

SPORT WALES REVIEW AN INDEPENDENT REPORT

JUNE 2017

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Acknowledgements

The Panel would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board, the Chief Executive and the staff for their positive attitude and patience throughout the process. We would also like to extend our thanks to the many stakeholders and partners who gave evidence and did so with honesty and integrity and in the best interests of sport in Wales.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Panel gathered evidence for this review from relevant literature and semi-structured interviews with partners and stakeholders. The interview participants also included Sport Wales Board members and senior management. The key issues that arose from the interviews were summarized in a note, which was considered for fairness and accuracy by Panel members and participants. The notes were triangulated with the Panel's observations from their reading of the literature and the preliminary research undertaken for the previous Sport Wales Chair's review. The data was then analysed to identify common issues that informed the Panel's findings and recommendations.

1.2 The review team received a clear and consistent message from stakeholders that Sport Wales is an organization at a crossroads in its strategic direction and the role it plays in the delivery of the wellbeing goals and government policy. It remains a very strong advocate for sport and is rightly credited for strengthening the governance and leadership of National Governing Bodies. The contribution Sport Wales' elite team has made to the success of Welsh athletes is also recognized and commended by partners. However, the increasing focus on sport's contribution to the wider policy priorities, in a climate of reduced public expenditure budgets, requires Sport Wales to lead the sector through transformational change.

1.3 This review was welcomed by Sport Wales, who saw it as an opportunity to take stock and consider how it can continue to play its part in delivering tangible benefits to people and communities across Wales. That responsibility is not and should not be for Sport Wales alone. The Welsh Government has a duty to make it clear to public sector bodies like Sport Wales what is expected of them for the investment they receive and how that contribution and performance will be measured. It is also for stakeholders and partners to help by respectfully challenging the organization when necessary and engaging fully and genuinely when invited to do so.

1.4 The findings and recommendations of this report relate to the effectiveness and efficiency with which Sport Wales is delivering Welsh Government's desired outcomes. Although the organization is delivering effectively across a range of activities, some clarity is required around its overall purpose and its role in delivering an increase in the population's physical activity levels. How it engages with the sector and other sectors, notably Health and Education, is also a key feature of this report and there is scope for improvements to be made very quickly to address those issues.

1.5 There is a genuine willingness and desire among stakeholders and partners to see Sport Wales as a leading authority on sport in Wales; a source of expertise and leadership to unite the sector and demonstrate sports' value to the health and prosperity of the nation. We believe this report will go some way to helping Sport Wales to fulfil that role.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Sport Wales was established by Royal Charter on the 4 February 1972, with the objectives of "fostering the knowledge and practice of sport and physical recreation among the public at large in Wales and the provision of facilities thereto".

2.2 The organisation is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body receiving annual grant-in-aid as well as additional income generated from its own core business activities. In-addition, Sport Wales is responsible for the distribution of National Lottery funds to both elite and grassroots sport in Wales.

2.3 Sport Wales remains committed to Welsh Government's vision for a physically active and sporting nation, as outlined in their strategies Climbing Higher and Creating an Active Wales and prepares its annual business plan based on an annual remit letter which it receives from Welsh Government. In general terms, the organisation seeks to not only improve the level of sports participation at grassroots level but also to provide Wales' aspiring athletes with the support required to compete successfully on the world stage.

2.4 In February 2017, Welsh Government invited an Independent Panel to examine the strategic intent, purpose and role of Sport Wales in relation to delivering a more active, healthy and successful nation in light of generally stretched public spending budgets.

2.5 In common with all areas of the public sector, Sport Wales is experiencing a reducing financial resource whilst simultaneously being asked to broaden its reach within communities. Bodies such as Sport Wales will need to share outcomes and resources and collectively plan to play their part in delivering against a broader wellbeing agenda for the benefit of the people of Wales. To make the best use of the sport sector's resources and public funds, Ministers wish this review to consider whether Sport Wales is delivering Welsh Government's desired outcomes as efficiently and effectively as possible.

2.6 The programme for government, 'Taking Wales Forward', sets out the Welsh Government's priorities for the next five years. The objectives for sport include increasing the physical activity levels of Welsh citizens in those groups that have very low current activity levels, to contribute to an overall healthier population, and increased well-being outcomes, through to providing sporting pathways for all to elite achievement. Sport and physical activity will be an important element of the Welsh Government's Healthy and Active strategy.

2.7 In reviewing Sport Wales, Welsh Government has requested that the Panel builds upon the work and preliminary research already undertaken for the previous Sport Wales Chair's Review, led by the former Chair, Dr Paul Thomas. In addition, the Panel has sought significant further evidence from a range of partners who either support the vision of Sport Wales or who contribute toward the ambition of a more physically active nation.

2.8 Reporting to the Minister for Social Services and Public Health, the review has been asked to specifically examine:

- The current vision, aspirations and strategic intent of Sport Wales in relation to achieving the government priorities and objectives
- The current Sport Wales strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in the delivery of these government priorities and objectives
- How the delivery of these objectives can support the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- The well-being outcome measures that Sport Wales could contribute to most effect
- Learning and insight from other countries around creating a more active, healthy and successful nation.
- The areas that Sport Wales should be targeting or influencing investment to have the greatest impact against the Welsh Government priorities.
- The appetite and capacity of Sport Wales to create innovative approaches to achieve in its objectives.

KEY THEMES

3. Policy and Strategy

3.1 In this section of the report the Panel explores the current vision, aspirations and strategic intent of Sport Wales in relation to achieving the government priorities. It does so by reflecting on the content of key reference documents and the evidence it has heard from its interviews. The issues that have emerged from its evidence gathering are discussed under several related sub-themes:

Policy

3.2 The document, '**Climbing Higher: A Strategy for Sport and Active Recreation in Wales**' was published twelve years ago, in 2005. It was the first and is the only sport strategy published by the Welsh Government. The strategy provided a vision for sport, articulated its contribution to the wider policy agenda and in particular, to the health of the nation, and set out some ambitious targets for increased participation and elite level success. It was followed by '**Climbing Higher: Next Steps**' in 2006; a document which outlined plans for investing the additional £7.8m secured by 'Climbing Higher' and allocated to the Sport budget over two years in 2007/08 and 2008/09. In the three years following the publication of 'Climbing Higher' the Sport budget increased from £10.36m to £19.91m and was aimed at programmes and activities to support the achievement of the strategy's targets. The current Welsh Government investment into Sport Wales, for 2017-18 is £22.52m

3.3 The 'Climbing Higher' strategy was supplemented by a physical activity action plan, '**Creating an Active Wales**', in 2009. The actions in the plan sought to encourage, facilitate and support people who were inactive to become physically active and those who were active to increase their activity levels or to enjoy a better experience.

3.4 The only policy statement on sport the Welsh Government has made since the publication of 'Climbing Higher', in 2005, was on the subject of elite sport. It followed an independent review in 2008 and triggered the development and publication of Sport Wales' first **Elite Sport Strategy** in 2010, a document that was refreshed in 2015.

3.5 In recent years, the annual **Remit Letter** has served as the vehicle for setting the policy context and priorities for Sport Wales and its budget. The budget has for a number of years only provided an allocation for one financial year.

3.6 'Climbing Higher' is still regarded by those who know of its existence, including the senior management team within Sport Wales, as the policy document that set the long term vision and direction for sport and active recreation in Wales. Others who were not aware of the strategy's existence regarded the sector led 'A Vision for Sport in Wales' as the sport strategy, and its aspirations of 'Every Child Hooked on Sport for Life' and 'A Nation of Champions' (underpinned by its strategies for elite sport, community sport and the workforce) as the key drivers for Sport Wales' activities and

investment priorities. Some even regard the annual Remit Letter as the document that sets the strategic agenda for Sport Wales.

3.7 Whichever document was regarded as the reference point for the strategic policy direction for sport in Wales, there was consensus that the strategy was about sport and its contribution to society, the economy and the health of the nation as well as ‘sport for sport’s sake’. However, while the agenda was clear, there was a lack of clarity in terms of the connection between different parts of Welsh Government and the strategic alignment of policies, outcomes, investment priorities and measures. This was seen to be a major barrier to partners outside Welsh Government understanding their roles and responsibilities and being accountable for their contribution to the policy agenda. The key example here was the respective roles of Sport Wales and Public Health Wales in relation to who was the lead organisation for physical activity and whose research and evidence should be the basis for policy development or intervention, investment priorities and social marketing or advocacy campaigns.

3.8 The perceived silo approach to policy development and investment from Welsh Government led people to believe the impact was too distant for Ministers to prioritise it as a policy area and to commit to longer term funding arrangements. The sector also believed that Ministerial portfolio changes and political landscape changes at Welsh Government made it difficult for it to align itself to the strategic policy agenda.

Reflections

3.9 If the overarching commitment to deliver a healthy and active Wales is to be realised, Welsh Government should provide the leadership to align partners to deliver increased physical activity levels and clarify respective roles, responsibilities and accountability. The ‘what’ has always been very clear to the sector; to increase physical activity levels to benefit people’s health and wellbeing, but the ‘who’, the ‘how’ and the ‘how will we know if we’ve succeeded’ are the components that the sector believes are missing. Most partners are clear on the need to change in response to a changing context but desire policy direction. There is an urgent need for a policy statement to clarify and make accountable the key policy and delivery partners for their respective roles and responsibilities and for Welsh Government to agree shared outcomes, budgets and performance measures and indicators to assess the impact and return on investment of individual departments and their external partners. Progress should be transparent with the performance of departments and external partners reviewed and made public periodically.

Recommendations

- i) Welsh Government should produce a long-term policy statement and strategy for physical activity that clarifies the respective roles and responsibilities of Ministers, departments, agencies, sponsored bodies and others to deliver a healthy and active nation.
- ii) The policy statement/strategy should set out very clearly the shared outcomes, budgets and means by which the performance of all partners should be measured.

- iii) The Sport and Health sectors should be mandated to collaborate effectively on investment, research, social marketing and advocacy to impact positively and sustainably on whole population physical activity levels.

Strategy

3.10 'A Vision for Sport in Wales' (2011) is regarded by many stakeholders in the sector as the strategy for sport and represents a very clear intent by Sport Wales, together with the sector, to deliver on the Welsh Government's physical activity agenda and achieve sporting success at the highest levels. The document states very clearly that it shares the vision articulated by 'Climbing Higher' and 'Creating an Active Wales' and that by producing 'A Vision for Sport in Wales' the sector "...have developed a complementary vision focussing solely on sport's role in delivering on the...wider physical activity agenda." This strategy has been widely shared, clearly communicated and was mentioned by many stakeholders in sport as their strategic reference point.

