



Select Committee on a National Plan for Sport and Recreation

Corrected oral evidence: National plan for sport and recreation

Wednesday 2 December 2020

3.30 pm

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Members present: Lord Willis of Knaresborough (The Chair); Lord Addington; Baroness Blower; Baroness Brady; Baroness Grey-Thompson; Lord Hayward; Lord Knight of Weymouth; Lord Krebs; Baroness Morris of Yardley; Lord Moynihan; Baroness Sater; Lord Snape.

Evidence Session No. 1

Virtual Proceeding

Questions 1 - 11

Witnesses

I: Ben Dean, Director for Sport and Gambling, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport; Mark Davies, Director for Population Health, Department for Health and Social Care; Graham Archer, Director for Qualifications, Curriculum and Extracurricular, Department for Education.

USE OF THE TRANSCRIPT

This is a corrected transcript of evidence taken in public and webcast on www.parliamentlive.tv.

Examination of witnesses

Ben Dean, Mark Davies and Graham Archer.

Q1 The Chair: First, I welcome our witnesses to this very strange new situation. Graham Archer is director of children's social care, improvement and learning at the Department for Education; Mark Davies is director for population health in the Department of Health and Social Care; and Ben Dean is director for sport and gambling at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Graham Archer: I am sorry to interrupt at this early stage, but I should say that my job has changed. I am now the director for qualifications, curriculum and extracurricular, hence my interest in PE and sports as part of the curriculum.

The Chair: Graham, thank you for that. You are just as welcome, whatever your title is at the end of the day. We are looking for your expertise in the department.

This is the first evidence session of the Select Committee on a national plan for sport and recreation. A transcript of the meeting will be taken and published on our website, and you will have the opportunity as witnesses to make any corrections to it where necessary. As this is the first evidence session of the Committee, it is a requirement that Members declare relevant interests when speaking for the first time so that they are on record. I apologise if some of that goes on for some time.

When asking a question, Members will specify the first witness they would like to hear from. Witnesses should then use the "raise hand" function on Zoom if they wish to come in. It is not necessary for all three of our witnesses to answer every question. We have about five minutes for each question, and I would like to get through the whole lot, as this is our first session, so that I do not get sacked.

My declaration of interest is very brief. I am a member of Leeds United Football Club, one of the most successful clubs in the land.

Ben, what has changed and what lessons have been learned in the five years since the Sporting Future strategy was first published?

Ben Dean: Perhaps I might start by spending one minute giving you a bit of context and then I will happily answer that question. As the first witness to come before you, I thank you, Chair, and all the Committee members for having us today. There is a huge amount of experience here and we welcome the Committee looking at these issues. I am delighted that Mark and Graham are with me today.

Overall, we are always looking at where we can improve in relation to sport and recreation, but we also have a strong track record, and your question about what has changed over the past five years touches on that. At elite level, we are truly world-beating. Team GB was second at

the 2016 Rio Olympics and Paralympics. That makes us the first team ever to perform better after hosting the games.

We saw over 40 million attendances at elite domestic sport in 2019, and the Premier League is now firmly the most watched league in the world. We have truly world-class facilities both for the science of sport and in centres of excellence and stadiums around the country. We have a fantastic track record in hosting many major events, of which members of this Committee have been part, including London 2012 and the 2015 Rugby World Cup. We also have a wonderful pipeline, including the Rugby League World Cup in 2021, the Commonwealth Games in 2022, and the final and semi-final of the delayed Euro 2021 and the Women's Euro 2022, not to mention even bigger events coming down the track.

At grass-roots level, for us, the last five years have all been about increasing activity and getting the population more active, in both sport and wider activities. One of the things we have been looking at over the last five years with Sport England, one of our key arm's-length bodies, is ways of targeting activities and sports that people want to do. Football, rugby and cricket are all wonderful sports, and we have strong track records there, but equally there are people who do not want to do that but will take a Zumba class or go skateboarding or surfing. What activities can we get people interested in that keep them active?

As for what else has changed over the last five years, the key thing this year has been Covid. That has been hugely impactful, not just on the nation but particularly on sport, both grass roots and elite. We have tried to make sure throughout this eight-month period that we were always looking at how sport and recreation can support the nation. We are very proud that exercise was allowed to continue in parks and the countryside throughout the first lockdown. That was not something that every other country did. As we enter the new tiering system—today is the first day out of lockdown—we are proud that team sport, indoor sport and gyms are prospering again in all three tiers.

At elite level, we have worked incredibly hard to make sure that we can get our elite sport back as quickly as possible. We had sport happening behind closed doors earlier than virtually any other country. We worked very closely with the Sports Grounds Safety Authority and UK Sport to enable that to happen. We ran pilots to enable fans to get back to sport. As of today, we can get fans back into stadiums in tiers 1 and 2. That is all phenomenally good stuff. We also have a lot of financial support, which I am sure we will get on to.

