liberal Democrat, Cardiff Central, Assembly Minister) Owen John Thomas (Plaid Cymru, South Wales Central) Lorraine Barrett (Labour, Cardiff South and Penarth) Delyth Evans (Labour, Mid & West Wales)
Officials	Margaret Evans (Arts, Lottery and Sport Division) Arthur Emyr (Arts, Lottery and Sport Division)
Secretariat	Marie Knox, Head of Members’ Research and Committee Services

2.00pm

Item 1: Introduction, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the Committee and members of the public.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from Rosemary Butler (Labour, Newport West), Alison Halford (Labour, Delyn); Dafydd Wigley (Plaid Cymru, Caernarfon) and Glyn Davies(Conservative, Mid and West Wales)

1.3 The Chair explained the recent changes to the standing order requirements on declarations of interests.

2.05pm

Item 2: Policy Review on Sport

Major Events / Ryder Cup

CC 19-02 (p1)

Presentation from Rob Holt, Welsh Development Agency and Brian Davies, Golf Development Wales

2.1 The following points were made:

- Mr Holt stated that there was a lack of evidence (other than anecdotal evidence) on the effect of major events on participation levels in sport, whereas there was evidence of the benefits for the economy and tourism. The boost to the Midlands economy of holding the Ryder Cup at the Belfry had been estimated at £15 million.
- The Ryder Cup will have a positive impact on golf development in Wales, it is hoped to maximise the event both before and after the 3 day competition in 2010.
- The Ryder Cup bid had included national and local government support and a long-term commitment to golf at all levels. There was a commitment to maximising the all Wales benefits of the event.
- The bid team included the Welsh Development Agency, the Welsh Tourist Board, the Sports Council for Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Celtic Manor, Newport City Council and various representatives from Welsh golf.
- The cost of the rights to the event was £1million. As part of the bid a commitment had been made to a Legacy Trust Fund of £2m to develop golf in Wales and an annual events programme related to the event had been launched in 2001. The bid commitments excluded the investment that the Celtic Manor was making to improve the course and any investment that may be needed for any other infrastructure improvements.
- Other benefits of the event included the potential for raising the international profile of Wales and tourism, particularly the chance to sell Wales as a 'golf destination' overseas.
- The Wales Open event at the Celtic Manor had been funded by the Celtic Manor.
- Mr Brian Davies emphasised that the Ryder Cup bid was not just a three day event in Newport in 2010, it was an eight year commitment to delivering increased participation in golf.
- To take forward this commitment, Golf Development Wales had been formed, representing the Welsh Ladies Golf Union, the Golf Foundation, the Sports Council for Wales and the Welsh Golfing Union.

- The four year development strategy produced by Golf Development Wales included targets to raise the participation levels of golf, focusing on participation by girls and boys – for example, to increase girls' membership from 692 to 2700 and boys' membership from 7300 to 10200 – and on breaking down the myths about golf as an expensive and exclusive sport, for example publicising special membership rates available to juniors.
- Golf Development Wales were hoping to take forward between 12 and 15 initiatives such as providing free coaching for girls who have been introduced to the sport as part of the Sports Council for Wales' "Girls First" initiative and supporting starter centres which accept children under 10 years of age. It was hoped to increase the number of starter centres to 62 in the next 4 years.
- The membership and admissions policies of private clubs were a matter for the clubs themselves. However Golf Development Wales did not work with those clubs who would not accept juniors, so that lottery funds were being targeted on those clubs willing to work to increase junior participation levels.

2.2 There followed a question and answer session during which the following points were made:

- More needed to be done to address the image of golf as an expensive sport and to make it accessible to wider groups of people. For example a £60 annual fee could be a deterrent to some families if it was not possible to stagger payments through the year.
- Golf Development Wales was encouraging clubs to buy small sets of clubs suitable for juniors.
- In order to teach young children the principles of golf, a game called Try Golf had been developed which used plastic equipment and could be played indoors. Teachers can be trained to deliver the game in only 2 hours.
- The ticketing policy of the Ryder Cup was determined by European Tour / PGA who own the event. The WDA was therefore not able to guarantee the provision of additional tickets to certain groups, although it could produce education packs to raise awareness of the event. It was hoped that a more open ticketing policy could operate if Newport were successful in gaining the bid for the Ladies equivalent of the Ryder Cup.

2.45pm

Item 2: Policy Review on Sport

Major Events / Commonwealth Games

Presentation by Myrddin John and Dr Wayne Griffiths from the Commonwealth Games Council for Wales

3.1 The Commonwealth Games Council has produced a submission and a series of slides setting out the various barriers to participation in sport. These were wide ranging and complex, and included individual, environmental and community factors. Among the points he made, Dr Wayne Griffiths mentioned the following:

- Strategies to increase participation in sport needed to focus on both addressing the individual's needs – the "person centred pathway" - and on working with wider groups of stakeholders – the "community centred pathway". Multi-agency collaboration was vital.
- There was a particular problem regarding participation in sport in the South Wales valleys.

