

## **HM Government – Written evidence (NPS0134)**

### **Lords Select Committee Written Evidence - National Plan for Sport and Recreation Committee**

**Question 1 - How can local delivery, including funding structures, of sport and recreation be improved to ensure that people of all ages and abilities are able to lead an active lifestyle? For example, how successfully do local authorities and other bodies such as Active Partnerships, Leisure Trusts, local sports clubs and charities work together, and how might coordination be improved?**

#### **Strategy**

Government published its strategy for sport in 2015, (*Sporting Future- a new strategy for an active nation*). In the document, we set out what the Government wanted to achieve from investing in a range of national and local projects, both existing and new.

For local projects we worked on the premise that no individual lives in a vacuum. We are all connected to a place and its community, each with its own unique structure, relationships and geography. Without taking this important point into account we would risk missing the inevitable synergies which can be exploited with other work being taken forward across the country. Initiatives such as the School Sport Action Plan, Active Travel work and Sport England's Local Delivery Pilots (LDPs) are a direct result of this thinking.

#### **Sport England Local Delivery Pilots**

Since 2016, Sport England has set aside funding of over £1m to create twelve Local Delivery Pilots across the country. Through the pilots, Sport England wanted to understand how we could use those local identities and structures to deliver sustainable increases in activity levels and then spread that learning more widely across the country. 12 pilots were chosen.

The starting point for some pilots were entire counties or local authority areas; others are very clear about focusing on specific locations or groups of people within such areas. Some reflect the reality of inner-city living, some are coastal communities and some are predominantly rural. This diversity is a real strength and adds to what can be learned from LDPs.

The 12 LDP areas are: Birmingham and Solihull, Bradford, Calderdale, Doncaster, Essex, Exeter and Cranbrook, Greater Manchester, Hackney, Pennine Lancashire, Southall, South Tees and Withernsea. All twelve pilots have reported back to Sport England with updated appraisals in October 2020 and this learning can be found on the Sport England website

#### **School Sport Action Plan**

In July 2019, DfE, DCMS and DHSC published the School Sport Activity and Action Plan (SSAAP). There has been widespread support from sport stakeholders for our high-level objectives and the Government remains

committed to delivering on the actions set out in the School Sport and Activity Action Plan.

Three examples of this includes:

- Government will launch a series of regional pilots to trial new and innovative approaches to getting young people active as part of a coordinated offer of sport and activity.
- Schools will ensure pupils have the opportunity to be active throughout the school day, in a way that engages and interests them.
- Government will raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for children and young people and make messages such as “at least 60minutes a day” as recognisable as ‘5 a day’

We will review the timing of an updated plan in light of the budget announcement. There is strong cross-Whitehall collaboration between the contributing government departments working on the School Sports Activity and Action Plan

### **Cycling and Walking Strategy (Gear Change)**

On 28 July 2020 the Prime Minister launched ambitious plans to boost cycling and walking in England, so that half of all journeys in towns and cities are cycled or walked by 2030. These focus on “functional” journeys, eg commuting and travelling to the shops, rather than sports and recreation activities.

This includes a £2 billion package of funding for active travel over the next 5 years. The first £250 million of the £2 billion is being spent this financial year on “quick wins” including the Active Travel Fund and the “Fix your Bike” voucher scheme. Over £200 million has been made available to authorities, via the Active Travel Fund, to support an active and green recovery from Covid-19. This will enable local authorities to deliver safe and direct cycling and walking measures in their areas, such as protected space for cycling, widened pavements, safer junctions and cycle and bus-only corridors.

The priority actions for the Cycling and Walking Strategy £2bn over five years of dedicated funding for cycling and walking include

- Offering Bikeability (cycling proficiency) training to every school child and every adult who wants it. This funding will help to increase children's road awareness, encourage active travel and improve future motorists’ empathy for more vulnerable road users.
- Building thousands of miles of cycling and walking networks in order to provide safe, direct and connected routes across towns and cities. Investment will get more people cycling by improving and expanding cycle routes between the city centres, local communities, and key employment and retail sites.
- Providing a national programme of incentives to support take-up of electric cycles.
- Supporting local behaviour change projects including more safety and awareness training for cyclists, projects to increase walking, extra secure

cycle storage, bike repair and maintenance courses, road safety measures and mapping information for pedestrians.