The Chair: Can I take you back a bit? I think the Committee would accept that the UK is doing very well in elite sport; England is doing very well indeed. We are a little worried about the data at grass-roots level and what is actually happening at that level. Could you explain why there has not been the usual annual update, and why the KPIs dashboard is no longer being published? That seems to suggest that we have lost a bit of momentum here, or is it for other reasons?

Ben Dean: Covid has changed everything over the last eight months, as we have recognised. We still have the annual Active Lives survey that Sport England runs each year. That will be published next year: in January for children and in April for adults. That is on track to be published annually as it always is. What we have tried to do, with Sport England leading the way as our grass-roots delivery partner, is to keep track of how Covid is impacting grass-roots sport. Sport England has done an additional survey with Savanta ComRes, doing weekly or monthly tracking. That data has shown that from the beginning of Covid until now there has been a decline of between 7% and 10% in adult grass-roots participation.

We fully recognise that grass-roots participation has dropped off during Covid. Part of that is because of lockdown and the closing of facilities. As we come out of lockdown, we hope to do all we can to encourage people to take up activity and sport again, as soon as they are allowed to, in whatever way suits them best.

Q2 Lord Hayward: I declare my interest, which is given in the records, as vice-president of Kings Cross Steelers Rugby Football Club. In relation to the last response, I will be with my rugby club on Saturday seeing how the new processes work.

Mark Davies, how closely do you as departments co-operate and co-ordinate your work with each other and with public bodies to deliver policy objectives aimed at improving both physical and mental health and well-being?

Mark Davies: We co-operate very closely. We are bound to say that, aren't we, but it is true. I am very pleased to be able to come here with colleagues from DCMS and DfE to talk to you today. There are a number of ways in which we express co-operation. In particular, we co-fund services. We put an awful lot of money into the school sport premium, for example. The Department of Health and Social Care is a contributor to that every year, with DfE funding. We also fund school games organisers, where we work with DCMS, but, more broadly, we work collectively on all aspects of physical activity.

We completely understand the relationship between physical activity and exercise and physical and mental health. Exactly a week ago, at the ukactive summit, Chris Whitty said: "Exercise is the single simplest and most important thing people can do to improve their physical and mental health". From the very top of the medical profession, we have a complete understanding of the role of physical activity, and we work closely together.

The Department of Health and Social Care is not the lead department, although like many departments we benefit from physical activity, whoever encourages it or leads on it. We express that interest in the way we work very closely together. Our childhood obesity work has elements of physical activity. Although we lead on childhood obesity, we work very closely with colleagues in DCMS and DfE to ensure that our activities are

co-ordinated. The purpose of physical activity and sport is not always to improve physical and mental health, but it is always an outcome of that sort of activity, or mostly—unless you clash heads on a football pitch, as happened to footballers this week. The importance of increasing physical activity for health is completely understood and recognised by the department.

Q3 The Chair: This question was from Lord Addington and is directed to Graham Archer. How do you co-operate and co-ordinate with local authorities and delivery agencies, such as Active Partnerships, the Youth Sport Trust and local sports clubs, to ensure that national policy goals encompassing sport and recreation are delivered locally?

Graham Archer: Our starting point from a schools perspective is that schools themselves are the best place for taking a view about the right way to deliver PE and sport to their children, but that is not the same as saying that we leave them to get on with it and think that is okay. A number of the things you have described—the partnerships and the Youth Sport Trust—are both delivery agents and bodies funded by us to provide advice and support for teachers and schools in delivering the PE and sport curriculum.

The *School Sport and Activity Action Plan* that we published last year describes a number of ways in which, in partnership with those organisations, we look to promote activity in general in schools, and in relation to particular groups within schools, and to support teachers and schools in the round to provide activity in the best possible way to meet the needs of their children. We use funding, relationships and local join-ups, recognising that it is a multi-agency operation with interests in schools, sports clubs and organisations in the health world. We use a variety of levers, but we try, in so far as we can, to be supportive of those delivering on the front line rather than dictating to them.

Ben Dean: I fully endorse what Graham said. We absolutely recognise that achieving our goals to get the population more active relies totally on collaboration with a range of partners. Government departments are part of that, and the three of us are here today because of our close working. Other government departments are involved as well, such as MHCLG—the housing, communities and local government department. Local authorities are another part of the picture, as are arm's-length bodies. I have already mentioned UK Sport and Sport England, which are key for us, and the Sports Grounds Safety Authority and UK Anti-Doping are part of our arm's-length body family.

There are also the national governing bodies of sports, the sports themselves and a range of other organisations. Without that close co-operation, we will not achieve as much as we could with co-operation, and that is why, particularly during Covid, we have tried to tighten collaboration and engagement with all our key delivery partners.

Q4 Baroness Brady: I declare the following interests. I am vice-chairman of West Ham Football Club and a director of WH Holdings Ltd, where

secretarial and other support is received from the staff employed by West Ham. I am a trustee of the Twinning Project, former managing director of Birmingham City Football Club, and my husband is a retired professional football player and sports commentator.