3.11 The vision for sport in Wales to **unite a proud sporting nation** where **every child is hooked on sport for life** and Wales is a **nation of champions** is supported by 5 key priorities – Sporting Innovation; Skills for Life in Sport; Sporting Communities; Sporting Excellence; and Growing a Skilled & Passionate Workforce. It followed the launch of a Coaching Strategy and Elite Sport Strategy in 2010 (refreshed in 2015) and preceded the Community Strategy and Child Poverty Strategy in 2012. The strategy set out how Sport Wales' approach was changing to deliver the vision by:

- Applying its culture of 'high challenge, high support' to its work with partners;
- Moving beyond traditional liaison activity to a relationship they would facilitate partners to set 'unreasonable ambitions';
- Proactively work with those sports that can make the biggest difference; geared towards a step change from providing opportunities to not the 100s, but the 1000s, and align its investments accordingly - based on evidence and on achieving big outcomes - to ensure it maximises its impact.
- It, and the sector, taking a more innovative approach to delivery, which would involve placing greater emphasis on the need to work with those that can deliver most effectively, from the wider public, private and voluntary sectors.
- Focussing on enabling a significant step change in the scale of community based activity so that anyone can take part in a range of sports locally.
- Building on its renewed commitment to growing the volunteer base through proactively addressing challenges of volunteer recruitment, training, deployment and retention.

3.12 The vision document also explained that the wider sport sector was also on the path to reviewing its approach to delivery; one that represents a growing commitment to being high performing and recognising the importance of collaborating with others. This new culture was about:

- Setting 'unreasonable ambitions'

- Developing strategies, informed by performance insights, to deliver the vision
- Distributed leadership, where there are clear roles and responsibilities set out for all involved in delivering the vision, and people are encouraged to be accountable for their work
- Providing high quality feedback to enable the sport sector to continually improve
- Working as one.

3.13 The intention of 'A Vision for Sport in Wales' was to build on the government's vision and strategy by providing the sport sector with its own strategic direction and focus, the justification for more and better collaboration, and a collective set of priorities. It successfully gained support for the aspirations (the 'strap lines') and Sport Wales aligned its investments to support the priority areas and deliver the published or planned strategies. For some, it filled the perceived lacuna in strategic direction and for others, such as local authorities, it was a helpful input and reference point to support their own strategies for sport and leisure services, but not the main driver as their strategy is developed in a wider context. The overall impression was that the vision was a helpful guide to action but there remained questions over its sustainability, how realistic it was and the level of capacity in the sector to deliver it.

3.14 Some stakeholders believed the vision (as a strategy) failed to properly represent the sector as a whole because it lacked:

- recognition of the unique circumstances, contribution and challenges of Higher Education and local government; and
- clear links to Welsh Government's strategies and objectives and key pieces of legislation.

3.15 Other stakeholders recognised the landscape had changed significantly since the publication of the vision and the supporting strategies and suggested the two major anchor points for a strategic approach were the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Sport Wales Advisory Group publication, 'Acting Today for an Active Tomorrow'. Some also saw value in documents such as 'Setting Sport Up for Success' and 'This is Sport Wales' as a means of understanding their specific role.

Reflections

3.16 During this review the Panel was informed that Sport Wales had, in 2015, begun the process of developing a new strategy with a larger lens but the work was paused due to the appointment of a new Chair. It was also made clear it was still the intention to produce a revised strategy, new investment principles and a performance framework that aligned Sport Wales' measures with the Chief Medical Officer's physical activity guidelines. However, the view was that any further work would be guided by the outcome of this review and any future policy statements or strategies produced by the Welsh Government.

3.17 From evidence received there is undoubtedly a need, willingness and support, for Sport Wales to lead the development of a new overarching strategy that is owned and delivered by the sector. It is important that the strategy provides a clear line of

sight between the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, through the Programme for Government and the purpose and role of Sport and Sport Wales, to the various roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and partners. The new strategy should be 'long-term' and encompass community as well as elite sport but it should be based on a clear and unequivocal policy statement by the Welsh Government that defines the purpose and role of sport in the context of the Future Generations Act and its contribution to the policy for physical activity. Any new strategy for Sport must be based on the opportunities and challenges that exist in communities across Wales and recognise the role and contribution all partners play in its delivery. It should set a clear path from investment and focus, through activity to agreed outcomes that are measured and reported transparently and demonstrate impact that can be linked directly to the goals and objectives of the Future Generations Act.

3.18 The Elite Sport Strategy published in 2010 and refreshed in 2015 is a good example of a policy informed strategy with a clear mandate, priority justification and transparent and aligned goals and targets based on independent research. It requires amendment to reflect the current focus on developing a sustainable performance and talent system and to clarify the benefits of a medal winning approach but it has a sound policy and evidence base for enhancement and provides a useful template for a bespoke community sport or overarching sport strategy.

Recommendations

- i) Sport Wales leads the development of a new, long term, strategy for Sport in Wales that:
 - (a) responds to the policy direction for sport that Welsh Government sets out in the context of its objectives to create a healthy and active Wales;
 - (b) is based on a fully inclusive and transparent consultation and discussion with the sport (in its widest terms) sector and other relevant sectors and organisations, taking into account the wider responsibilities of some delivery partners.
 - (c) establishes a clear line of sight between the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the delivery of community sport and the sporting and performance pathway;
 - (d) encompasses elite as well as community/grass roots sport and clarifies the definition of success and its importance to the wider policy agenda;
 - (e) is linked to partners' strategies where relevant or where shared outcomes exist;
 - (f) includes robust outcomes, metrics and performance framework with ownership clarity, and a transparent investment process.
 - (g) is reviewed independently at periodic intervals.

4. Purpose and Role

4.1 The terms of reference for this Review state that, in the context of reducing public sector budgets, Sport Wales is asked to broaden its reach within communities, to share outcomes and resources with other national bodies and collectively plan to play their part in delivering against a broader wellbeing agenda. That wellbeing agenda includes the objective to increase physical activity levels, and sport is expected to contribute to that objective as well as to others that support the aim to be a successful sporting nation.

4.2 Before considering how effective Sport Wales is in delivering Welsh Government's desired outcomes and priorities in this way, it is important to understand the purpose of the organisation and the role it is perceived to be playing or should be playing.

Purpose

4.3 Sport Wales was established by Royal Charter in 1972 "...with the objects of fostering the knowledge and practice of sport and physical recreation among the public at large and the provision of facilities..." The Charter goes on to say:

"The objects of the Council shall also include supporting, encouraging and fostering the knowledge and development of sport and physical recreation and the achievement of excellence therein among the public at large in Wales and the provision of facilities.

4.4 The powers conveyed upon Sport Wales to further its objectives are:

- to develop and improve the knowledge and practice of and education and training in **sport and physical recreation** in the interests of social welfare among the public at large in Wales;
- to encourage and develop higher standards of **performance** and achievement of **excellence** among persons and teams from Wales participating in sport and physical recreation;
- to foster, support or undertake provision of facilities for the benefit of sport and physical recreation;
- to carry out itself, or to encourage and support other persons or bodies in carrying out, research or studies into matters concerning sport and physical recreation in Wales, and to disseminate knowledge and advice on these matters;
- to encourage, facilitate or undertake the implementation of proposals or findings arising out of such research or studies;
- to advise, encourage and assist individuals and/or teams participating in events or seeking to gain relevant experience at home or abroad;
- to advise and assist and co-operate with the Welsh Government and its departments, local authorities and other bodies on any matters concerned whether directly or indirectly with these objects;
- to make grants or loans upon;

4.5 The Royal Charter also provides that Sport Wales shall have regard to any general statements on the policy of the Welsh Government or National Assembly for Wales and consult the governing or representative bodies of sport and physical recreation, local authorities, and other appropriate bodies in pursuing its objectives and exercising its powers.

4.6 It is clear from the evidence gathered during the course of this Review that the purpose of Sport Wales is driven by the Royal Charter. The perception of that purpose is that it:

- promotes and supports sport and physical activity;
- supports elite athletes and the development of talent;
- provides funding for sport and physical activity;
- provides leadership and direction for sport in Wales;
- supports and works with partners to deliver sport and physical activity.

4.7 There are inconsistencies in terminology in the various reference sources that describe the role of Sport Wales. For example, while the Royal Charter clearly uses the term ‘sport and **physical recreation**’, the Sport Wales website states it is “...the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and **physical activity** in Wales.” and the Vision for Sport in Wales claims its domain within the spectrum of physical activity illustrated in ‘Creating an Active Wales’ is ‘**Sport**’ and ‘**Active Recreation**’. The Community Sport Strategy omits any term other than ‘Sport’, which also features alone in the ‘hooked’ target in the ‘Vision for Sport in Wales’, while successive annual Remit Letters have interchanged between ‘physical activity’ and ‘physical recreation’.

4.8 This inconsistency is very confusing for Sport Wales’ partners, some of whom claimed the organisation is ‘changeable’ and lacking in clarity of purpose. It is equally confusing for Sport Wales’ staff who liaise with partners and are expected to deliver consistent messages about the organisation’s objectives and priorities.

Physical Activity and Health and Wellbeing

4.9 There was some disappointment among partners that despite the introduction of a Memorandum of Understanding with the NHS Confederation very little progress had been made to establish a platform for collaboration between the sport and health sectors. Some were still confused about the role of sport in the context of the physical activity agenda, particularly in terms of the sector’s expected contribution, the correlation between the hooked on sport measure and the CMO guidelines and how the impact of each organisation was to be measured and how they would be held accountable. They saw this more as an issue for Welsh Government than for Sport Wales and pointed to the need for absolute clarity in terms of the role and responsibilities of Sport Wales and how they were different from other organisations such as Public Health Wales and Natural Resources Wales.