We expect to provide funding to local authorities through a mixture of allocation by formula and competition, with the majority by allocation, heavily based on ambition set out in, and robustness of, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) in order to reduce burdens on local authorities. Our aim is to provide long-term funding following the next Spending Review in 2021 by providing indicative funding streams up to 2024/25, in much the same way as we did for the Emergency Active Travel Fund in 2020/21.

The Department for Transport is supporting 46 local authorities with their Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) so they can deliver high quality cycling and walking programmes. This is key to us achieving the objectives set out in the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

### **Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS)**

The Government's aims, objectives and targets for walking and cycling are set out in the statutory 2017 Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. The Government published its first report to Parliament on 7 February 2020 which highlights the delivery of actions, outputs and outcomes since 2016/17. The strategy sets out a 4-year action plan outlining key short-term interventions to support delivery of the aims and targets. Of the 26 actions outlined in the CWIS, around half are substantially completed and many of the remaining actions are long term interventions that will continue until at least the end of 2020/21, such as the Access Fund, Bikeability, Cycle Rail and third sector behaviour change initiatives.

Around £2.4 billion is likely to be invested in cycling and walking over the 5 years of the CWIS, outside London. The CWIS originally projected £1.2 billion of investment to 2020/21, and this amount had already been invested to the end of 2018/19 on cycling and walking across all relevant government funding streams, including almost £390 million of ring-fenced funding. This funding covers England, outside London, and TfL provides further funding for London.

**Question 2 - How can children and young people be encouraged to participate in sport and recreation both at school and outside school, and lead an active lifestyle? If possible, share examples of success stories and good practice, and challenges faced.**

In July 2019 the Department for Education (DfE), Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), jointly published the Government's School Sport and Activity Action Plan (SSAAP). It sets out a joint commitment to ongoing collaboration to support the delivery of high-quality PE lessons and to ensure that sport and physical activity are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities. This will contribute to the ambition of the Government's Sporting Future strategy and the aim set out in the Childhood Obesity Plan that all children should take part in at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day, with 30 minutes a day in school.

Supporting all pupils to be physically active involves addressing barriers to engagement in under-represented groups. There are a number of programmes which support under-represented groups and aim to remove barriers in order that all pupils are able to participate in PE, sport and physical activity:

- Inclusion 2020 grant: The DfE has supported a grant supporting pupils with SEND to have increased and improved access to PE, sport and physical activity since 2013. Our current grant is the Youth Sport Trust-led *Inclusion 2020* grant which totals £300k per financial year. Examples of impact include:
  - In the year 2019/20 the grant engaged over 10,000 members of the school workforce, from over 5,000 schools, in over 800 Continued Professional Development (CPD) events
  - In the year 2019/20 the grant supported over 4,000 young leaders in engaging over 20,000 children and young people in further opportunities to be physically active
  - During 2020 a new e-learning resource was published called 'All about autism, all about me'. This new resource is endorsed by the National Autistic Society and builds knowledge of autism spectrum conditions and some of the key considerations for making PE and sport inclusive to all. The 'All about autism, all about me' e-learning guide has engaged over 2,604 schools.
- Volunteering and Leadership: Our Volunteer Leaders and Coaches programme is delivered by Sport England. It recruits and trains young people including those from lower socio-economic backgrounds to help deliver the School Games.
- Girls' engagement: Stakeholders have a range of programmes aimed at increasing participation in under-represented groups, such as *Girls Active* (Youth Sport Trust and Sport England) and a new set of video resources to engage girls in PE called *StudioYou* (Sport England).

- Swimming and water safety: Inclusion 2020 currently includes 7 local areas who aim to understand and address barriers to pupils with SEND being able to swim and learn how to be safe in and around water. Swim England has a new 'inclusion hub' on their website, which includes resources and advice for school, parents and swim teachers.