How are you incorporating sport and recreation in your efforts to tackle obesity and health inequalities? I direct that question to Mark, but I would like the other two witnesses to give their thoughts, too.

Mark Davies: I have already mentioned the fact that exercise is integral to the childhood obesity plans we have published. I accept that most of the focus is on food because the key driver of obesity is calorific intake. That has been our focus, but alongside that we encourage and fund sporting activity and sport for children in schools because we think general fitness is part of tackling obesity.

The question of health inequalities is important. I am pretty sure that, in and of themselves, changes to physical activity will not address health inequalities, but health inequalities are reflected in inequalities in access to, and engagement with, sport or physical activity. We know, for example, that during Covid the number of children undertaking physical activity reduced, for obvious reasons—opportunities were reduced and schools were closed—but we also know that children from poorer and ethnic communities suffered more.

Exercise is one aspect of health inequality. It will not resolve it on its own, but it must be addressed because we need to ensure that everyone has access to sport and exercise. We do not lead policy on sport and physical activity. We work closely with other departments, but the lead sits elsewhere. We encourage all activities to target those where need is greatest, as we do with healthcare. We should be targeting our activity where need is greatest. That is something that we need to look at between us to understand what has happened with Covid, which shone a light on inequalities across society. We are working to address them. Inequality in access to or engagement with physical activity is one of those factors.

Graham Archer: Those inequalities begin in school. We know that black and Asian children, children from the least affluent backgrounds, and girls, as opposed to boys, are less likely to be active in school. Our objectives in the action plan I described a little earlier include the idea that children should have at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day—30 minutes in the curriculum and 30 minutes outside it.

We fund a range of things that help to tackle those inequalities, whether volunteering programmes encouraging those from less affluent backgrounds to be engaged in school sports, work specifically to encourage girls who have disengaged from PE and sports to regain that interest, or, under our Inclusion 2020 grants, looking to engage those with special educational needs and disabilities—another group that sometimes struggles to engage with PE, sport and physical activity. We very much recognise the issue and have embedded in our action plan a

lot of work to engage those most likely to be disengaged and, therefore, most likely to see health inequalities perpetuating or growing.

The Chair: Ben, do you think your programme fits into that agenda?

Ben Dean: Absolutely. It is something on which we have to collaborate across government. The Prime Minister has been very clear from the top down about how important tackling obesity is. He has said to all departments that he expects them to contribute. Our three departments are major components, but we recognise that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has a role, as do other departments. A good example is the Department for Transport, which has been doing a lot of work on cycling, encouraging people to walk or cycle to school or work or to get around.

Working closely with Sport England, we want to make sure that people have access to the facilities they need and are given more options, so that those who do not want to do traditional sports can find something that suits them. That may be an exercise class; it may be cycling. It could be anything that meets their needs. Part of it has been about doing some comms campaigning. The This Girl Can campaign is a really good example of that, where we have been trying to encourage girls to become active and more involved in sport and to overcome some of the hurdles they faced previously.

Baroness Brady: I was disappointed that the 10-year review of the Marmot report noted that "the national government has not prioritised health inequalities" and that a third of children were currently overweight or obese. I wonder whether any of the programmes you are engaged in are actually working.

Mark Davies: I completely recognise that. I speak as the person who 10 years ago commissioned Michael Marmot's original report, so I am very familiar with the work. It is challenging. The increase in childhood obesity seems to be a consequence of what happens in other aspects of their lives. Our publication in July on childhood obesity talked very much about making the healthy choice the easier choice for families.

You will have noticed, I hope, that two weekends ago the Prime Minister announced an increase in the Healthy Start voucher scheme, which has not happened for a decade. That is directed absolutely at giving poorer families access to healthier food. That was partly through the Marcus Rashford campaign. It is a positive relationship between sport and food and shows the influence that people such as Marcus Rashford can have. We are struggling against the tide of promotion of unhealthy food and trying to turn that around, and that is part of the challenge of the childhood obesity strategy.

This is rather flattering of the team of which you are director, Baroness Brady. West Ham United and Newham Council have done a fantastic piece of work on access to activities through charitable organisations, which I commend. It is absolutely excellent. It engages different

communities and people from different backgrounds, and works with the organisations they feel comfortable with. It has had a fantastic effect on health inequalities; it has reduced average blood pressure levels among communities that have struggled with that for a long time. That is a great example of how the local health system and significant local sporting organisations can make a difference. I did not say that just to flatter Baroness Brady, but it is worth noting.

The Chair: The Committee is very pleased to hear it.

Baroness Brady: Lots of football clubs have fantastic foundations and are doing excellent work with their local communities. Ours, with Newham, was to drive down diabetes, which is something we are very proud of. Thank you for recognising it.

The Chair: That leads very nicely to Lord Krebs and issues of public health.