4.10 Despite this lack of clarity, Sport Wales, to their credit, have continued to seek out opportunities to support and connect traditional and non-traditional partners through the Calls4Action scheme to deliver physical activity projects. The scheme

seeks to tackle the obstacles that prevent specific groups from participating in community sport, recognising the need to improve facilities, skills and access. The second phase of Calls4Action specifically targeted under-represented groups, improving access to facilities and providing individuals with opportunities to develop the right skills to be physically active. One of the projects funded in phase 1 created a partnership between Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Disability Sport Wales to increase the number of physically active disabled people across North Wales and to reduce their needs for medical intervention as a consequence of physical inactivity. Phase 2 of the scheme saw a variety of project partners coming together to tackle the barriers faced by women and girls, opportunities for people with disabilities, BME communities and young people living in poverty. Those partners included a National Parks Authority, MIND Cymru, a Housing Association and street Football Wales.

4.11 It was acknowledged that the Health sector had lead responsibility for physical activity but there was recognition that Sport Wales and its partners had an important role to play in increasing physical activity levels. The impact was an ongoing discussion framed by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) act 2015 and 'Taking Wales Forward', the Welsh government's programme for government. The questions that arose during our interviews were:

- which areas and issues should Sport Wales be expected to lead and which ones should be led by others.
- how is sport defined and what should be the balance of focus between traditional and competitive sport versus non-traditional, informal and un-structured activity.
- Who is responsible for seeking to increase the physical activity levels of the inactive population.
- How is impact measured to compare progress against each area of the physical activity spectrum and who is accountable for those areas.

4.12 The 'Getting Wales Moving' physical activity plan has recently been published and sets a clear focus for all partners under a number of policy areas. Sport Wales is one of a number of partners with a specific role to play through sport. Public Health Wales has been working with partners to develop measures for the physical activity spectrum to reduce health inequalities, which are currently out to consultation.

4.13 It was suggested Sport Wales' role was to deliver population level outcomes through sport and to work with schools to facilitate a more prominent role for physical activity and physical literacy in the National curriculum. They were also seen to have a role in supporting and co-ordinating the sector to deliver against the wider physical activity and wellbeing agenda but should not be regarded as the leading authority or be responsible for increasing physical activity levels among the inactive population; a role which Public Health Wales saw themselves playing.

Role

4.14 One of the major successes that Sport Wales has achieved over recent years is to lead and support the modernisation of National Governing Bodies of Sport. Many now have a Board that is diverse in experience and expertise and Chief Executives or General Managers who are proven leaders who have had varied roles in and outside the sector.

4.15 The local authority landscape has changed dramatically in the last 10 years and very few now have Chief Officers who are solely responsible for sport and leisure. Their roles can be much broader, budgets much tighter and they may be expected to deliver more with less or indeed to deliver less. As a result, the traditional sports development officer has all but disappeared or at least the responsibilities of the role have changed so much that they are more about developing healthy and active people than traditional sport.

4.16 There was general consensus that as a result of these changes and shift in the policy landscape and government priorities that it was timely for Sport Wales to review its role and the way it works with partners to deliver national outcomes through sport. Later in this report, we make reference to some insight we came across in relation to one of Sport Wales' counterparts, SportScotland. There may be some lessons to be learnt from that experience which came about at the time Scotland was preparing for the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow and developing a legacy that put physical activity centre-most in their priorities.

4.17 One of the challenges an organisation like Sport Wales faces is achieving a balance between its function as a grant provider or investor and that of an advocate, a facilitator and a uniting force for the sector. Developing partnerships was sometimes difficult when the same organisation or people were required to check and challenge partners and, in some cases, withdraw funding.

4.18 Fundamentally, the view of Sport Wales' partners was that the organisation should be seen to be adding value; to be experts in their field, a critical friend, a source of advice, evidence and insight, and influential as a conduit to other sectors and policy departments in government or to external experts who could provide insight and added value. Instead, the perception was it was a grant funder, or investor, who was quite prescriptive and inflexible in its funding decisions, did not take account of the wider priorities of the funding recipient, and who prioritised competitive, performance and elite sport over community sport.

4.19 Partners wanted to see a Sport Wales with a clear vision for sport in Wales that was aligned with government priorities, unambiguous in its purpose and that of the sector, and an organisation that was well connected to the world outside sport, transparent in its decision-making and creative and innovative in using insight to develop solutions to the barriers and challenges faced by the sector.

Function and Scope

4.20 Our evidence suggests that to separate community sport from elite sport would be unwise, despite the claim that there was, until recently, very little joint working between the two teams who lead on these areas in Sport Wales. It was agreed that while someone else could arguably provide the elite athlete support function, and the elite team itself could be based elsewhere, community and elite sport were inextricably linked and should remain with one body.

4.21 In England, Sport Wales' counterpart, Sport England has a twin portfolio approach in which it supports NGBs to deliver sport, and other partners to deliver physical activity or to turn inactivity into activity. Sport Wales operates a mixed portfolio approach where NGBs can be supported to provide the infrastructure and systems for both formal and informal versions of the sport and the performance pathway into elite sport, and also be funded to deliver interventions to address poverty, equalities and other policy priorities. It also funds local authorities and other partners to deliver physical activity/recreation opportunities. The challenge for Sport Wales in the context of the new policy agenda is achieving a balance in strategic direction and investment to ensure the infrastructures for sustained sport and physical recreation can be maintained alongside the development of a broader offer and new activities.

Elite Sport

4.22 Another of Sport Wales' success stories is the contribution the elite team has made to Wales' impressive record of medal hauls in consecutive Commonwealth Games and the success of Welsh athletes competing in recent Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, as well as other world and international competitions.

4.23 The success of Sport Wales' elite team lay not just in the quality of the support it provided to athletes but the strategic direction it worked to and the close and effective relationship it had with National Governing Bodies and the athletes, coaches and Performance Directors. The role of the elite team connects well with government policy because it is directly linked to the review commissioned and managed by Welsh Government in 2008. The first Elite Sport Strategy, in 2010, was developed as a result of a policy statement by Welsh Government and was endorsed by Ministers. The strategy was refreshed and relaunched with some subtle changes in 2015 but remains consistent with the policy statement of nearly 10 years ago.

4.24 While the Welsh Government policy statement is still current, Sport Wales recognise that in a time of competing priorities and reducing budgets, it needs to elaborate on why success is relevant in the context of today's societal challenges. Accordingly, the team has begun two strands of work; one to gather evidence to demonstrate the wider benefits of medal success and another to create a system that provided access and opportunity for everyone to succeed in their chosen sport. There is now an opportunity to refresh the policy statement and to enhance the outcomes elite sport can deliver once that work is completed.

4.25 The Elite Sport Strategy did not include major events as a focus because the stated benefits were about the economy and not about sports participation or performance. Sport Wales were able to provide some input in terms of the potential

links between an event and the development of a sport but that was after the decision had been made to bid for the event. Mega events were more likely to stimulate interest in sport and provide it with a profile that the sector should benefit from. Achieving a sports development impact, in addition to economic benefits, from a major event was more challenging

Reflections

4.26 Sport Wales is expected to broaden its reach within communities, to share outcomes and resources with other national bodies and collectively plan to play their part in delivering against a broader wellbeing agenda. That wellbeing agenda includes the objective to increase physical activity levels and sport is expected to contribute to that objective as well as to others that include the aim to be a successful sporting nation.

4.27 The policy landscape and the professionalism and extended remit of Sport Wales' partners has changed sufficiently to warrant some reflection on its purpose and role, what it needs to do differently and the ways in which it should work to maximise it and the sector's contribution to the new agenda. Clarity of purpose and an unambiguous definition of its role and that of its partners are crucial but that is a responsibility that should be shared between Welsh Government, Sport Wales and the sector. As we have stated earlier in this report, Sport Wales had begun to consider their strategic direction and their impact against the wellbeing goals prior to this review. We would suggest that work continues in earnest but it is done so by consulting widely not just on why it exists but what it does, why it does it and how it does it.

4.28 Despite the policy responsibility for community and elite sport lying with different Ministers in the Welsh Government, there is no reasonable justification for separating the functions but it is very clear from the evidence we have heard there are opportunities to bring the community and elite support teams closer together and to breakdown silos to maximise their impact.

4.29 In the light of the elite team's work on system development and gathering evidence to explain why medals are important, there will be an opportunity to refresh Welsh Government's policy statement on elite sport to properly reflect the contribution sporting success makes to the wellbeing goals.

4.30 At the beginning of this section it was noted that there was potential for the elite athlete support function to be located elsewhere. This particular issue is discussed later in this report but it is worth mentioning here that this was viewed as a positive option by Sport Wales, who recognise that the space at the National Centre will at some point in the future be insufficient to cater for the type of equipment and level of service athletes will require to be prepared for success.

Recommendations

- i. Welsh Government should clarify the purpose of Sport Wales and the role it and the sport sector is expected to play in the delivery of the wellbeing goals and objectives.

- ii. Welsh Government should clearly define Sport Wales' domain within the physical activity spectrum and what it will be held accountable for in terms of the wellbeing objectives.
- iii. Sport Wales should engage early and fully with its partners and stakeholders to clarify its role in the new policy landscape and how it will add value to the contribution the wider sector is making to ensure sport maximises its contribution to the wellbeing goals.
- iv. Welsh Government should revisit its policy statement on elite sport following the completion of the work Sport Wales has identified to explain why medal success is important.

5. The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

5.1 The Act seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The seven goals of the Act are:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
- A globally responsible Wales

5.2 The Act requires the public bodies listed in the legislation, which includes Sport Wales, to adopt five ways of working:

- ensure the need to address short-term needs is balanced with the need to meet long-term needs.
- take actions that prevent problems occurring or getting worse, rather than just dealing with the consequences of problems.
- act to help other bodies achieve the goals in the Act and avoid actions that might prevent them from doing so.
- work with others to achieve the wellbeing goals.
- involve people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals and ensure those people reflect the diversity of the people of Wales.

5.3 It also requires those public bodies to do what they do in a sustainable way, to make sure their decisions take into account the impact they could have on people living in Wales in the future.

5.4 The Act also established Public Services Boards (PSBs) for each local authority area in Wales to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of its area by working towards the wellbeing goals. The Members of each PSB must include the local authority, local health board, Welsh Fire and rescue Authority for the area and the Natural Resources body for Wales. In addition, each PSB must invite others to participate on the board and they include Welsh Ministers, the Chief Constable responsible for any part of the local authority area, the Police and Crime Commissioner, at least one body representing relevant voluntary organisations and other people who carry out public functions. The PSB must prepare a Local Wellbeing Plan that sets out its objectives and the steps it will take to meet them, consult widely on that plan, publish it and undertake an annual review of progress.