Through the School Sport and Activity Action Plan the Government's aim is to build physical competency alongside confidence, enjoyment, knowledge and understanding and high quality, modern PE lessons that engage boys and girls of different backgrounds and abilities. This should be a fundamental part of every child's school experience. Examples of how the Department for Education is helping to achieve this include:

- Improving the coordination of PE training for teachers: Funding of £500,000 has been provided by the department to allow nine teaching schools to test new ways to support schools to deliver high quality PE, improve and co-ordinate the PE CPD for teachers and support primary schools to maximise their PE and Sport Premium funding.
- Helping schools to open up their sport facilities: The department is providing £1.6 million to Sport England to boost the capacity of Active Partnerships to help schools further open their sport facilities after the school day and during the school holidays.
- Take further action to ensure all children leave primary school with vital swimming and water safety skills: The Department continues to work closely with Swim England and members of the Curriculum Swimming and Water Safety Review Group to look at the further support needed to ensure all pupils learn how to swim and be safe in and around the water. Updated advice has been produced with Swim England to support schools to use PE Premium funding to raise attainment in swimming and water safety.
- Launching a scheme to help schools rate their health and wellbeing provision, which includes guidance on appropriate levels of PE provision: The Healthy Schools Rating Scheme was launched in 2019 and is available to all schools participating in the Active Lives Children and Young People survey.
- Providing up to £6m support to schools to teach the new health and relationships curriculum: A new Physical Health and Fitness module was launched in November 2020 to support teachers to deliver the new health and relationships curriculum. The module covers practical training materials for primary and secondary schools to use to train staff to teach about physical health and fitness with key knowledge and facts on active and healthy lifestyles, the benefits of physical activity on mental wellbeing and the risks of an inactive lifestyle.

The government provides £320m of funding each year to primary schools through the PE and sport premium to make additional and sustainable improvements to the quality of PE, physical activity and sport. It is allocated directly to schools, so they have the flexibility to use it in the way that works best for their pupils. The amount of the PE and sport premium was doubled in

2017 to the current £320 million amount. The 2019 Primary PE and sport premium survey investigated the impact of this doubling of the PE and sport premium amount. Teachers reported improvements across all five key indicators for the PE and sport premium as well as other positive impacts such as increased participation in PE, extra-curricular sport and competitions for children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Pupil premium/Free School Meals) and pupils with SEND.

Schools are best placed to understand and meet the needs of their pupils. They should ensure pupils have the opportunity to be active throughout the school day, in a way that engages and interests them. Most schools do not rely on PE lessons to provide physical activity for pupils, but are exploring options like after-school clubs, lunchtime sports clubs, innovative activities such as active miles, and building in activity to classroom lessons. The department has published a series of examples of how schools can support pupils to be physically active during the school day through a new YouTube playlist.

The Department for Education has provided £1.6m into the Active Partnership network to fund 19 projects across 23 Active Partnerships to support schools to open their sports facilities in order to broaden the offer of extra-curricular and out of school sporting and physical activities available to pupils and the wider community.

**Question 3 - How can adults of all ages and backgrounds, particularly those from under-represented groups, including women and girls, ethnic minorities, disabled people, older people, and those from less affluent backgrounds, be encouraged to lead more active lifestyles? If possible, share examples of success stories and good practice, and challenges faced.**

Government wants to ensure that everybody in this country has the opportunity to play and enjoy sport. Our aim is to increase diversity among sporting organisations and to help the sport sector be more inclusive and welcoming to its spectators, participants and people in its workforce. Government's strategy for sport and physical activity 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for An Active Nation' highlights the importance when meeting their aims of focusing on those groups that are less likely to take part in sport and physical activity including those from lower socio-economic groups.

We are working hard with sports bodies in this area and through Sport England's 'Active Lives' survey, we are measuring participation of under-represented groups. Sport England's latest Active Lives data shows that:

- Men (65% or 14.3m) are more likely to be active than women (61% or 14.2m) and across the whole academic year, boys (47%) remained more likely to be active than girls (43%).
- Those with no disability or long-term health condition (67%) are more active than those with a disability and long-term health condition (47%).
- People who are from lower socioeconomic groups (NS SEC 6-8) (53.3%) remain less likely to be active than those from higher socioeconomic groups (NS SEC 1-2) (71.9%)
- Activity levels vary considerably between ethnicities for example, 68.7% of people from a Mixed ethnic background are active and

53.0% of people from an Asian (excluding Chinese) background are active.