Q5 Lord Krebs: Public Health England has now been abolished or is being broken up. One of its responsibilities was work on promoting physical activity and healthy living. Could you tell us a bit about the plans to replace Public Health England's role in that, how it will be organised and to whom it will be accountable?

The second part of my question goes back to earlier questions. It is about the joining up of different departments and different community activities. In the background reading we were given, I noticed that no fewer than six strategy documents had been published by different bits of government or government agencies in the last few years on increasing physical activity and sport. That makes me wonder whether people are just ploughing their own furrow. Can you explain why there had to be six different documents rather than one strategy?

Mark Davies: You are right. We announced in August the establishment of the National Institute for Health Protection, which will be created from the health protection elements of Public Health England and the test and trace capability we have been building in the department as part of Covid and the national biosecurity centre. That work is in hand, and we plan that the organisation will come into existence at the start of the next financial year, 1 April.

The health improvement functions of Public Health England continue. PHE will continue to exist. I cannot tell you what the replacement will be, because that work is ongoing. There is an awful lot of consultation and engagement going on with many interested parties. We have been very open about engaging on that. For a start, it is not a cost-cutting measure; it is about trying to ensure that we have the best measures for health protection and, alongside that, the best measures for health improvement. We are determined that what comes out at the other side of the process of engagement and organisational design will have learned the lessons from the establishment of Public Health England and will build on all the good work it has done.

At the moment, we do not know what those organisational forms will be. We are engaging with many external stakeholders who are offering us their views. We plan to go out with a written proposition early in the new year; it will not be a formal consultation, but it will be a summary of what we have heard and what we plan to do. We will make sure that we give ourselves time to establish the new arrangements. It will not just be an over-the-cliff end to Public Health England; each part of it will have a safe home to go to.

I am sorry that is not a very clear answer. I cannot give you the absolute answer as to what the organisation will be, how many organisations there will be or where functions will sit. That is work in progress at the moment.

Ben Dean: Can I pick up the strategy question? I do not know which six documents you are referring to, Lord Krebs. Apologies. In 2015, we published *Sporting Future*, which was cross-government but DCMS-led. That was our overarching strategy for how we wanted to approach sport and recreation, including increasing mental well-being. That still guides us, although five years on, we are now looking at how we might refresh it.

There have been other strategies where needed. A good example is the obesity strategy, which was touched on previously. The reason we have a separate strategy there is that, as Mark said, although activity is part of the answer for tackling obesity, it is much wider than just activity. That was why the strategy looked also at food labelling and junk food. Another good example is the *School Sport Action Plan*, which is mentioned in *Sporting Future*, which followed on from our overarching strategy to go into detail about how schools play their part.

Lord Knight of Weymouth: Until the end of August, I was chief education and external officer at TES Global, where I was also a shareholder. I am now a director of Suklaa, which is an educational consultancy, of which TES Global is a client. I am a director of Whole Education Ltd and trustee of an associated charity; and my brother-in-law co-owns Azalea Ltd, which is a sports marketing company.

My supplementary question is to Ben Dean. Looking at the data, it appears that take-up at the physical activity end of the remit is not really shifting. Is that because Sport England and cross-government working is failing, or is it something else? Is it perhaps that you are too sport-led, and there is not enough of the recreational end of what this Committee is interested in?

Ben Dean: One of the things on which I definitely agree with you is that we have been trying to recognise that sport is a major factor but not the only one.

On your point about recreation, we want people to be active, whatever form that takes. If that is hill walking or cycling to work, it is brilliant. It is not sport, but we absolutely encourage that to keep people active.

Before Covid, 63% of the adult population were meeting our target of 150 minutes of activity a week. That still means that just under 40% of the population were not achieving those 150 minutes. We have been working with Sport England and others on what more we can do to reach the communities we are not yet reaching. Some of that is very targeted. A great example I heard about the other day is Muslim Girls Fence, involving British Fencing. That is a great way of reaching a community it had never worked with before to address that issue.

One of the fastest areas of growth in grass-roots sport is women's sport. All the national governing bodies I talk to recognise that. That is where a lot of their grass-roots growth and uplift comes from. There are many great examples of the big expansion of women's football and women's rugby. I think we have a good story to tell, but I utterly recognise that particularly in these Covid times we will have to work incredibly hard over the next year to get people who have stopped being active to be active again and maintain those levels of activity.

Q6 Baroness Morris of Yardley: I am chair of the Birmingham Education Partnership and I act as an adviser. I chair the trustees of the Institute for Effective Education and I advise them. Both are funded by the Bowland Charitable Trust. I am a trustee and vice-chair of the Sunderland AFC foundation.

Mr Archer, what progress has been made in implementing the actions and commitments set out in the 2019 *School Sport and Activity Action Plan*?

Graham Archer: I will start with the three ambitions in that plan: to have 60 minutes of activity, to enable developmental character-building experiences in school PE and sport, and to develop physical literacy. A series of actions flows from those. It would be right to say that, while progress has been made on some of them, the pandemic has affected the way in which some of them have been delivered.