5.5 Sport Wales is required to set well-being objectives which maximise its contribution to achieving the goals of the Act in a way that meets the sustainable development principle (five ways of working). It should also articulate very clearly how it will ensure that everything it does, all that it facilitates or influences and the

organisations it funds will have a beneficial impact on people living their lives in Wales in the future.

Sport Wales' Contribution

5.6 There was a good understanding within Sport Wales of the Act and the duty placed on the organisation. There were some skills gaps among the Board's membership in terms of its understanding of the full contribution Sport Wales could make but that was being addressed through a skills audit. Independent members on its sub-groups, who usefully brought another perspective to their discussions, also supported the Board.

5.7 There were certain goals Sport Wales were more closely aligned to but the Act required the organisation to maximise its contribution to all the wellbeing goals and that it should consider the wider impact of its actions. It was suggested that while Sport Wales should focus on the areas of their responsibility that could have the greatest impact on the wellbeing goals, they should seek to collaborate with others where there was synergy to be achieved between outcomes. A practical example might be a collaboration project to provide opportunities for people to enjoy cycling as a form of exercise that would give them the motivation and confidence to cycle to work via cost-effective cycle routes – an example of contributing to a Healthier, More Prosperous and Resilient Wales.

5.8 It was acknowledged that the contribution sports participation made to the physical activity agenda was the most important aspect of Sport Wales' role and that preventing or reducing the impact of adverse childhood experiences for children and young people should be a priority area of focus. Equally, it was suggested that the ageing population was perhaps an untapped area for attention and investment and one which could have a significant impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of older people which could reduce health and social care costs as well as supporting people to work and live longer.

5.9 Because of their make-up, Public Service Boards (PSBs) were a vehicle for making connections between partners and sectors and having an impact across a range of wellbeing objectives for their area. It was a challenge for some public sector bodies to be represented on all 22 but those who can make an impact in terms of delivery could benefit from having a say in discussions about how local policies and decisions might be changed or new ways of working should be developed. Some public bodies were already reaping the rewards of being a member of PSBs because of its common purpose and the need to think and act collaboratively in the interests of their communities.

Leadership and Advocacy

5.10 While Sport Wales had discussed internally its duties under the Act and the opportunities it presented for better collaboration and greater impact in the areas of its responsibilities that contribute to the wellbeing goals, there had been very little engagement with the sector. Very recently, there has been a wider consultation with partners on how Sport Wales might impact on the wellbeing goals and the NGB Chief Executive Officer Forum had received a presentation on the Act from Sport Wales, which they found very helpful and informative. However, many NGBs and other

partners were still not clear what was expected of them, which partners or sectors they should be connecting with and where they can have the greatest impact. One of their concerns was that while there were obvious areas where their activities could contribute to the wellbeing goals, such as volunteering and physical literacy, their resources and capacity to contribute more widely was limited unless it was proportional and as a partner of others.

Reflections

5.11 The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 presents an opportunity for public bodies to work across boundaries and more collaboratively with each other to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of people and communities across Wales. This will not happen unless there is greater clarity of respective roles and responsibilities, an understanding of where those bodies can have the greatest impact and who they should be working with to maximise the impact of their activities across other goals.

5.12 Sport Wales has begun the process of developing its own objectives and assessing where it can have impact but the status of the projects is unclear. These are two important pieces of work that could help shape the focus for Sport Wales' activities and be the basis upon which partnerships with the sport and other sectors could be developed or enhanced to make a significant contribution to the wellbeing goals. Equally important is the need for a clear articulation of the steps Sport Wales will take to achieve those goals and what it means in terms of what it does differently and the ways of working it will adopt.

5.13 Sport Wales has begun to engage a number of its partners in discussions about the sector-wide contribution to the Act. They are keen to understand their roles, where they should focus their attention and which partners they should be seeking to collaborate with.

5.14 The Public Service Boards appear to be a vehicle for connecting local delivery with local strategic objectives that impact on the wellbeing goals. As well as providing a conduit for Sport Wales' partners to demonstrate impact and value it would seem to present an ideal opportunity for better and meaningful collaboration without stretching limited capacity and resources. While Sport Wales might not be able to be represented on every PSB, it would seem prudent to engage with them to understand and share their objectives and the partner engagement opportunities with NGBs and others.

Recommendations

- i Sport Wales should complete and continue to share the work they have done on the wellbeing objectives and impact with their partners.
- ii Sport Wales should provide leadership to the sector by facilitating discussions to identify where the sector should be focusing its investments and efforts and where are the partners in other sectors they should be seeking to collaborate with.
- iii The wellbeing outcomes and ways of working should be embedded within all aspects of Sport Wales' responsibilities and activities, including its strategy/strategies and business plans.

- iv Assessment tools should be developed to measure the sector's impact and social return on investment and should form part of the evaluation of progress towards the wellbeing objectives Sport Wales sets itself.
- v In defining its wellbeing objectives, Sport Wales should identify the partners who are critical to their delivery, where they might be integrated to deliver additional outcomes and who is accountable for delivery.
- vi Sport Wales should, as far as possible, engage with other public sector bodies such as Public Health Wales to develop joint objectives and impact measures where appropriate.
- vii Sport Wales should seek an effective and efficient mechanism for understanding, sharing and influencing PSBs objectives and the partner engagement opportunities with NGBs and others.

6. Performance Measures and Investment Priorities

Budget and Planning Cycle

6.1 The annual budget, remit and planning cycle begins during the Welsh Government's Budget Planning Round. Once the budget for Sport Wales has been agreed, the Remit Letter is prepared, discussed with Sport Wales and agreed with Ministers. The Remit Letter confirms the annual budget and describes what is expected of Sport Wales to meet the strategic agenda and maximise its impact against the wellbeing outcomes. It should also provide indicators against which sport Wales' performance will be measured during the year and at year-end.

6.2 In reality, the cycle is not always synchronised and Sport Wales, in the knowledge of its likely budget, prepares its Business Plan in advance of receiving the Remit Letter and annexes the document to the final draft. Sport Wales' ability to draft a business Plan in advance of the Remit Letter is assisted by the iterative process Sports Policy officials adopt during the drafting stage. Consequently, there are very few, if any surprises in the Remit Letter when the Chair receives it and very few amendments to make to the draft Business Plan Sport Wales would have already prepared.

6.3 The annual Business Plan requires Ministerial approval and is then subject to periodic scrutiny during Quarterly Management Meetings between Sport Wales and its Sponsor Division when progress against financial projections and objectives are discussed. The Quarterly Management Meetings are also the forum for sharing changing Welsh Government priorities and to ensure they are reflected in Sport Wales' plans and activities.

6.4 More recent Remit Letters have referred to the need to develop a performance management framework to allow for a more meaningful assessment of Sport Wales' performance against objectives. Those objectives have typically been in the form of specific actions as opposed to targets or indicators and the reason for that is the infrequency of any published data against which to set targets or measure progress. The Schools Sport Survey and the Active Adult Survey have in the past been the source of data against which some level of analysis of performance has been judged but by the time the surveys were published, the data was sometimes two years old so as an annual measurement of performance, was of limited use. The same applies to elite sport indicators, which were typically medal targets for Commonwealth Games that occurred every 4 years, which on their own do not reflect the impact and performance of Sport Wales.

6.5 Some have suggested that the data collected by Sport Wales through their surveys and partner management reports are blunt tools and the sector would benefit more from evidence that demonstrated a social return on investment. It was even suggested the survey data were merely a means through which Sport Wales justified its existence by claiming a modest cumulative percentage increase every two years.

6.6 The 'Hooked on Sport' target of 75% of young people and young adults participating in sport three times a week was also a blunt measure that concerned

partners. It was claimed that while it was a reasonable ambition, it ultimately did not correlate with the Chief Medical Officers guidelines for physical activity and was therefore of limited use to partners in demonstrating their impact across the wider policy agenda and to potential partners in other sectors.

6.7 Because of the financial uncertainty in the public sector in recent years, the budgets set for all Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies are for one financial year only. This restricts organisations like Sport Wales in making any long-term plans or investments and has a knock-on effect for the partners they fund and in particular, some of the NGBs who rely heavily on Sport Wales' grant funding. There are also consequences for local authority partners who employ staff to deliver Sport Wales community programmes and an annual scenario of job uncertainty based on timescales for approval of funding proposals.

6.8 The business planning process in Sport Wales is initiated by the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors and presented as iterative drafts to the Board for consideration. The Board is supported in its consideration of the draft business plan by the various sub-boards whose membership includes independent people with expertise in the area the sub-board is responsible for. The draft Business Plan is not subject to consultation with partners.

Investment Priorities

6.9 Some regarded the investment approach as bureaucratic and rigid and said they would welcome an approach which allowed partners to submit business cases for funding that were assessed against a set of investment principles, relevant but proportionate outcomes and key performance indicators. There was a view that longer-term funding agreements that allowed time for creative ideas to be tested would also be helpful and would signal confidence and trust in partners. It was also suggested that a joint approach to project and programme funding where there were synergies between departments or teams would ensure investments are spread more generously and sufficiently to create a greater impact.

6.10 Sport Wales was commended for the managed risk approach it adopted for the Lottery funded Calls4action grant scheme. While it was acknowledged the same approach to using Welsh Government funding might be more difficult, partners said they would welcome the opportunity to access funding that was more flexible to allow them to seek innovative solutions to challenges without the risk of being penalised if they were not successful. There was support for Lottery funding in the form of the existing Community Chest scheme and the Development Grant to be used as a community development tool instead, where investments were more proactive than reactive. This suggestion was mirrored by others who thought a challenge fund (of capital and revenue funding) as well as 'core' funding would encourage partners to look for bespoke solutions to sport specific or local community challenges.

6.11 The view of some we interviewed was that supporting inactive people to become active was a behavioural change issue that was best managed locally rather than nationally and by others, not Sport Wales. They suggested that public investment in sport should be targeting infrequent and irregular participants in physical activity, where significant health gains could be made.

6.12 Some proposed that in 5-10 years time NGBs should be less reliant on the public purse but they needed help to achieve that; to be more business minded, to develop ideas and bring them to market. There was likely to be a polarisation, with those who can deliver against wider agendas becoming stronger and those who cannot, losing out. Governing Bodies with less capacity, resources and expertise to be more creative and commercial would welcome more support and advice from Sport Wales.