In addition, Sport England's "Sport for All?" report, published in January 2020, looked in depth at the activity levels of people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Sport England's investment into community sport aims to provide support and opportunities to people from groups less likely to be active. Examples include their Active Ageing fund, strategic partnerships with disability sports organisations, and campaigns such as We Are Undefeatable. This campaign has been developed in close conjunction with the Richmond Group of charities and aims to inspire people with long-term health conditions to get active in ways that work for them.

Government recognises that Covid-19 has brought new challenges to the way people are able to engage in physical activity. We have been working closely with our national sports council Sport England to continue to promote health and fitness during lockdown. Sport England have launched the Join the Movement campaign which provides tips, advice and guidance on how people can keep or get active in and around the home.

On women's sport specifically, the Government is determined to continue to maintain the focus on women's sport and build on the fantastic progress made in recent years. Initiatives like Sport England's This Girl Can campaign have been groundbreaking in encouraging women to get active regardless of shape, size and ability and to date has already inspired 3.9 million women to take part since its launch in 2015.

Over the last year the Minister for Sport has met with a range of sports organisations to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on women's sport and how together we can address these challenges going forward. The Minister has made clear in these discussions that he expects women's sport to be protected through the pandemic and prioritised as we emerge on the other side.

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**Question 4 - Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation, the Government's 2015 sports strategy, outlines five outcome priorities: physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development. Are these the right priorities and how successful has the government been in measuring and delivering these outcomes to date?**

Since the strategy (*Sporting Future- a new strategy for an active nation*) was published in December 2015 a huge amount has been achieved.

DCMS, Sport England and UK Sport have continued to embed the five outcomes that *Sporting Future* sets out in everything that we do and invest in. We have continued to work across government to harness the benefits that sport and physical activity can give rise to across a range of agendas – health, education, social cohesion, transport, the environment, and planning.

Researchers at Sheffield Hallam University estimate sport and physical activity delivers £85.5bn of social and economic benefits in England. This is delivered through a range of outcomes such as mental wellbeing, improving physical health and supporting jobs.

This means that for every £1 spent on community sport and physical activity in England, an economic and social return on investment of £3.91 is generated.

Each year since its launch in 2015, The *Sporting Future* strategy is monitored for delivery across government and the Annual Reports are available on GOV.UK. We have greatly improved our evidence base since previous strategies, with data being taken from numerous sets corresponding to the five outcomes. Our main source is Sport England's Active Lives survey for adults twice a year and Active Lives for Children and Young People survey once a year.

We are considering a refresh to the government Sport Strategy once the pandemic recedes sufficiently. This task will be supported by the launch of Sport England's new 10 year strategy 'Uniting the Movement' on Tuesday 26 January 2021. The strategy will set a positive agenda in providing opportunities for people to exercise over the next ten years. The five outcomes model gives a more holistic picture of how the nation benefits from the input of funding and projects than previous strategies allowed. The current datasets we rely on to give us reliable quantifiable progression, are crucial in building a real-time longitudinal picture as we build for the future.

**Question 5 - Is government capturing an accurate picture of how people participate in sport and recreation activities in its data collection? How could this be improved?**

Sport England tracks participation in sport and physical activity in England through two national surveys; Active Lives Adult, which is published twice a year, and the 'world-leading' Active Lives Children and Young People, which is published annually. Both give a unique and comprehensive view of how people are getting active.

Additionally, shortly after the government issued guidance on social distancing and limiting people to one piece of outdoor exercise a day, Sport England commissioned Savanta ComRes to conduct regular surveys to supplement Active Lives over the pandemic. Each week for the initial eight weeks of lockdown, Savanta ComRes surveyed the English public to assess their activity levels and attitudes towards physical activity. Throughout this period, they published the results to help people understand the impact of coronavirus and how they could help to keep the nation active.

The research also included the ways people kept active and whether they did it solo, or with other members of their household. Since then, Sport England have been commissioning ad hoc surveys at key points, such as on the weekend the majority of indoor sport and physical activity facilities were allowed to reopen.

## **Question 6 - How can racism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny and ableism in sport be tackled?**

There is no place for racism, sexism, homophobia or any other kind of discrimination in sport. Our aim is to increase diversity among sporting organisations and to help the sport sector be more inclusive and welcoming to its spectators, participants and people in its workforce.