Progress we can point to includes providing funding to boost the volunteer coaches and leaders programme, with a view to recruiting young people from lower socioeconomic groups; work on creating new digital platforms designed to reach girls who have disengaged from PE; and the work on Studio You, as it is known. We have developed a number of means of focusing on initial teacher training, CPD and whole-school approaches, to enable teachers to become stronger individually and collectively in designing and delivering work. We have funded Active Partnerships to work directly with local sport providers in schools to increase access to school sport facilities.

To be candid, I do not think we have done as much as we would have liked in the creation of regional pilots to trial new and innovative approaches, although we have pivoted activity to provide support for schools in particular to provide strong PE and, where possible, extracurricular activity through the Covid pandemic. As we emerge, we hope, from the pandemic, and with the implications of the spending review announced last month, we will be thinking actively about recovery

from the pandemic and returning, in the way Ben Dean described, to a focus in schools and beyond on how we engage and drive activity. There is no doubt that, during the pandemic period, physical activity has declined among children at school, as well as among adults more widely, so we will certainly need to look at how we increase and sharpen our communications, to re-engage and support schools and other local organisations to help draw children back into activity.

Baroness Morris of Yardley: All that sounds great. When you read the document, it sounds really ambitious. I accept that this year has not been the best one for you to start some of those initiatives, but my worry goes a bit beyond that. I ended up feeling that, if you were able to put all that into action, we would probably solve the problem, but what are your expectations of that actually happening?

If we look at the phonics programme or the maths mastery programme, we realise what it takes for a school system to bring about significant change. There is no parallel between the money, resources and focus put into maths mastery and phonics, and sport. Is part of the problem that you are trying to launch a lot of initiatives and glue them together, but in schools the basics are not in place? Are you confident that, in every primary school, at least one or two teachers have the skills to teach PE and the enthusiasm to do so? If not, I can see all these other initiatives doing what has happened for many decades: they will not come to anything.

Graham Archer: There is increasing engagement and commitment right across government to make this work, so ambition is not the issue. On Baroness Morris's last question about whether we can be confident that there is a teacher in every primary school who knows what they are doing and can drive this, the answer is no. There is more variability than we would like. We want to use the primary PE and sport premium to focus on getting schools that are strong in that to support others and drive greater activity in that space. It is work in progress. I do not think there is a limit to ambition, but we absolutely need to focus and sharpen the resources we have to make the biggest difference we can.

Q7 **Baroness Blower:** My interests as recorded are as follows. I am the vice-president of Show Racism the Red Card, an education charity working with current and retired football players. Baroness Brady, I am very pleased to say that we have a very good project at West Ham. I have a son-in-law who is an assistant head in a large secondary school. One of his responsibilities is PE. He is active in a local football team, Pitshanger Dynamo, as both player and administrator.

My question follows on very well from Baroness Morris's question and is to Graham Archer. What assessment has been made of the sport premium and whether it has been money well spent? In 2019, the APPG on a Fit and Healthy Childhood reported that there had been "little critical appraisal" of that funding, and identified an increasing tendency for schools to use their funding to employ sports coaches to deliver the PE curriculum. The APPG recommended changing the name of the premium

to the primary physical education and physical activity grant to help to “liberate head teachers from the (mistaken) mindset that resources can only be spent on PE or sports lessons”. I would be pleased to have your observations on that.

Graham Archer: We are absolutely clear that the PE and sport premium should not be used for topping up or substituting basic delivery of the PE curriculum. We are clear that we want that premium to be used to deliver a premium, to use a trite way of describing it. It is about extending the work that goes on in the core curriculum to enable children to engage in more activities, to focus sharply on inclusion in those activities, and to extend the range of games and sports that are delivered. The way in which Ofsted inspects PE, and thinks about sport as part of the need for a school to deliver a healthy life experience for children, is an important element of accountability in that space. The work being done by the active youth partnerships is an important part of thinking about how schools can extend and deliver more.

The circumstances Baroness Blower describes do not appear to me the most appropriate use of the premium. We would very much want to see it used in a more extensive way. The work of the APPG and others that have looked at that is very much part of the way in which we continue to refine, develop and think about how we deliver that programme.

Q8 Baroness Sater: I declare my interests as chairman and trustee of the Queen’s Club Foundation. I am a member of the Association for Physical Education’s national taskforce to address the future of physical education, patron of StreetGames and vice-chair of the APPG for Sport, and former vice-chair and trustee of the Queen’s Club and former chair and trustee of StreetGames.

I would like to direct my question to all three panellists. What are you doing to encourage adults of all ages and abilities, particularly those from underrepresented groups, including women and girls, ethnic minorities, disabled people, older people and those from less affluent backgrounds, to become more active both in school settings and in the wider community? Drilling down slightly, what levers do you think you are lacking to increase the progress and pace of change?