- There was a need for centres of excellence at national level and also in local communities.
- Lack of transport to venues can be a key factor, particularly in rural areas.
- Media coverage of female athletes affected girls' view of sporting success as a valid goal.
- Capacity building at local and voluntary level was needed. The available resources needed to be more widely promoted.
- Welsh competitors need to compete in annual international competitions to prepare them for participation in major events. The last Commonwealth Games had been many Welsh athletes' first experience of competing with world champions.

3.2 Myrddin John, made a presentation during which the following points were made:

- The scale of the Commonwealth Games and the infrastructure required to support it were considerable. In Manchester the athletes' village accommodated 6000 people and the event had 2000 staff.
- Major televised sporting events were beneficial in generating interest in sports, including among young people.
- The Commonwealth Games were particularly important, as they were the only international competition in which Wales competed as a nation.
- In order for Wales to be successful in all areas of sport it was important to avoid concentrating on either elite sports or grass roots investment at the expense of the other; funding should be invested in both.
- The Commonwealth Games Council was a voluntary organisation; it was not a sports governing body. For the Games in Manchester 2002, the Trust provides £7,000 per annum, the Sports Council for Wales had provided £30,000 and sponsors had provided £20,000. The fundraising target of £300,000 was not met but, with cutbacks, the team had managed to compete in the games with the £150,000 that had been raised. [check figures] Myrddin John felt that the support provided to the Welsh team was the envy of the other competitors in the Commonwealth Games.

3.3 In the subsequent question and answer session the following points were made:

- Myrddin John felt that fundraising was difficult in Wales because Welsh businesses preferred to sponsor rugby events while large companies had headquarters in England and tended to target funding there. Mr John did not accept that other UK countries had more success in fundraising because they employed professionals. There had been two previous attempts by the Council to use fundraising professionals and in both cases the Council felt that it did not provide value for money. The Council did not employ a fundraiser at present.
- Mr John felt that the Council provided good value for money in terms of the medals won by Welsh athletes compared to funding levels.
- Owen John Thomas said that he would like to see the sponsorship funding raised by the Council being matched by funds from the Assembly.
- The Committee stressed that it would be encouraging to hear that there was a strategy in place to increase fundraising efforts.
- Delyth Evans said that she was aware of concerns about the quality of the clothing provided to Welsh athletes at the Manchester Games. Mr John disagreed and felt that the Welsh team's equipment had been superior to that of other teams', except for Canada.
- Mr John stated that the timing of the next Commonwealth Games in March rather than August

meant that athletes would be selected on their previous year's performance rather than the current season which would only just be starting. There were plans for the Welsh team to arrive in Melbourne a week prior to the other competitors to acclimatise.

- In response to a question on whether the Council had been involved in discussions with Cardiff City Council about a possible bid for the next Commonwealth Games, Mr John replied that the next possible bid would be the 2014 Games. The team of officials from Melbourne had stayed on in Wales after the Manchester Games and held discussions with Council officials. However there were a range of factors to be taken into account in making a successful bid. Indeed, simply submitting a bid to hold the Games could cost £1million.

3.4 To conclude the discussion the Chair invited all presenters to make general comments on attracting major sporting events to Wales.

3.5 Responses included:

- In all cases, the motivation for regions or countries to host a major sporting event was the potential economic benefits rather than the impact on sports in that area. Attracting one major event to Wales helped to attract others. An events strategy was needed to ensure that Wales was bidding for the right events for the right reasons. A "Team Wales" approach involving all economic partners was essential for bids to succeed.
- The infrastructure, logistics and costs of hosting major events should not be under-estimated. Nor should the potential negative effects of an event which was not properly organised. The process of bidding for an event was also becoming increasingly costly.
- Cardiff was the only city in Wales which could realistically host a Welsh Commonwealth Games because of the need for hotel and other facilities. However additional sporting facilities meeting the Games' technical requirements would be required in and close to Cardiff for a bid to be successful – for example Swansea would be likely to be considered too far from Cardiff to host the swimming competition.
- The potential benefits of major events included: contributing to economic growth, raising the profile of the area and nation in which they were situated; boosting the self-image of the people of that area; and encouraging a culture of volunteering.
- The potential benefits of major sporting events would not be realised if investment focused only on physical infrastructure and overlooked the investment in human resources which was needed. There was no point in providing physical facilities without developing Wales' potential future athletes.

3.6 The Chair thanked the presenters for their time and closed the meeting.

Committee Secretariat November 2002