6.13 The elite sport focus was on system building and the talent pathway, which meant there was very little flexibility for NGBs to use their funding for anything else. The sports science service was prioritised to support athletes with medal potential so other athletes that needed support had to be supported by the NGB. Another example of the inflexibility of NGB grant funding was the insistence that the Sport Wales National Centre was the only option for meeting any accommodation needs even though some NGBs might want a presence at Plas Menai.

6.14 With the increasing focus in the public and Third sectors on new ways of working and doing more with less, some proposed Sport Wales could be more proactive in encouraging clubs to share facilities, resources and volunteers. One example offered was a funding programme or set of funding principles that favoured multi-sport clubs or club mergers would provide a breadth of sporting opportunities in communities where the sports offer was limited and would help clubs become more sustainable.

6.15 The evidence base for certain investment programmes was an area of concern to some, especially those like 5x60 that target children and young people but do not seem to have had the impact that was envisaged when they were first introduced. It was noted that some programmes had been evaluated but the results were not made public and the learning from the evaluations was not shared widely. The approach by the elite team to invest in the Welsh Institute of Performance Sport – a group of Higher Education academic experts in various fields of sports science, was commended and some suggested a similar arrangement for community sport might be beneficial.

Commercialisation Strategy

6.16 The commercialisation work that Sport Wales began some 12 months ago was of interest to some partners. They were interested in knowing what assets Sport Wales owned that had a commercial value and how the strategy would assist them in generating commercial income. We understand Sport Wales has agreed the Welsh Sports Association was better placed to lead on developing a strategy for the sector and allocated some funding to them for that purpose. In parallel, Sport Wales appointed a project manager to consider the commercial opportunities available to Sport Wales and began the process of setting up a subsidiary company as a vehicle for generating income from commercial activities and initiatives and campaigns.

Community Sport and Activity Programme

6.17 This particular issue was raised in several interviews and understandably, given its significant implications for Sport Wales, local authorities and other partners. Generally speaking, there was support for the concept of a regional approach to community sport and it was clear from what we heard that the North Wales local authorities were keen to implement the business case for Sport North Wales, having redeveloped the principles and approach. However, the evidence suggests there are some significant issues yet to be resolved and that is why the programme is currently on hold.

6.18 Sport Wales acknowledged one of the risks was the loss of income to local authorities from the grant they provided for development posts and they were seeking to mitigate a negative impact. The other risk was that the procurement process would not be as competitive as Sport Wales would like so it was important to test the market as soon as possible by seeking expressions of interest.

6.19 There had clearly been a great deal of work by Sport Wales to bring forward a business case for change, which was based on the need to do things differently to create a sustainable, resilient and efficient delivery model for community sport. There was an obvious frustration on the part of some that the programme had been paused but there was an acknowledgement too that further work on the outcomes framework was required to reflect Welsh Government priorities and provide alignment with the wellbeing objectives.

6.20 The key issues of concern surrounding the CSAP appear to be:

- The extent to which the sector had been consulted and understood what was being proposed/what the model would look like.
- Whether the full financial implications had been considered, particularly staff costs resulting from a potential change in the delivery model for community sport.
- What other models had been considered and why was the current model the preferred way forward.
- The discussions have focused only on Sport Wales investments into community sport and the models would be enhanced if more global partner investment beyond grants could be committed and the value recognised.
- The suggestion that the existing model of community sport is all bad and no recognition of where examples of good practice exist and the potential for an alternative approach, such as the Gwent Partnership.
- The implications of facility access and/or cost, if a preferred host is not a local authority or local authority partnership.
- The potential for creating more layers of bureaucracy and reducing the level of investment reaching the coalface.
- The prescriptive nature of the outcomes.
- With schools being the main beneficiaries of Sport Wales funding, should the education sector not be part of the consultation and engagement process.

- Whether a body other than a local authority would have the structures in place to provide the necessary ‘back-office’ and corporate functions for a commissioning entity.
- Why a procurement process was being considered if the reality was that only a local authority or collaboration between local authorities was the only feasible option.

Reflections

6.21 It would appear that while there is a very clear process in place for agreeing Sport Wales’ budget and setting its priorities, the timing of the Remit Letter is key to whether or not the different parts are synchronised. While there are legitimate reasons for only providing an annual budget, this does not provide Sport Wales with the opportunity to make long-term strategic investments or funding commitments, which in turn impact on their partners’ ability to plan strategically or set outcomes instead of short term outputs.

6.22 During this review the Panel has heard that an outcomes framework is being developed to provide a clearer line of sight between the strategic priorities and objectives of Sport Wales and those of Welsh Government. We have also heard that Sport Wales is working with Public Health Wales to develop performance indicators that are aligned with the Chief Medical Officer’s physical activity guidelines. What we’ve also discovered is that the current metrics used by Sport Wales to measure the performance of their partners are not as robust as they could be and an approach where the social return on investment was considered would be useful in leveraging investment from other sectors.

6.23 The approach Sport Wales took with the Calls4Action programme was seen as a refreshing departure from the norm. Comments from partners suggest they would welcome more flexibility in the criteria for core and programme funding and the ability to access capital and revenue funds that allow them to be creative and innovative.

6.24 The evaluation of programmes is an issue that appears to be worthy of some consideration but we are aware this is something that has been raised in the 2017-18 Remit Letter. It is interesting that the elite team have established a research group of higher education academics to inform their insight into sports science and technology developments and offer solutions to athlete preparation and performance issues.

6.25 In reality, based on the evidence provided, a local authority or a collaboration between local authorities might have to be the CSAP preferred host because of the costs involved in setting up a new company (HR, Finance etc.) and funding the associated costs with a new staffing model – the transition costs could be significant and potentially swallow up a significant proportion of the grant awarded by Sport Wales.

6.26 There appear to be several issues to resolve before the Community Sport and Activity Programme proceeds to a trial or early adopter stage. Fundamentally, the main concern appears to be whether in fact there is a market because of the structure and costs involved and whether added value at a community level can be

achieved. While there is support for a regional model concept, from the evidence received, there is perhaps a presumption that the only feasible structure is one that mirrors other sectors like the Youth service or Education Consortia and is a regionalisation of local authority community sport teams.

Recommendations

- i. The Welsh Government should issue the annual Remit Letter in a timely fashion to allow for a synchronised budget planning process.
- ii. Sport Wales should ensure its Business Plan properly reflects and reports against the contents of the Remit Letter and should be published and shared with partners.
- iii. The Welsh Government should include an outcomes framework and performance indicators in the Remit Letter to allow for more meaningful management of Sport Wales' performance against sector specific and integrated wellbeing objectives.
- iv. The Welsh Government should provide a longer-term budget to allow Sport Wales to plan strategically its investments and activities to deliver agreed objectives and outcomes.
- v. Sport Wales should consider using measurement tools to assess the social return on their investments in partners and programmes.
- vi. A more flexible and mixed funding approach should be considered by Sport Wales to allow for creativity, innovation and sport specific or local needs based solutions.
- vii. There should be agreement between Sport Wales and the WSA on who is to lead the commercialisation programme for NGBs.
- viii. Sport Wales should adopt a more transparent approach to programme evaluation and consider the value of academic input from the Higher Education Sector to inform its research and evaluation strategy.
- ix. The Community Sport and Activity Programme should be subject to further consideration by Sport Wales and the Welsh Government in the light of the concerns identified in this report.

7. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships

WG Departments and Other Organisations

7.1 The general perception was that Sport Wales' officers had a good working relationship with the Sponsor Department. The experience of the Sponsor Department officials and their depth of knowledge of Sport Wales and sector were perceived as being helpful in forging relationship with other WG Departments and sectors. There was, however, some disappointment with the progress Sport Wales had made in articulating a convincing argument for the contribution sport makes to Education and Health. There was a suggestion that the lack of robust evidence, the language used in discussions or the over-ambition and over-confidence may have created barriers to developing collaborative approaches.

7.2 The relationship with and role of Public Health Wales was of particular interest to some. The organisation itself was very clear about the differences between them and Sport Wales but some partners were confused about where the responsibility for physical activity rested.

The Sport Sector

7.3 Sport Wales's officers across the organisation were valued by partners for their commitment, support and desire to make a difference. Many had worked for Sport Wales for many years and their networks were an asset to the organisation and the sector as a whole.

7.4 There was recognition by Sport Wales that in the light of the new policy landscape and financial climate, transformational rather than transactional discussions with partners were required. The relationship required better understanding of each others' roles, responsibilities, challenges and opportunities and although it was difficult to achieve, there needed to be the right balance between the check and challenge function and the role of adviser and source of expertise. It was suggested that because of the nature of the role, there was a risk some officers became too close or too involved in the sports they were working with.

7.5 One of the criticisms of Sport Wales was the amount of additional information they require NGBs to produce that is of little value but carries a significant resource implication, which for smaller organisations is disproportionate to the level of investment they receive. The absence of any business reasons for requiring certain information, the lack guidance, or any evidence the information had been used was a frustration for some. It was however a relationship that had evolved and Sport Wales were commended for the investment they had made in helping NGBs to improve their governance, to attract people with diverse skills and expertise to their boards and to executive positions. Now the NGBs had this level of professionalism within their organisation, the relationship was less parent: child but still not quite the adult: adult one that the NGB's desired; a relationship where they were trusted to pursue their objectives without the need for Sport Wales' presence at all board meetings and other forums.

7.6 The level of support that performance directors and athletes receive from the Sport Wales Institute was regarded as one of the key strengths of the organisation

and the close relationship it had developed with NGBs. There was an acknowledgement from Sport Wales that they had sometimes claimed credit for elite level success that should have been attributed to or shared with others but they were conscious it could create a negative perception and were addressing it.

7.7 The relationship with the Welsh Sports Association (WSA) was another that some partners thought required more clarity. There were good examples of where WSA could add value and represent the sector successfully, such as the work being driven by them on developing a commercialisation strategy.

7.8 The overriding impression received from partners was that Sport Wales had a very important role to play but it was a different one from that they have played to date. It was one that would add considerable value but required a change in behaviour; a greater level of trust and recognition and a genuine attempt to engage and collaborate, to co-ordinate and unite the sector and be less insular in the way it works. One of the ways in which Sport Wales has demonstrated these behaviours is in their work on facilities; producing a blueprint to guide strategic investment and decisions, and working with NGBs to produce a collaborative investment in 3G pitches and to influence facility development proposals under various Welsh Government programmes such as the 21st Century Schools Building Programme. Another positive example of early engagement with NGBs is the approach to the development of the 'Four Worlds Model'.