Ben Dean: Building on what I said earlier, we fully recognise that part of our job is to try to get people active who are not traditionally active. One way of doing that is to find new ways to encourage them to do things. You might be a keen walker. On the point about different segmentations, we have found that, if you encourage older people to become part of an organised walking group, it can be a good gateway into walking sports. We see many more older people in the population now doing walking football and netball. It is fantastic for both the physical workout they get and for their mental well-being, with the social network it gives them. That is definitely one thing that Sport England, one of our key delivery partners, has been looking at.

Likewise, with black and ethnic minority groups, we fully recognise that in parts of the population we are not getting the activity levels we would

like. What are the targeted interventions that they may need? Some of it can be comms campaign work, of which a really good example is the This Girl Can campaign. There is also the We Are Undefeatable campaign that works with disabled people on how they can get active. There is some campaigning work, but you also need to make sure that you have the infrastructure and facilities for people to do the activities they want. Part of our story has been making sure that there are those facilities across the country. We have clearly done a lot, but undoubtedly there is more to do and we continue to work on that.

Mark Davies: It is an excellent question. There is a real challenge for us to make sure that we think about how sport can help to address health inequalities and the disparities within different communities. There are a couple of things I want to point to.

Over the summer, we launched communications called Better Health, which were linked to Covid but were very much targeted at people from all backgrounds; the TV adverts about getting active were all about activity, not sports. We were not trying to encourage people to do elite sports but asking them to get active. You will have seen the diverse range of people sizes, colours and shapes who featured in the adverts. That seems to have had some impact. People recognised themselves in those adverts and started to take action.

Through the NHS England programme, we are encouraging social prescribing, which tends to target the most disadvantaged and those with the greatest health problems, so that is part of the armoury. There is no single solution.

The four chief medical officers of the four UK nations issue guidelines on physical activity and updated them last year. We have a programme to help healthcare professionals understand those guidelines, because quite a lot of the impact will be through trusted professionals talking about physical activity. One of the things we want to do is encourage healthcare professionals to talk to people about weight, health and activity in the round, as part of their general overall health. That is a challenge because often primary care professionals have not wanted to talk about weight. It is not one of the things they feel comfortable talking about. We are trying to move that on, so that people can discuss it and have a conversation with their healthcare professionals.

Alongside the campaign I talked about, we announced in the summer that we would be looking at increasing the number of weight management services available. We want to target those at the most disadvantaged groups of people who otherwise are unlikely to attend services. Physical activity tends to be on a social gradient, so targeting resources for weight management on people in the most disadvantaged communities in the poorest areas would be part of how we address health inequalities. We still have to roll that out.

Lord Hayward: There is a lot of concentration on many fields, but Covid has been absolutely brutal in relation to mental health and society. Are

the different departments working together to develop a programme to ease mental health, as it relates to physical activity and sport, as we come out of the Covid crisis?

Mark Davies: The lead department on mental health is obviously mine. We recognise the impact of Covid on mental health. Not only has it broadened the number of people who might be susceptible to mental health problems, but for those with pre-existing problems it has probably made them worse, so it is a significant issue.

The link to physical activity is well known and well evidenced. Public Health England's programme Every Mind Matters talks about the five ways to well-being, of which physical activity is one. At the more clinical end of things, the money announced for the NHS a couple of weeks ago, before the spending review, included significant additional resource for mental health services, so there is recognition that demand will have increased. I believe we will be publishing a mental health strategy very soon, which will set out our response to the challenges of Covid.

There is no doubt that maintaining physical activity has a significant protective impact on people's mental well-being. That is something we recognise. Whether we do enough is something you might want to make a judgment on.

The Chair: Graham, would you like to respond to Baroness Sater's question about diversity and inclusion?

Graham Archer: Before I deal with that, may I follow up Mark's answer on mental health? Colleagues in the department are closely engaged with their DHSC colleagues in thinking about the impact of Covid on children and young people in a mental health context. We have stood up quite quickly a programme to support children's mental health as they return to school. We are thinking about how we need to pivot or recast the way in which the broader range of services for children and young people, both in schools and, as we edge towards the specialist end of things, in the mental health sphere, work together and focus on Covid outcomes. Through all of that, the impact of physical activity on physical and mental health is an important element.

To return to Baroness Sater's question, one of the things that is helpful in this space is that we have a good deal of data about how different groups of young people engage in sport, through the Active Lives children's survey and reports from people such as the disability charity Activity Alliance. We use those to shape our activity a bit. Examples would include the Inclusion 2020 grant, £300,000 a year, paid to the Youth Sport Trust, or to a Youth Sport Trust-led consortium, which looks to work with members of the school workforce and use young leaders to engage children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities to be physically active. We published a new e-learning resource focused particularly on autism and how autistic children and young people engage with sport.

