4th Meeting of Sport Matters Monitoring Group: Wednesday 5th October 2011, Level 2 Conference Room, Causeway Exchange, DCAL

Present: Rosalie Flanagan (DCAL – Chairing on behalf of the Minister)
Jenny Pyper (DSD)
Mick Cory (DCAL)
John McMillen (NIEA)
Robb Phipps (DHSSPS – on behalf of Elizabeth Mitchell)
Sharon Lawlor (DE – on behalf of Adrian Arbuthnot)
Stephen Jackson (DEL)
James O'Boyle (DARD – on behalf of John Fay)
Stephen Reid (SOLACE – on behalf of Philip Faithfull)
Eamonn McCartan (SportNI)
Ken Nixon (NISF)

In attendance: Brian McCargo (Chair – Participation Implementation Group)
Danny O'Connor (Chair - Performance Implementation Group)
Dr Alan Strong (Chair - Places Implementation Group)
Paul Donnelly (SportNI)
Ciarán Mee (DCAL)

1. Welcome by the Chair

1.1 Rosalie Flanagan explained that, due to illness, the Minister was unable to attend the meeting and had asked her to chair. Rosalie Flanagan assured the meeting of the Minister's continuing commitment to Sport Matters and that she recognised the sports strategy as an essential element of her Ministerial responsibilities.

1.2 Rosalie Flanagan welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, including new members and those standing in for existing members. She further explained the reasons for the last minute change of venue to members. She also assured members that the possibility of holding a future meeting at the Belfast Model School for Girls would continue to be pursued by the Department. **[Action: DCAL]**

1.3 Rosalie Flanagan stressed the importance of today's meeting, particularly item 5 on the agenda, the presentation by the Chairs of the Sport Matters Implementation Groups (SMIGs) of the draft Sport Matters Action Plan, 2011-15 for approval by this Group.

2. Apologies

2.1 Apologies were received from Adrian Arbuthnot (DE), Dr Elizabeth Mitchell (DHSSPS), John Fay (DARD), Dominic Walsh (SportNI) and Philip Faithfull (SOLACE)

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

3.1 The minutes of the meeting of 31 March 2011 were agreed and approved without amendment.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 It was agreed that, aside from the matters listed on the agenda at item 4, all remaining matters would be dealt with in the course of the meeting at items 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Sport Matters Target: PL26 (para 4.1 of the minutes of the previous meeting)

4.2 Mick Cory reported that DCAL has completed a very useful engagement with DOE Planning Service on PL26. As a result of these discussions, Planning Service has indicated it is content for PL26 to remain unchanged at this time and has agreed in principle to work with SportNI and the Places SMIG to consider the development of suitable actions around PL26 that could be incorporated within a Sport Matters action plan.

4.3 Mick Cory further advised that, on Planning Service advice, DCAL had entered into follow-up discussions with DRD specifically to ensure there would be a clear, high level alignment between Sport Matters and the revised Regional Development Strategy (RDS). He confirmed that DRD has since accepted most of DCAL's alignment suggestions.

4.4 Alan Strong confirmed that the Places SMIG is actively looking, with Planning Service and other delivery partners, at possible actions around PL26. As a first step, it has commissioned a literature review to help assess options for better promoting and articulating PPS8 in the context of both the built and natural environment. He advised that this initial piece work should help populate and stimulate thinking on appropriate long term actions linked to PL26.

Publication of SMMG Minutes and Reports (para 4.3 of the minutes of the previous meeting)

4.5 Mick Cory confirmed all the Monitoring Group's approved minutes and reports are now available on the DCAL web site. He further confirmed that arrangements are now in place to ensure all SMMG approved minutes etc will be published on the site.

Circulation of New Public Health Responsibility Deal to Members (para 4.8 of the minutes of the previous meeting)

4.6 Members confirmed that they had received from DCAL, and as agreed with DHSSPS at the previous meeting, a copy of the UK Department of Health's 'Public Responsibility Deal' published earlier this year.