7.9 Local Authorities valued the relationship they had with Sport Wales but felt they were being distanced more and more from decisions on programmes they were expected to deliver. There was a view that Sport Wales tended to tell more than listen and were less inclined these days to lead on strategic issues; issues like the results based accountability measure for swimming they developed in consultation with local authorities. There was an element of frustration in the reluctance of Sport Wales to work with local authorities on workforce issues and national standards, another example where they could demonstrate leadership and a co-ordination role that is missing in the sector. The advice local authorities received from their liaison officers was mostly positive and constructive but the officers had limited or no authority to make any decisions at regional meetings and there were occasions when communication was inconsistent with messages other local authorities or partners were receiving. The perception was that Sport Wales' presence at the meetings was as a funding partner, to check and challenge, rather than to facilitate and support and added little value to the discussions.

7.10 The move to a regional structure in the Gwent area and Sport Wales' agreement to a different reporting arrangement and budget structures was a good example of how the partnership should work. The Gwent Partnership was initiated by Caerphilly County Borough Council's Sports Development team some five years ago following a conversation with Sport Wales about local authorities working more effectively and collaboratively with each other. One of the key drivers was reducing the level of bureaucracy and number of meetings involved in the process of securing and monitoring Sport Wales funding.

7.11 The Chief Officers in the Gwent local authorities had always worked collaboratively at a strategic level but because of the competitive nature of sports development, they did not always focus on sharing good practice or lessons from successes and failures. The partnership has grown organically but has been driven by the local authority partners and is the reason for its success. The collaboration was not forced but was based on a genuine willingness to work together and learn from each other.

7.12 The perception of Sport Wales' relationship with the Further and Higher Education sectors was that it was still largely untapped and the contribution they make to community and elite sport in Wales was not fully recognised. The view was that the sectors could play a more prominent role in producing research and evaluation to strengthen the evidence on the social and economic impact of sport. They also considered themselves to be a major contributor to the talent identification and development system in Wales, supporting athletes at various stages of their careers in and after sport.

7.13 Sport Wales' relationship with the Third sector is quite limited but it does fund Urdd Gobaith Cymru and StreetGames as national partners. Relationships have been developed in recent years with the Welsh Language Commissioner and there is scope to do more to support the Welsh Government's targets for increasing the use of Welsh and the number of Welsh speakers in sport.

7.14 The Panel is aware that Sport Wales has in the past conducted Partner Participation Surveys but the last one was in 2013 and there is little evidence to suggest they were subject to Board consideration, acted upon or published publicly with any response to the findings.

Reflections

7.15 Sport Wales' relationships with stakeholders and partners are mixed but have improved in recent years. There is undoubtedly a need for them to engage earlier when developing new initiatives or ways of working and to demonstrate that they have listened and considered views and concerns during that consultation phase. The disappointment partners expressed about the lack of influence over Health and Education is understandable given the focus and effort that has been invested but it is unfair to lay the blame solely with Sport Wales. The importance of clarifying respective roles and responsibilities and agreeing integrated objectives with partners in other sectors is key to any future success in this area and it is an issue we have addressed earlier in this report.

7.16 The relationship between the Sport Wales elite team and NGBs is seen as a very positive and collaborative but Sport Wales is aware of the perception that they may appear to take too much credit for elite sport success and it is something they are seeking to address.

7.17 The level of perceived bureaucracy NGBs and local authorities experience was noted. So too was the desire for a more mature relationship where they were trusted to plan and deliver agreed objectives without the need for Sport Wales' presence at every regional, Board or network meeting. Local authorities were

particularly frustrated by Sport Wales lack of recognition of their wider responsibilities and the significant funding they invest in creating community sport opportunities, managing and maintaining facilities and supporting clubs, volunteers and NGBs. We also heard evidence to suggest Sport Wales' sometimes used funding as a control mechanism over partners and would suggest such an approach is not helpful.

7.18 There is clearly a role for Sport Wales in co-ordinating and uniting the sector around important strategic issues and there are examples of where that has happened and been successful. However, Sport Wales could consider a wider role in that context for the Welsh Sports Association, who have recently refreshed their commitment to champion and support the work of NGBs and have already partnered with Sport Wales on the commercialisation work. It is noted, however, that capacity and resources limit WSA's scope.

7.19 The relationship with the FE and HE sector could be stronger, particularly in terms of research and evaluation, the sporting and talent pathway and elite athlete services. There was also a potential role for the sector in educating, training and developing a workforce that can support the wellbeing goals by using different skills and approaches beyond traditional sport development and working with a different demographic. The challenge for the sector would be to ensure course content and qualification structures were designed accordingly.

7.20 The Partner Perception Survey would appear to be a very useful tool for Sport Wales to gather this type of feedback but only if it is done independently and is acted upon with complete transparency.

Recommendations

- i. Sport Wales should consider how best to manage their relationships with NGBs and local authorities so that the level of check and challenge is proportionate and balanced with providing expert advice and added value.
- ii. In developing initiatives or new ways of working, Sport Wales should engage partners at the outset and adopt a transparent process where their views are considered and receive feedback.
- iii. Sport Wales should consider adopting a formal relationship with FE and HE for gathering insight, commissioning research and discussing areas for collaboration.
- iv. Welsh Government and Sport Wales should consider the WSA's role in supporting NGBs and what avenues exist for them to receive funding to sustain their activities and expand them where there is recognised need.
- v. Sport Wales should commission an independent survey of partners and stakeholders for the Board's consideration and the findings should be shared with the sponsor Department as part of the performance management process.

8. Behaviours, Skills, Innovation and Expertise

Behaviours

8.1 The evidence suggests the leadership function Sport Wales performs for the overall sector could be more prominent. There was a desire for Sport Wales to take a more collaborative and accountable role. Partners wanted to work with Sport Wales in a way that felt equal and balanced, where their role was valued and maximised. Instead, they were sometimes made to feel distinctly junior and overpowered during discussions. Some described the leadership style of the organisation as tending to tell rather than listen.

8.2 Partners' perceptions were that while Sport Wales consulted with them on various issues, they did not see any evidence of changes as a result of the consultation or any feedback on how their input had influenced the end result. This led them to conclude Sport Wales had decided on the end result already and was using consultation merely as part of a process rather than a meaningful exercise that brought added value to thinking.

Skills

8.3 Most of the partners interviewed expressed the view that the skill set of staff within the organisation had generally not kept pace with change outside the organisation and the needs of the sector. One of Sport Wales' notable successes is the way in which they have helped NGBs become more successful businesses with greater expertise at board and executive level and, therefore, less need for direction and guidance.

8.4 A common perception amongst partners interviewed was that often there was now a mismatch between the level and experience of Sport Wales officers and those they were liaising with in partner organisations. Sport Wales's officers have been responsible for challenging experienced, more senior colleagues in partner organisations without necessarily having the knowledge or expertise to advise them on a course of action or the delegated authority to make decisions. This is a weakness in the organisation's performance management and skills development framework.

8.5 The Panel heard evidence that the organisation does not align the technical skills and competencies of staff to the Business Plan. While there is an effective staff appraisal system in place, poor performance is not always properly managed and the organisation is losing pace with partners in terms of skills development. However, there have been some good results from the Chartered Management Institute programme and the organisation now has a focus on learning. Leadership skills and change management were regarded as weaknesses in the organisation and the 3 top skills gaps mentioned were in performance management, customer service and strategy.

8.6 A Skills Matrix covered staff in senior grades and looked at the skills and behaviours required of roles and the extent to which they were present. An external resource was brought in to undertake the assessment and while the Senior Management Team reviewed the results, they are not yet shared with the Board.

8.7 One of the perceived weaknesses in the organisation is its relatively low turnover of staff, which some partners believed stifled fresh ideas, innovation and creativity and made succession planning and talent development difficult. Some work had already been done to future-proof the skill set of the staff working in the community sport team. The skills that staff were required to have in the past are not what the organisation and the partner network needs now. The role needs to add value, to be about relationship management, sharing best practice, innovation, community intervention and engagement and business skills, and less about sports development. The current roles are too varied and almost an impossible task – for example, being able to clearly separate out the role of compliance with the role of relationship building. The elite team had the right skills mix.

Innovation

8.8 There was some appetite within Sport Wales to follow a more innovative approach with the introduction of Calls4Action, the Community Sport and Activity Programme, the Governance and Leadership Framework and the Four Worlds Model. The formation of the Sport Wales Advisory Group (SWAG) was also considered a bold and progressive move but there was a sense it was losing traction because its ideas were not being accepted.

8.9 There was little evidence of an ethos of creativity within Sport Wales or that it was a key focus by senior managers. NGBs reported that they are provided with little insight or innovation they are not already aware of.

Expertise

8.10 The extent to which Sport Wales outsourced the management of programmes and projects as well as the propensity to recruit consultants to develop business cases or review processes was very noticeable among partners and stakeholders. Several interview participants expressed concern about the number and cost of these contracts and whether their value was being maximised by providing staff with opportunities to shadow and learn from the external consultants.

8.11 NGBs would like to see Sport Wales acquire some in-house business development expertise and some experience of government to understand the priorities of various departments and how to collaborate effectively with them. They would also welcome some assistance with analysing data and impact and a mechanism to share learning across sports. It was suggested the Higher Education sector could play a role but Sport Wales should co-ordinate and commission the research and evidence gathering.

8.12 The Sport Wales Board has a broad range of expertise already and there was a view the membership should be reflective of the sector it represents. It was suggested that future appointments are based on a skills matrix to fill any gaps and to ensure the Board can provide high-level challenge to the Senior Management Team across all areas of its business, including stakeholder engagement. It was also suggested that when appointing a Chair, Welsh Government should consider the role that appointment plays on the Board of UK Sport and the additional skills that are required to competently represent UK Sport.

Reflections

8.13 During a time when traditional and familiar structures are changing and the pressures to evidence impact are growing, Sport Wales could be the binding agent that presents a strong case to government for continued and enhanced financial support and recognition for the contribution sport makes to the wellbeing goals.

8.14 Sport Wales could add much more value to their relationships with partners by developing into a critical friend, providing constructive challenge, evidence-based advice and support, rather than relying on funding as its main lever of influence. This could only work if done in the spirit of listening, engagement and genuine partnership.