More broadly, we have a volunteer leaders and coaches programme, delivered by Sport England, which aims to get young people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to engage—for example, to help deliver school games. As I may already have said, we expect the primary PE and sport premium to be used to drive inclusion. We have a range of programmes aimed at increasing the participation of girls: for example, the Youth Sport Trust's and Sport England's Girls Active programme, and a new set of video resources helping to engage schools in PE called Studio You, which is another Sport England programme. Those are just a few examples of how we seek to connect.

Q9 Lord Knight of Weymouth: Some of the low activity we have been talking about among underrepresented groups may be because they have experienced some form of discrimination. Ben, how are you tackling racism, homophobia, misogyny and transphobia in sport at all levels?

Ben Dean: We absolutely recognise that. We do not want any racist behaviour, homophobic behaviour or transphobic behaviour in sport. This is one of the areas where government is part of the story, but it needs collaboration across a lot of different partners.

When it comes to what happens on terraces, the FA and footballing bodies have a huge amount of work to do. They work very closely with the Home Office and police. The training that stewards now get on intervening if they hear racist chanting, and the much more sophisticated CCTV now installed in several stadiums, has been helpful in targeting that, but there have still been cases. We want sports to be very clear about cracking down on individual cases, while making sure that they create the right supportive environment.

One of the things football has done is try to make the sport much more inclusive. When we look at the terraces now, we see families turning up and far more mothers taking their kids, and that creates a better atmosphere. Baroness Brady will know that from her West Ham work. A lot has been done there. One of the things we continue to support, although it is not for government directly to lead, are stories of high-profile sports people coming out as gay. That is something we try to welcome. There has been lots of media pick-up on the fact that sport needs a more welcoming environment, both on the pitch and off the pitch in the locker-room.

Lord Knight of Weymouth: In respect of sport governing bodies and sporting groups, do you have any leverage for them to do better on the diversity of their membership?

Ben Dean: One of the things we absolutely believe in doing is making sure that we talk to those bodies about it. Only two weeks ago, the Secretary of State held a meeting with all the key senior football partners, as well as Kick It Out and some of those involved in tackling racism and homophobia, to do precisely that, and to say, "We are still seeing too many problems. What are you doing? How are you focusing on it? How seriously are you taking it?" In our minds, it is not a one-off

initiative but bread and butter work, and it needs to be part of senior conversations on all national governing boards and in all sports wherever possible.

The Chair: We may well come back to that some other time. Baroness Grey-Thompson?

Q10 Baroness Grey-Thompson: I start by declaring my interests. I apologise for reading them out with a bit of pace; otherwise, I may not get to my question. I am chair of ukactive, a non-executive director of the BBC and a board member of the London Legacy Development Corporation. I do occasional TV work for the BBC, Sky and other channels. On 24 July 2020, I had a speaking engagement for the IOC and the IPC in partnership with Airbnb. I had a speaking engagement on 9 October 2019 for the UK APMP. I made a visit to Berlin, Germany, from 15 to 18 February 2020 to attend the Laureus world sports awards and received a gift of a Montblanc medium suitcase and a Laureus bracelet, and business class flights and accommodation costs for me and a guest were paid for by the organisers.

I am an officer of the adult social care APPG, a member of the basketball APPG, a member of the boxing APPG, a member of the Commonwealth Games APPG, a member of the disability APPG, and vice chair of the inclusive entrepreneurship APPG. I am vice-chair of the Olympic and Paralympic Games APPG and I am vice-chair of the Sport APPG. I am an advisory board member of Amaechi Performance Systems. I am a director of the National Academy for Social Prescribing. I am a member of the advisory board of Equida. I am chancellor of the University of Northumbria in Newcastle. I am vice-president of the Local Government Association. I am an ambassador for Fields in Trust. I am an associate member of the British Wheelchair Sports Foundation. I am chair and a former trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, council member of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and president of Sports Leaders UK.

I am president of the Welsh Association for Cricketers with a Disability. I am a trustee of the global Laureus Sport for Good Foundation. I am a trustee for SportsAid, in which my interest ceased on 29 January 2020. I am a trustee of the Sunderland Foundation of Light. I am trustee of the Wembley National Stadium Trust. I am vice-chair and an academy member of the Laureus World Sports Academy. I am vice-president of the New Marske Harriers. I am a member of the UK IWG secretariat and conference bid steering group. I am an ambassador for Sport Relief.

I was co-chair of the All-Party Commission on Physical Activity from 2013 to 2014; I was chair of the duty of care in sport review from 2015 to 2017; I am a former trustee of the Jane Tomlinson Appeal, the Tony Blair Sports Foundation and the Tennis Foundation. I am a former director of London Marathon Events Ltd. I was a member of the Sports Council for Wales from 1994 to 2002, including the elite Cymru panel from 1996 to 2003. I was a member of the English Sports Council lottery awards panel from 1995 to 1999; and deputy chair of the United Kingdom lottery awards panel and member of the UK Sports Council from 1998 to 2002.