Promotion of exemplars in community use of school sports facilities (para 5.13 of the minutes of the previous meeting)

4.7 Eamonn McCartan asked Paul Donnelly to update members on the latest position. Paul Donnelly informed the meeting that SportNI has had a number of positive engagements with DE on the development of an advocacy document highlighting exemplars of good practice in community use of school sports facilities. DE has provided in-put and work is continuing towards completion of an agreed document for publication in due course.

4.8 Sharon Lawlor confirmed that DE welcomed the development of the advocacy document which complements a wider DE initiative in relation to opening up the school estate to the community. She advised that DE Estates team had been closely involved in the process and intended to add some further exemplars to the document.

4.9 Members noted the position and, at the suggestion of Eamonn McCartan, recorded its thanks to Paul Donnelly and Sharon Lawlor, Linda Toner, Diarmuid McLean and Brian McLawrence of DE for their work on drafting the advocacy document.

4.10 Stephen Reid stressed the importance of local government being consulted on the document in the interests of local community planning and avoiding duplication. Paul Donnelly advised that SportNI had recently met with CLOA to discuss the content.

4.11 Members agreed that, whilst DE should be the first point of consultation for this exercise, local authority sporting provision and school sporting provision should ultimately be viewed as one. It was therefore agreed that the final draft of the advocacy document be shared with the Monitoring Group when completed. **[Action: SportNI/DE]**

5. Presentation by Chairs of 3 SMIGs of proposed final action plans for approval by SMMG

5.1 Rosalie Flanagan referred members to a copy of the draft SMIGs' Sport Matters Action Plan circulated ahead of the meeting.

5.2 With members' permission, the Chairs of the SMIGs tabled a slightly updated version of the Action Plan which contained the following additions/ amendments to the draft circulated for this meeting:-

a) The inclusion of recently received, and SMIG agreed, Forest Service contributing actions to targets PA2 and PL25;

b) A re-wording of the DE proposed action at PA3 in order to reflect more accurately DE's actual contribution to this target;

c) The inclusion of a second, SMIG agreed, SportNI contributing action to target PA5 proposing the use of Wildcats Activ8 clubs as one pathway to encouraging increased sports club membership;

d) The inclusion of recently received, and SMIG agreed, district council contribution to target PE20

e) The inclusion of references to Sport Matters targets already achieved (ie PA1, PA2, PE12, PE13 and PL21.)

5.3 Rosalie Flanagan welcomed receipt of the Action Plan. She acknowledged that the Plan sets out, on one document and for the first time, clear commitments from a wide range of key stakeholders to contribute, in a concerted manner, to the delivery of sport and Sport Matters.

5.4 Rosalie Flanagan invited the Chairs of the SMIGs in turn to comment on the actions proposed in the Plan as they affected their respective areas (Participation, Performance, Places).

5.5 The following actions were agreed as a result of the SMIG Chairs' presentation:-

a) Given the close inter-relationship and inter-dependence between the 3 Sport Matters pillars (ie Participation, Performance and Places), it was agreed that there should be regular exchanges between each SMIG on actions and progress in their respective areas. **[Action: SMIG Chairs]**

b) It was agreed that the Forest Service should be offered a place on the Places SMIG. **[Action: Places SMIG Chair, SportNI]**

c) Ken Nixon asked if there could be some re-allocation to DCAL of the Exchequer monies InvestNI was reported in the press to be planning to return to DFP for investment in elite facilities projects (ie PL23). **[Action: DCAL]**

d) It was agreed that either a representative of the Places SMIG and/or SportNI officer(s) should meet with the Board of the NIEA to discuss the place of sport/recreation in the natural environment and how tensions between this and the need to protect the environment might be practicably overcome. **[Action: Places SMIG Chair, SportNI, NIEA]**

e) Jenny Pyper agreed to reflect the Northern Ireland Sports Forum's concerns over the delay in taking forward amendments to existing charities legislation and related application of public benefit tests. **[Action: DSD]**

f) It was agreed that a paper would be prepared for the next SMMG meeting on a process for re-setting individual Sport Matters targets that are either achieved earlier than anticipated or may be delayed due to factors outside of stakeholders' control. **[Action: DCAL/SportNI]**

g) It was agreed that the Chairs of the SMIGs should provide, for the next SMMG meeting, a report on how long term commitment to actions will be maintained and how clarity on stakeholder delivery roles and responsibilities will be ensured. **[Action: SMIG Chairs]**