Government continues to work with National Governing Bodies of Sport and organisations such as Kick It Out, Stonewall and Women in Football to tackle discrimination in local, national and international sport. We are working hard with sports bodies in this area and through Sport England's 'Active Lives' survey, we are measuring participation of under-represented groups.

We are fully appreciative of the efforts football and other sports have made over a number of years to tackle discrimination. For example football and rugby union bodies, including the Premier League, the Football Association, the English Football League, the Professional Game Match Officials Limited, Premiership Rugby and the Rugby Football Union, all supported Stonewall's Rainbow Laces campaign to show support for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender (LGB&T) players and fans, as part of which players and officials wore rainbow-coloured laces and armbands. DCMS is also supportive of the Home Office's work in partnership with Kick It Out to develop guidance on initiatives related to LGB&T hate crime. Through the Governance Code we are also working to ensure that there is greater diversity on sports' national governing bodies boards.

However, there is no room for complacency, and we will continue to work with the sector to ensure action is taken to tackle discrimination.

## **Question 7 - What can be done to improve and implement effective duty of care and safeguarding standards for sports and recreation activities at all levels?**

### **Duty of Care**

It is vital that everyone participating in sport feels safe and secure and that where allegations about inappropriate or harmful behaviour are made, these are taken seriously.

In response to the 2017 Duty of Care report and well-publicised cases of inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour in sport, UK Sport announced the following measures in the 12 months following its publication:

- **Template policies:** UK Sport produced template discipline, grievance, capability, whistle-blowing and Diversity and Inclusion policies for employees of NGBs (including coaches and athlete support personnel), which are designed to support compliance with the *Code for Sport Governance*. These are all modelled on ACAS guidance, representing best practice, and they are published on UK Sport's website.
- **Independent element in discipline and grievance procedures:** UK Sport developed new athlete discipline and grievance policies which mandate an independent appeal element, facilitated by Sport Resolutions UK. In certain circumstances (mainly allegations of coaches bullying athletes) NGBs are required to commission an independent investigation and panel, or else write to the CEO of UK Sport to explain why they have chosen not to do so. This requirement has been in place since May 2018 and has been successful to date - UK Sport have reported an increase in the successful use of mediation services to resolve disputes informally.
- **British Athletes Commission:** As part of UK Sport's work on athlete voice and representation, a review of the British Athletes Commission (BAC) was conducted. As a result, UK Sport committed to investing £1million in the BAC over the rest of the Tokyo 2020 cycle. This will allow the BAC to increase its capacity threefold, with two full time casework officers and permanent support for athletes representatives in each Olympic and Paralympic World Class Programme.
- **The Culture Health Check:** a regular survey designed to capture information about the culture, systems and support available in World Class Performance Programmes, administered by an independent research agency. UK Sport triage each report and present the findings to the Chief Executive and Performance Director of each NGB. It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and Performance Director to report back to the athletes, coaches/support staff and stakeholders. As part of the survey process, athletes and employees can speak directly and confidentially to the Head of Sport Integrity at UK Sport, or to the research agency if they wish to raise specific concerns about unacceptable behaviour.
- **'Culture Capture' guidance:** UK Sport has issued guidance to all World Class Programmes about culture within the environment of high performance sport. The guidance identifies four 'golden threads' of a positive and winning sporting culture (inspiration, integrity, the pursuit of

excellence, and respect) as well as providing extensive practical guidance and recommendations for staff throughout the system, tailored to 'critical moments' in an athlete's journey through their sport. This includes a definition of unacceptable behaviours and guidance on identifying such behaviours.

We welcome the action taken across the sector to address the themes highlighted in the Duty of Care report. It is vital that work continues to strengthen and embed positive cultures. The sector needs to continue to challenge itself on this issue - for example, embedding national policies and procedures at grassroots level. UK Sport have done some really positive work on culture, learning lessons from the unfortunate cases that have come to light in recent years.

### **Safeguarding**

We are completely committed to doing all we can to ensure everyone can participate in sport in safe and secure environments. DCMS will continue to work closely with Sport England and the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit to review and strengthen safeguarding provision wherever necessary.

All organisations in receipt of public funding from Sport England and UK Sport have been required to meet the standards set out in the Code for Sports Governance since April 2017. The Code contains specific obligations around safeguarding, including a requirement for national governing bodies to adhere to the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport, which are issued by the Child Protection in Sport Unit.

