

Written Evidence submitted by CHANCE TO SHINE

DCMS ENQUIRY: Impact of Covid-19 on DCMS sectors

Introduction

Chance to Shine (CTS) is a national cricket charity and we focus on helping children and young people to play, learn and develop through the sport. Our work is concentrated in two areas: state schools and disadvantaged communities through our Street programme. In 2019 we reached over 600,000 children across England and Wales.

We are submitting evidence to help assist the Government understand the impact of Covid-19 on the sport sector, particularly those charities working to use sport as a vehicle to change lives for the better.

1) What has been the immediate impact of Covid-19 on the sector?

Participation challenge – keeping children physically active

As part of supporting the Government's and the England & Wales Cricket Board's response to covid-19 CTS ceased all programme delivery on 18 March 2020. At this point in time we are estimating that 400,000 children will miss out on taking part in Chance to Shine programmes if no delivery is possible for the remainder of this academic year.

Our work in State Schools supports around 5,000 primary schools every year, we support teachers with our team of professional coaches (approx. 700) who deliver high-quality cricket lessons focused on improving children's physical, personal and social wellbeing. In addition to directly supporting pupils, CTS coaches help to improve teachers' confidence in delivering lessons so that they can continue to help children benefit.

Our Street programme works in the top third of disadvantaged areas across the country, there are over 200 projects which run year-round, are free to access and are open to boys and girls aged 8-24. 81% of our participants are from BAME communities and 74% were not attending any sports team or club outside of school when they joined Street.

Achieving scale and quality is largely down to the army of coaches that inspire thousands of children and young people to take part in physical activity. As a result of Covid-19, approximately 95% of our workforce has been furloughed, and the longer no activity goes on for the bigger issue this becomes from both a financial and engagement perspective. This could have a much longer-term impact on our ability to deliver if these coaches cannot be retained.

Income reduction challenge - remaining operational and retaining the ability to deliver

Chance to Shine is in a similar boat to thousands of charities: the main reduction in our income is the result of a probable and significant decrease in forecast private fundraising. This follows from the unavoidable cancelling of fundraising events and a predicted downturn in donor support as the economic and social environments lead to trends in immediate and reduced giving capacity. We have taken a number of steps to counteract this; communicating with major donors and new virtual events.

To counterbalance this reduction in income, we have identified savings and reduced all non-essential expenditure. Whilst we are restricted, we are doing everything we can to still generate income through this period.

Taking the above into account, we are forecasting a £1.7m reduction in fundraised income. Which we predict will lead to a £1m deficit outside of our restricted grant income. We have built prudent reserves in recent years and whilst this deficit can be absorbed in 19/20 we cannot maintain deficit budget levels in future years.

Importantly we have retained the ability to deliver our programmes again this academic year and over the summer if it is safe to do so.

2) How effectively has the support provided by DCMS, other Government departments and arms-length bodies addressed the sector's needs?

The support we have had from Sport England through this time has been nothing short of exemplary. The communication around our grant, both current and future has been of huge support to not only help us plan to weather this period but help us pivot our work to continue to reach and support children and young people to play, learn and develop through cricket during this challenging time.

Sport England have really listened to our challenges and have either found ways to help solve or, for more complex challenges, such as our current and future ability to match fund, taken them onboard for consideration.

3) What will the likely long-term impacts of Covid-19 be on the sector, and what support is needed to deal with those?

One of the most challenging elements of the outbreak is the uncertainty of time frame in which CTS's operational delivery; our ability to coach and support children and schools, will be affected.

Our major areas of concern are:

A. Children missing out on the opportunities to play, learn and develop through cricket. Our immediate concern is for the hundreds of thousands of children who are not able to benefit from our programmes and the length of time that this will remain the case. In particular:

- I. **In schools** – the uncertainty of when it will be safe for external providers, such as our CTS coaches, to safely deliver in state schools, particular primary schools is a concern. The safety of participants, teachers and our workforce is of course our paramount focus, however as we believe it will be more important than ever that children are supported to be active and learning through sport, we also desire to be able to deliver our work as soon as it is safe to do so. We therefore call for government support on providing clear guidance to schools on the use of external sports coaches.
- II. **In communities** – we are anticipating our Street participants being harder to re-engage following lockdown for a variety of reasons. Again to this end, we welcome Government's support in developing guidance which would make this possible. In particular, as Street is delivered in non-traditional club settings such as Multi-Use-Games-Areas, that endorsed guidance covers these important local communities.

We are committed, through our partnerships with ECB and Sport England to recommence delivery as soon as it is safe to do so.

B. The impact to our fundraising income. In line with best practice we work to an 80p in the £1 ratio of funding going to charitable activities and we are currently scenario planning for our 20/21 operational and financial years, this process is still ongoing at the time of writing.

We will have to make some difficult decisions as the ongoing economic and social climates will likely impact on our ability to fundraise and therefore our income.

With this in mind we are scenario planning for different eventualities which include reducing the size and scale of our programmes and therefore the number of children we will be able to reach who can play, learn and develop through cricket. At the time of writing our biggest identifiable programme risk is to our Secondary School girls leadership programme as this is predominantly funded through unrestricted funds which will no longer be available. We welcome support from the Government for charities such as ourselves who, although aren't front line services in the national response to coronavirus, deliver essential and tangible health and wellbeing related benefits to the country.

4) What lessons can be learnt from how DCMS, arms-length bodies and the sector have dealt with Covid-19?

Providing clarity to the educational and community sport sector on what does and doesn't constitute safe delivery during the early and late phases of a pandemic. In the month before lockdown we had a 25% reduction in sessional delivery and this was sporadic based on local decision making. Clear guidance from government at this stage would have helped national charities such as CTS to inform partners on safe delivery or cancellation.

5) How might the sector evolve after Covid-19, and how can DCMS support such innovation to deal with future challenges?

In light of covid-19 we believe there is space for the sector to evolve towards more digital engagement of participants, both as a means of maintaining engagement and also as a means to influence activity levels and choices if the country were to find itself amidst another pandemic.

We also believe many sports and activities, such as those delivered by CTS will have adapted and look to adapt to be able to either maintain or restart as soon as possible safe levels of participation. In essence, sports will have 'go to' models that can be used in the future which enable activity to take place whilst keeping the country safe.

We would welcome support from DCMS in sharing best practice in both of these spaces.

Case study: Pivoting our work – maintaining our purpose

From a CTS perspective our main concern upon entering into lockdown was children; their activity levels and their wellbeing. We therefore focused on how to ensure that children are still able to benefit via CTS whether that be within their home or school environment.

During the period of social restrictions, we want to ensure that all children have the opportunity to continue playing, learning and developing through cricket despite the pause on delivery of both Schools and Street programmes.

Our focus quickly turned online and to the CTS digital portal. This is a free to platform which has 14,000 registered teachers and contains hundreds of sessions which focus on physical activity and learning subjects such as Maths and English through cricket.

This key piece of work concentrates on three groups of young people:

- a. Children of key workers who are still at school

- b. Children at home being supported by their parents
- c. Street participants

Our work broadly engages:

- Teachers - both working remotely and supporting activity at their schools for children of key workers and other children within their care
- Parents – who are looking to support activity at home
- Children – who will want to have fun and learn
- Coaches – both part of the CTS network and outside of, to continue their connection with the game during social isolation as positive role models.

To date, we've had 500,000 views via social media of sessions and an additional 1,000 teachers register on our portal to access the free content.

We are working alongside our key partners to support their messages, particularly ECB via their #TogetherThroughThisTest initiative and Sport England with their #StayInWorkOut campaign.