I was a member of the 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games organising council. I was a member of the North East Sport board from 2006 to 2008. I was a member of the European Paralympic Committee from 2005 to 2009. I was a non-executive director of UK Athletics from 2008 to 2012. For the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation, I was chair of the Commission on the Future of Women's Sport from 2008 to 2013; for LOCOG, I was vice chair of the athletes panel from 2009 to 2012 and held other roles; and for UK Sport's mission 2012, I was a panel member from 2007 to 2012.

I was pro vice-chancellor of Staffordshire University until 2013. I am a former mentor for the Women's Sport Trust programme, from 2019 to 2020. My husband currently has a contract with the British Triathlon Federation to deliver coaching on the elite pathway. My daughter is a member of British Canoeing and the Talent Athlete and Coach pathway programme.

The Chair: And on Sunday you rest.

Baroness Grey-Thompson: My question is to Ben Dean of DCMS on the duty of care in sport review. What progress has been made to implement the recommendations of the review since it was published in 2017?

Ben Dean: Baroness Grey-Thompson, you have an incredibly impressive track record. I know that the duty of care is incredibly close to your heart. It is something on which my team continues to lead. The truth of the matter is that it has been very hard for my team. Since Covid kicked off, we have had to prioritise. Some of the resources for duty of care had to be reprioritised to focus on urgent Covid work. Hopefully, over the coming months, as some of the pressures of the Covid work are released, one of the areas my team will be looking at again, in answer to your point, is how much progress has been made and what more needs to be done in the year ahead.

Q11 **The Chair:** Ben, thank you very much indeed. Thank you all for coming, Ben, Graham and Mark. I am sorry we have had to rush through it and have not had the sort of interchange we would normally have on the Select Committee. I apologise for that, but we know the reasons why.

I counted 49 references to different initiatives that you mentioned; I lost count and got fed up at that point. There was a host of them from all three of you, from three areas of government. Who co-ordinates it all to make sure that across government we get a co-ordinated approach to what is one of the most important issues facing us as a society?

Ben, could you give us a starter on that? If you could write to us, it would be good to know what the organogram is, so that we can sort it out.

Ben Dean: I am very happy to write to you with further details, if that is helpful. The way we look at it is that the three of us have a duty to work across government, as do other departments. There are lots of other delivery partners. A good example that I mentioned is that, when it comes to grass-roots delivery, Sport England is our key arm's-length body. It invests hundreds of millions a year on grass-roots sports, and

there are lots of different initiatives. In my view, that is absolutely right, because we often need different initiatives to target different parts of the population, which could be geographically or demographically. To your point, we have to make sure that we are tracking the results.

Sport England is part of that. It is responsible for making sure that the grants it gives deliver the results it wants, but in government we also keep an overarching view to make sure that we are delivering. A key element of that is the Active Lives survey. Are all these different initiatives delivering the results that we expect and want from the public money, sometimes lottery money, going into them? The Active Lives survey results give us very good, detailed knowledge of where we need to do more, or where some initiatives are not achieving as much as we want. That can be picked up in future funding rounds to decide whether, having tried something that was not as successful as we wanted it to be, we need to reprioritise the money elsewhere.

I do not think that having 40 initiatives, or probably far more when you look at all the grass-roots work, is necessarily a bad thing. To your point, we need to make sure that we have good oversight across government of how they are delivering the goals that the Government, as well as the public, want them to deliver.

Graham Archer: I think we may have lost our Chair.

Lord Knight of Weymouth: That is careless. Congratulations.

Lord Moynihan: Do we still have everybody else?

Lord Knight of Weymouth: I think so.

Lord Moynihan: In that case, it might be helpful if I take this opportunity to declare my interests. It might take 30 seconds and then we will thank our speakers very warmly.

I am an advisory board member of Sports 12 Education Ltd, trading as InSport Education, which provides sport business education courses. I am a member of the international Commission for Public Affairs and Social Development through Sport. I am a senior adviser to InSport Intelligence sports publications.

I am a life member of British Rowing, president of the British Water Ski Federation Ltd and president of the Welsh Amateur Rowing Association. I am a patron of Disability Snowsport UK. I am vice-chair of the boxing APPG, a member of the Commonwealth Games APPG, vice-chair of the golf APPG, co-chair of the Olympic and Paralympic Games APPG, vice-chair of the sport APPG, and vice-chair of the sport, modern slavery and human rights APPG. I was a member of the London Sports board from 2009 to 2013. I was Minister for Sport from 1987 to 1990. I was chair of the British Olympic Association from 2005 to 2012. I was a member of the board and a former director of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games from 2005 to 2012. My son is a member of British Ski and Snowboard and was in the senior national

alpine ski squad until April 2019.

With that, I thank Graham, Mark and Ben very much for giving evidence this afternoon. Thank you, Ben, for your kind agreement to follow up in writing any questions we might have, particularly in the context of co-ordination between government departments on sport, recreation and active lifestyle policies. They have been illuminating answers and we greatly appreciate your time. It has been very valuable to us. Many thanks.