8.15 It appears that with increased capacity and collaboration, the Sport Wales Insight team could add more value to the organisation, internally and externally, by:

- Providing direct research, evidence and evaluation support to colleagues to inform the development of Sport Wales' programmes and initiatives.
- Supporting partners to analyse survey data to understand the local impact of their activities and to share learning across the sector.
- Developing a partnership with the FE and HE sector to commission and disseminate research project findings and co-ordinate a research service to inform policy development.

8.16 The evidence would suggest Sport Wales is behind the curve in the area of performance management and skills development and lacks commitment to encouraging creativity from within or outside the organisation. While it is understandable the organisation is awaiting the outcome of this review before looking at its structures and the results of a skills audit, there should be some immediate action following this report to correct the situation and to create an environment where innovation, learning and ideas generation is facilitated and celebrated. There should also be more effective use of any external consultants that are commissioned to ensure in-house expertise is developed as part of the contract.

Recommendations

- i. Sport Wales should develop a communications strategy that sets out some guiding principles for how it will consult with and listen to partners and stakeholders, sharing information and feedback with them.
- ii. A mechanism for receiving new ideas, insight and information from within and outside the organisation should be developed.
- iii. Sport Wales should work with the sector to promote partner successes and achievements.
- iv. In-house training and development should be considered as part of the contract when external consultants are brought in for special projects.
- v. Consideration should be given to increasing the capacity and collaboration of the Sport Wales Insight team :
 - a. Provide direct research, evidence and evaluation support to colleagues to inform the development of Sport Wales' programmes and initiatives.

- b. Support partners to analyse survey data to understand the local impact of their activities and to share learning across the sector.
- c. Develop a partnership with the FE and HE sector to commission and disseminate research project findings and co-ordinate a research service to inform policy development.
- vi. Managers should create an environment within Sport Wales where innovation and creativity is promoted and celebrated.
- vii. The results of the staff skills matrix and the action proposed to address any gaps should be discussed and agreed at the earliest opportunity, and a robust performance management process implemented.
- viii. Future Board appointments should consider the gaps revealed by a skills matrix of incumbent members.
- ix. Sport Wales should develop staffing structures which give consideration as to how best to manage the challenge of compliance and public accountability versus expert input.

9. Learning and Insight

9.1 There were some examples in Sport Wales where learning or insight from elsewhere had been acquired during the process of developing new programmes, initiatives or concepts. The Elite Sport team had recently considered Denmark's approach to system development as a possible example of good practice and the Community Sport team looked at models in Scotland, England and New Zealand during the early stages of the Community Sport and Activity Programme. The approaches in New Zealand and Scandinavia to start-up businesses and sports development, respectively, had also been considered.

9.2 There was little evidence to suggest Sport Wales shared learning and insight with partners. In fact, it was suggested that Sport Wales has a wealth of useful data, not just from surveys and research projects but also from the learning its staff had acquired by working with different partners and in different sectors, which could help partners to learn from good practice elsewhere. Furthermore, 'well travelled' officers in partner organisations undoubtedly have experience and knowledge to share with Sport Wales and the sector but there did not appear to be any evidence that this had been explored as a possible source of insight. Moving knowledge around the sector so that the sector could benefit from proven practice and others' success or failures was something partners said Sport Wales could usefully do to add value.

Insight from Scotland

9.3 One of the contributors to this review was Sport Wales' counterpart in Scotland, SportScotland. The Panel was struck by the similarities of both organisations in terms of the policy agenda that guided them but equally struck by the differences between their roles and relationships with partners.

9.4 SportScotland is in a similar position to Sport Wales in terms of the expectation of them contributing to national health goals. They are probably in a more advanced stage because they have an agreed set of measures to describe the ambition and to measure progress against national goals. The 'Active Scotland Outcomes Framework' describes the sport and physical activity outcomes to be achieved over a period of 10 years that will contribute to achieving 16 National Outcomes, one of which is 'Healthier'. Progress against the outcomes is measured by 55 national indicators, one of which is an increase in the proportion of the population who meet the Chief Medical Officer's recommended level of physical activity. The Outcomes Framework is a generic model based on a system where all partners are connected by common goals and outcomes but with specific roles and progress indicators.

9.5 SportScotland's relationship with their partners was based on the principle of added value, leadership and facilitation. They recognised that while they contribute 80% of the funding NGBs receive their funding of local authorities only represented 10% of the total investment councils and other partners make in creating sport and physical opportunities in communities. The outcomes SportScotland expected of partners were developed, agreed and owned by the partners themselves.

Reflections

9.6 There is in Sport Wales, willingness to and examples of, learning and gathering insight from others to develop new concepts, programmes and approaches. It appears that individuals responsible for a new area of work make the decision to explore the horizon and it is not a regular function of the Insights team. This is something the Insights team has said they would like to explore subject to resources being available.

9.7 At the time of writing this report the Panel understands the Sport Wales Advisory Group, established to provide insight, explore and research trends and offer guidance for Sport Wales and its Board, has been dissolved pending the outcome of this review. This type of group, consisting experienced and respected professional from the commercial, health, education and communications sectors would appear to be one source of the added value that partners are seeking.

9.8 The experience of SportScotland in developing a new approach to measuring its impact and its role and relationships with partners offers some useful insight for Sport Wales to consider. There are still some challenges that SportScotland face in their partnerships with other sectors, such as Education and Health, at a national level; most notably the commitment to own and be accountable for shared outcomes. However, they are hopeful a collaboration project in Glasgow to develop health outcomes owned and reported against by all partners will provide a template for the rest of Scotland. That experience too could provide some useful learning.

Recommendations

- i. Sport Wales should consider establishing a central function for gathering and sharing insight, good practice and learning across the organisation and with partners.
- ii. The knowledge and experience of staff and all partners should be captured and shared where learning and successes would benefit others. This should be a priority shift in the added value role of Sport Wales going forward.
- iii. The value of an independent sounding board or advisory group to enhance the organisation's insight function should be explored.
- iv. A platform for exchanging good practice, innovation and creative solutions with other Sports Councils and similar organisations outside the UK should be considered where roles and objectives are similar.

10. CONCLUSIONS

10.1 Since its creation by Royal Charter in 1972 Sport Wales has contributed much to the development and success of the sport sector in Wales. National outputs over recent years demonstrate continuous improvement across both community and elite sport and the organisation, and its partners, can be rightly proud of the role played in achieving this success to date. The commitment and desire of the Sport Wales workforce to make a positive difference is well documented and appreciated by key stakeholders and partners alike.

10.2 Against this backdrop of success it is only right that Sport Wales now reflects positively on the challenges that lie ahead. At a time of growing financial uncertainty with a public appetite of 'more for less' and an expectation for public bodies to work more collaboratively with each other to improve the wellbeing of people and communities across Wales, Sport Wales needs to clarify its role and purpose, agreeing where it can achieve the greatest impact for the people of Wales.

10.3 It is important to recognise that Sport Wales cannot achieve its full potential without the support and collaboration of its partners. Shared responsibility and accountability must be accepted across the sector, including Sport Wales' national partners and Welsh Government. With a shared approach, clarity of purpose and an appreciation of the strengths and limitations of partners it will be possible to make a huge contribution to the health and prosperity of the nation.

10.4 The purpose of this report is to recommend why and how Sport Wales might respond to the challenges that lie ahead for the organisation. The panel are grateful to the support it has received from Sport Wales during the preparation of this report and hopes that it will support and inform the organisation as it strives to contribute to a healthier, more active and successful Wales.

11. LIMITATIONS OF THE REVIEW

11.1 Although the review has achieved the purpose set out in the Terms of Reference, there were some unavoidable limitations. The timescale allowed us to gather evidence from a wide variety of interested parties but restricted us to a relatively small representative sample.

11.2 The risk of others not recognising or accepting our findings is mitigated by our triangulation of the interview data with the preliminary research undertaken to inform the review started by the former Chair of Sport Wales.

11.3 While we have identified a number of key themes relevant to the scope of our review, we were not able to provide definitive findings or an exhaustive set of recommendations for all of them because the evidence was not as strong as it was elsewhere. In these cases, consideration should be given as to whether further testing is necessary. These themes, along with others that emerged but fell out of scope have been listed as Areas for Further Research or Investigation in section 12.

12. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH OR INVESTIGATION

12.1 During the course of the review we were made or became aware of some issues that were relevant to the purpose but out of scope of the Terms of Reference. We have used the opportunity in this section to list these issues and what our evidence revealed about them. We would suggest they are subject to further research or investigation.

Sport Wales National Centres

12.2 The future role and purpose of the Sport Wales' two national centres is a question that needs to be addressed in the context of their charitable purposes, the changes in the facility landscape since they were built, the ongoing cost subsidy required for their maintenance and the emergence of the Further and Higher Education sectors as providers of elite sport research and services. The Remit Letter has periodically made reference to the need for a review and while the issue has been considered and subject to board scrutiny, their future remains uncertain and in need of attention by Sport Wales and the Welsh Government.

12.3 While Sport Wales has attempted to improve the financial situation of **Plas Menai** in Gwynedd by diversifying into other sectors, such as tourism, it still operates with a significant annual funding deficit. A range of options for the future management of the facility should be considered but not before its purpose and function as a Sport Wales asset is agreed in the context of the organisation's strategic direction and expected impact and outcomes.

12.4 The **Sport Wales National Centre** at Sophia Gardens in Cardiff was regarded as a performance centre and the main base for the Sport Wales Institute as well as providing office accommodation for Sport Wales' staff and a number of National Governing Bodies of Sport. The centre also provided the public with access to indoor and outdoor sports facilities, effectively operating as a sport/leisure centre. Again, the purpose and role of the facility should be considered in the context of the strategic direction of Sport Wales and its expected impact and outcomes. If the organisation were to continue to provide elite support service to athletes, the building would require further investment or a partnership with the Education or commercial sectors would need to be sought.

Sport and Leisure Facilities

12.5 The changing facility landscape was an issue and concern to many of the contributors to this review and some suggested that Sport Wales should play a more prominent role in advocating and providing solutions. We are aware the Welsh Government is conducting a review of sports facilities in Wales and would suggest it considers the following comments/suggestions that have emerged from our review:

- (i) It is not sustainable for sports clubs in close proximity to others to have their own facilities and there should be a shift to create flexible spaces where clubs share resources.
- (ii) Welsh Government requires a more transparent and collaborative approach and its partners, including Sport Wales, should invest strategically in facilities for sport and physical activity that meet

demand, are financially viable and sustainable, and address health inequalities in communities.