We have also taken steps to promote best practice in non-funded sports. The Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts was launched in March 2018 which sets consistent standards and provides parents with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about where to send their children for instruction.

We welcome the Ministry of Justice's commitment to change the law around 'positions of trust' in the Sexual Offences Act 2003. We will continue working closely with the Ministry of Justice to ensure that sports coaches are included as part of these legislative changes.

#### Government actions since November 2016 to improve safeguarding in sport

In the immediate aftermath of allegations of non-recent child sexual abuse being reported in November 2016:

- The Minister for Sport wrote to all sports funded through Sport England in November 2016 asking them to look into their safeguarding processes to ensure they were as robust as possible, and to ensure they have processes for managing allegations of non-recent sexual abuse.
- DCMS asked Sport England to carry out a piece of work to set out the current safeguarding landscape in sport in relation to child sexual abuse, and to provide an assessment of how it could be further strengthened. This resulted in recommendations and an implementation plan, which Sport England reports on bi-annually. *Please note that details of this work are not in the public domain.*

- Baroness Grey-Thompson looked at safeguarding as part of her review into the duty of care sport has towards participants.
- On 1st March 2018, the Minister for Sport launched a Safeguarding Code in Martial Arts. The Code is designed to allow parents, organisations and leisure providers to make informed decisions about Martial Arts providers. Signing up to the Code will demonstrate that a provider has a commitment to safeguarding principles and has undergone basic checks to ensure that they have the appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- DCMS has worked closely with the Department for Education to include explicit reference to the responsibilities of sports organisations in the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children* for the first time.<sup>1</sup>

### The Sexual Offences Act 2003

- The Sexual Offences Act 2003 prohibits consensual sexual activity between an adult in a position of trust and a young person aged 16 or 17 under their care. A 'position of trust' applies to adults working in certain professions, such as teaching, medicine or care. Under the current legislation, it is currently not illegal for sports coaches to have a sexual relationship with someone aged 16 or 17 under their care.
- DCMS is currently working with the Ministry of Justice to extend the definition of a 'Position of Trust' in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to include sports coaches. Ministry of Justice publicly committed to changing the law around positions of trust (at an Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse hearing in May 2020).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

**Question 8 - What are the opportunities and challenges facing elite sports in the UK and what can be done to make national sports governing bodies more accountable? For example, accountability for representing and protecting their membership, promoting their sport and maximising participation.**

**Elite Sport Challenges**

Elite sport in the UK has faced some unprecedented challenges in the last year and will continue to need support and innovation from within as the sector looks to return to full operation.

We have put both regulatory exemptions and guidance in place to ensure that elite and professional athletes can continue to train and compete. The sector have responded to the challenges of creating environments that have enabled them to continue competing “behind closed doors” and in this manner many sports have been able to continue their international fixture calendar.

We have seen a number of events admit limited numbers of spectators under our relevant guidance, and the restrictions put in place by covid local tiers, and it is progress in this area that will be key to enable the sector to recover and thrive. We have invited a Sport Tech and Innovation Group (STIG) to explore what interventions could be deployed to welcome more spectators back to sport, and these experiences can be shared across other sectors that typically entertain large crowds.

For those sports whose viability has been threatened by the absence of match day income, we are delivering a £300 million Sport Winter Survival Package (SWSP) which will protect the immediate future of major spectator sports in England impacted by coronavirus restrictions over the winter period. Support through this package, which is administered by Sport England and overseen by an Independent Board, is primarily through loans with grants available where loans are unaffordable. We take great pride in the fact that it is the most generous financial support package of any Government for its domestic sport sector in the world which is in addition to the unprecedented support the government has provided to businesses throughout the covid pandemic; many sports clubs have also benefited from the business rates relief for eligible leisure businesses, the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

The postponement of the Tokyo games was a necessary challenge for our Olympic and Paralympic athletes, whose continued funding has been secured through the SR process. We have ensured the minimum possible disruption to their training and preparation through ensuring their access to training facilities that follow appropriate guidelines, and through our quarantine exemptions which has allowed overseas training and qualifying competitions to continued unhindered.

Elite sport clubs, of all sizes, form an integral part of our local communities, they are crucial in encouraging and facilitating participation in sport. Since 2001, alongside the Government, The FA and Premier League, have invested substantial sums into the National Game through the Football Foundation. This

currently sees around £70m a year invested into grassroots sport facilities each year.

The Premier League's Premier League Primary Stars has reached over 16,000 primary schools across England and Wales. This sees schools accessing free high-quality, curriculum-linked resources and expert coaching.

The Government continues to have regular discussions with the football authorities on the future direction of the sport, and how to ensure it is sustainable and representative. We are currently deciding on the scope and structure of the fan-led review of football governance, and will announce details of this in due course.

### **Sports Governing Body Accountability**

Launched in 2017, the Code for Sports Governance has set out standards expected for sports organisations in receipt of public funding via UK Sport or Sport England. The Code has helped accelerate the professionalisation of many national sports bodies, including establishing boards as the ultimate decision-making authority within a sport, rather than the traditional councils. It has also helped encourage greater levels of gender parity on the boards of National Governing Bodies, with women now accounting for 40% of board members across funded bodies.

In July 2020 UK Sport and Sport England announced a joint review of the Code for Sports Governance. The review, which will conclude in early 2021, will focus on areas that can help promote even greater diversity, drawing on experiences from the past three years and using current best practice.

**Question 9 - What successful policy interventions have other countries used to encourage people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to participate in sport and recreation, and lead more active lifestyles?**

Government is in regular contact with the international community regarding matters relating to anti-doping, primarily through Council of Europe and UNESCO fora. Discussions at these fora focus on the compliance of states parties to relevant anti-doping standards and conventions, and international cooperation to further promote anti-doping measures.

Government is also aware of the work that international organisations like the World Health Organisation are doing to mobilise and encourage people to lead more active lifestyles. Their Global Action Plan for Physical Activity published in 2018, provides a framework of options for Governments to help increase physical activity across the life course.

## **Question 10 - Should there be a national plan for sport and recreation? Why/why not?**

The Government believes that a National Plan for Sport and Recreation would duplicate existing published strategies including the governments *Sporting Future* strategy, Sport England's *Uniting the Movement* and UK Sports organisational strategy. Government is considering a refresh to the Government sport strategy once the pandemic recedes sufficiently.

When the current Government sport strategy, *Sporting Future* was first published in 2015 it contained a great deal of innovation and as a result we had to find new ways of funding our projects and initiatives and also importantly, measuring the success (or otherwise) of those innovations. Exchequer and lottery funding currently goes towards anything from funding improvements to local sport centres to helping support emerging sporting movements.

Our main partners in this work are the English sports councils, Sport England and UK Sport who fund grassroots sport and Elite and Olympic/paralympic sport respectively. The Sports Ground Safety Authority are our partners looking after sports grounds across England and UKAD are our UK anti-doping body.

The strategy was based around the requirement to show how any funding activity or initiative could demonstrate improvement across five targeted outcomes including mental wellbeing, improving physical health and supporting jobs. We have greatly improved our evidence base since previous strategies, with data being taken from numerous sets corresponding to the five outcomes. Our main source is Sport England's Active Lives survey for adults twice a year and Active Lives for Children and Young People survey once a year.

The challenge post-Covid will be greater than ever. We are fully aware of the magnitude of this task as people's sporting and exercising habits have been badly hit. We have a huge task to pull the nation out of its lockdown habits and help embed a more physically active way of living for people from all backgrounds.

This may require a greater injection of energy and resources in the short term as we raise the level of physical activity for people back to where they were before the lockdown restrictions and then push for improving those levels even further. We know that participating in sport and physical activity is the best way to protect the nation against future health crises including any potential mutations to the current virus.

Part of this increase in resource will, we hope, give rise to further integration and greater coordination between other government departments, notably, Education, Health and Communities. We will aim to coordinate further many of our trusted partners some of whom already work across these departmental priorities. We will aim to build further on our existing work by adapting to the changing landscape so will potentially include elements such as, for example, digital accessibility as an essential criterion for future funding.

This task will be supported by the launch of Sport England's new 10 year strategy '*Uniting the Movement.*' The strategy will help the country recover from

the coronavirus pandemic and set a positive agenda in providing opportunities for people to exercise over the next ten years.

*2 February 2021*