- (iii) The facilities review needs to clarify whether hosting a multi-sport event like the Commonwealth Games is a realistic ambition.
- (iv) The interface between sport and major sporting events and the role the latter play in the promotion, encouragement and facilitation of participation was not clear. There was a need for a clearer rationale for investment in facilities to host major events.

Periodic Review of Sport Wales

12.6 Not since the beginning of the millennium has there been an independent review of this nature. Some of the issues that arose then, including the purpose and role of the two national centres, remain an issue. It is the Panel's view that Sport Wales, like their counterparts in other countries and other sponsored bodies or arms length government organisations, should be subject to periodic reviews of its function and form.

Appendices

Appendix A

| Theme | Recommendation |
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| Policy, Strategy, Purpose and Role | 1. Welsh Government should produce a long-term policy statement and strategy for physical activity that clarifies the respective roles and responsibilities of Ministers, departments, agencies, sponsored bodies and others to deliver a healthy and active nation. |
| | 2. The policy statement and strategy should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) set out very clearly the shared outcomes, budgets and means by which the performance of all partners should be measured. (b) clarify the purpose of Sport Wales and the role it and the sport sector is expected to play in the delivery of the wellbeing goals and objectives. (c) define Sport Wales' domain within the physical activity spectrum and what it will be held accountable for in terms of the wellbeing objectives. (d) revisit its policy statement on elite sport following the completion of the work Sport Wales has identified to explain why medal success is important. |
| | 3. The Sport and Health sectors should be mandated to collaborate effectively on investment, research, social marketing and advocacy to impact positively and sustainably on whole population physical activity levels. |
| | 4. Sport Wales leads the development of a new, long-term, strategy for sport in Wales that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) responds to the policy direction for sport that Welsh Government sets out in the context of its objectives to create a healthy and active Wales; (b) is based on a fully inclusive and transparent consultation and discussion with the sport (in its widest terms) sector and other relevant sectors and organisations, taking into account the wider responsibilities of some delivery partners. (c) establishes a clear line of sight between the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act and the delivery of community sport and the sporting and performance pathway; (d) encompasses elite as well as community/grass roots sport and clarifies the definition of success and its importance to the wider policy agenda; (e) is linked to partners' strategies where relevant or where shared outcomes exist; (f) includes robust outcomes, metrics and performance framework with ownership clarity, and a transparent investment process. (g) is reviewed independently at periodic intervals. |
| WFG Act & Performance Indicators | 5. Sport Wales should complete and continue to share the work they have done on the wellbeing objectives and impact with their partners. |
| | 6. The wellbeing outcomes and ways of working should be embedded within all aspects of Sport Wales' responsibilities and activities, including its |

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| | <p>strategy/strategies and business plans and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in defining its wellbeing objectives, Sport Wales should identify the partners who are critical to their delivery, where they might be integrated to deliver additional outcomes and who is accountable for delivery. (b) Sport Wales should provide some leadership to the sector by facilitating discussions to identify where the sector should be focusing its investments and efforts and where are the partners in other sectors they should be seeking to collaborate with. (c) Sport Wales should, as far as possible, engage with other public sector bodies such as Public Health Wales to develop joint objectives and impact measures where appropriate. <p>7. Assessment tools should be developed to measure the sector’s impact and social return on investment and should form part of the evaluation of progress towards the wellbeing objectives Sport Wales sets itself.</p> <p>8. Sport Wales should seek an effective and efficient mechanism for understanding, sharing and influencing PSBs objectives and the partner engagement opportunities with NGBs and others.</p> |
| <p>Investment Priorities and Planning</p> | <p>9. Welsh Government should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) provide a longer-term budget to allow Sport Wales to plan strategically its investments and activities to deliver agreed objectives and outcomes. (b) issue the annual Remit Letter in a timely fashion to allow for a synchronised budget planning process. (c) include an outcomes framework and performance indicators in the Remit Letter to allow for more meaningful management of Sport Wales’ performance against sector specific and integrated wellbeing objectives. <p>10. Sport Wales should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ensure its Business Plan properly reflects and reports against the contents of the Remit Letter and should publish and share it with partners. (b) consider a more flexible and mixed funding approach to allow for creativity, innovation and sport specific or local needs based solutions. (c) establish an agreement between Sport Wales and the WSA on who is to lead the commercialisation programme for NGBs. (d) adopt a more transparent approach to programme evaluation and consider the value of academic input from the Higher Education Sector to inform its research and evaluation strategy. <p>11. The Community Sport and Activity Programme should be subject to further consideration by Sport Wales and the Welsh Government in the light of the concerns identified in this report.</p> |

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| <p>Stakeholder Engagement & Partnerships</p> | <p>12. Sport Wales should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) consider how best to manage their relationships with NGBs and local authorities so that the level of check and challenge is proportionate and balanced with providing advice and added value. (b) consider adopting a formal relationship with FE and HE for gathering insight, commissioning research and discussing areas for collaboration. (c) commission an independent survey of partners and stakeholders for the Board’s consideration and the findings should be shared with the sponsor Department as part of the performance management process. |
| | <p>13. In developing initiatives or new ways of working, Sport Wales should engage partners at the outset and adopt a transparent process where their views are considered and receive feedback.</p> |
| | <p>14. Welsh Government and Sport Wales should consider the WSA’s role in supporting NGBs and what avenues exist for them to receive funding to sustain their activities and expand them where there is recognised need.</p> |
| | <p>Behaviours, Skills, Innovation and Expertise</p> |
| <p>16. In-house training and development should be considered as part of the contract when external consultants are brought in for special projects.</p> | |
| <p>17. Consideration should be given to increasing the capacity and collaboration of the Sport Wales Insight team to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) provide direct research, evidence and evaluation support to colleagues to inform the development of Sport Wales’ programmes and initiatives. (b) support partners to analyse survey data to understand the local impact of their activities and to share learning across the sector. (c) develop a partnership with the FE and HE sector to commission and disseminate research project findings and co-ordinate a research service to inform policy development. | |
| <p>18. Sport Wales should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) develop staffing structures which give consideration as to how best to manage the challenge of compliance and public accountability versus expert input. (b) discuss and agree the results of the staff skills matrix and the action proposed to address any gaps at the earliest opportunity, and implement a robust performance management process. | |

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| | <p>(c) consider any gaps revealed by a skills matrix of incumbent members for future Board appointments.</p> |
| <p>Learning & Insight</p> | <p>19. Sport Wales should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) consider establishing a central function for gathering and sharing insight, good practice and learning across the organisation and with partners. (b) explore the value of an independent sounding board or advisory group to enhance the organisation’s insight function. (c) consider developing a platform for exchanging good practice, innovation and creative solutions with other Sports Councils and similar organisations outside the UK where roles and objectives are similar. |
| | <p>20. The knowledge and experience of staff and partners should be captured and shared where learning and successes would benefit others. This should be a priority shift in the added value role of Sport Wales going forward.</p> |

Appendix B

Terms of Reference for the Review

An Active, Healthy and Successful Nation

Context

Sport Wales is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body, established by Royal Charter, and the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and physical recreation. In common with all areas of the public sector, it is experiencing a reducing financial resource whilst simultaneously being asked to broaden its reach within communities. Bodies such as Sport Wales will need to share outcomes and resources and collectively plan to play their part in delivering against a broader wellbeing agenda for the benefit of the people of Wales. To make the best use of the sport sector's resources and public funds, Ministers wish to consider whether Sport Wales is delivering Welsh Government's desired outcomes as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The programme for government, 'Taking Wales Forward', sets out the Welsh Government's priorities for the next five years. The objectives for sport include increasing the physical activity levels of Welsh citizens, in particular those in groups that have very low current activity levels, to contribute to an overall healthier population, and increased well-being outcomes, through to providing sporting pathways for all to elite achievement. Sport and physical activity will be an important element of the Welsh Government's Healthy and Active strategy.

Purpose of the Review

To examine the strategic intent, purpose and role of Sport Wales in relation to delivering a more active, healthy and successful nation in light of generally stretched public spending budgets.

Scope of Work

The review should build upon the work already undertaken ensuring that the report is properly referenced and any evidence provided is substantiated. The Review should examine:

- The current vision, aspirations and strategic intent of Sport Wales in relation to achieving the government priorities and objectives
- The Sport Wales current strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in the delivery of these government priorities and objectives
- How the delivery of these objectives can support the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- The well-being outcome measures you feel Sport Wales could contribute to most effect
- Learning and insight from other countries around creating a more active, healthy and successful nation.
- What are the areas that Sport Wales should be targeting or influencing investment to have the greatest impact against the Welsh Government priorities.

- What is the appetite and capacity of Sport Wales to create innovative approaches to achieve in its objectives.

It is recognised that the preliminary research undertaken for the Chair's Review may not provide sufficient evidence to underpin firm recommendations in all areas in the reporting timescale. We would welcome suggestions from the Independent Panel as to areas or issues where further work may be usefully undertaken, whether by Sport Wales itself or others as best suited.

Accountability and Decision-making

The panel will report to the Minister for Social Services and Public Health by the end of April 2017.

Appendix C

Panel Membership

Aileen Richards – Independent Non-Executive Board Member, Welsh Rugby Union

Helen Phillips – Chair, Commonwealth Games Wales and Welsh Gymnastics

Jon Morgan – Executive Director, Disability Sport Wales and Board Member of Welsh Sports Association and Commonwealth Games Wales.

Andrew Thomas – Bridgend County Borough Council, Board Member of Disability Sport Wales and Member of Sport Wales Advisory Group.

The Panel was supported by a member of the Welsh Government's Sports Policy Branch in a research and administrative capacity. All Panel members were acting independently as individuals and not as a representative of the organisation by whom they are employed or serve as a Board member.

Appendix D

List of Interviewees and Contributors

English Institute of Sport
Further Education
Future Generations Commissioner
Higher Education
Local Authorities
National Governing Bodies of Sport
Public Health Wales
Sportscotland
Sport Wales Board Members
Sport Wales Chair, Chief Executive and Senior Management
Sport Wales Human Resources Department
Sport Wales Insights Team
UK Sport
Welsh Government Education Department
Welsh Government Sports Policy Team
Welsh Language Commissioner
Welsh Sports Association
Youth Sport Trust

Appendix E

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