5.6 Following the SMIG Chairs' presentation, the SMMG approved the Sport Matters Action Plan submitted to it including additions/amendments tabled at the meeting. (Para 5.2 above refers.)

5.7 It was agreed that SportNI would arrange, on behalf of the SMIGs, for appropriate publication and dissemination of the approved Action Plan. **[Action: SMIGs/SportNI]**

5.8 The SMMG asked the Chairs of the SMIGs to pass on its thanks to all stakeholder organisations that had contributed to the development of the current Action Plan. **[Action: SMIG Chairs]**

6. SMMG Members' Contribution to Sport Matters

6.1 Rosalie Flanagan thanked members for their contributions to date in seeking to identify likely high level policy, objectives, actions and investments that align with Sport Matters. She also acknowledged the difficulties in completing the exercise at this stage when many member organisations' corporate and business plans remain to be agreed and finalised.

6.2 Rosalie Flanagan invited members to comment on their individual contributions. During discussion, the following points and actions were agreed:-

a) The exercise is already revealing significant areas of common purpose between Sport Matters and member organisations' emerging priorities and objectives, particularly in terms of Participation and Performance targets. It was agreed that, for the next meeting, DCAL officials would engage with members with a view to identifying, where appropriate, clearer potential policy alignments with the Places pillar of Sport Matters. **[Action: DCAL]**

b) It was agreed that references to SOLACE in the emerging contributions table should be replaced by references to local government. **[Action: DCAL]**

c) It was agreed that the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure should be asked to write to all of the new Councils in order to draw their attention to Sport Matters and the important role that they play in its delivery. **[Action: DCAL]**

d) It was agreed that the agenda for the next SMMG meeting should be reordered to enable this item to be discussed prior to the SMIG chairs' report. **[Action: DCAL]**

7. Presentation of final Sport Matters Progress Report, Apr 2009-Sep 2010 for approval by SMMG

7.1 Rosalie Flanagan referred members to the draft Progress Report received from SportNI and circulated prior to the meeting.

7.2 Eamonn McCartan confirmed that points raised at the previous meeting in relation to the report have been dealt with and that it is ready for publication.

7.3 The SMMG approved the report and agreed that it should now be published on the DCAL web site. **[Action: DCAL]**

7.4 Members agreed that general progress reporting should be a regular agenda item for SMMG meetings and that, for the next meeting, consideration be given to how progress reports could best be presented for public consumption. **[Action: DCAL/SportNI]**

7.5 It was agreed that DCAL officials would also discuss with the Minister how she might alert her Executive colleagues to the importance of Sport Matters and the progress made on its implementation to date. **[Action: DCAL]**

8. Presentation of Revised CMO Guidelines, 'Start Active, Stay Active' – Robb Phipps, DHSSPS

8.1 Rosalie Flanagan invited Robb Phipps to give a presentation on the recently revised and published UK Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Guidelines on health physical activity, 'Start Active, Stay Active'

8.2 In introducing Robb Phipps, Rosalie Flanagan emphasised that much of the success of Sport Matters and the Executive's related health, fitness and well-being agenda hinges on achieving participation rates in sport and physical activity that meet CMO guidance in this area.

8.3 A question and answer session on the presentation followed and it was agreed that a copy of Robb's presentation be circulated amongst all SMMG members after the meeting. **[Action: DCAL]**

9. A.O.B

9.1 Stephen Reid suggested that the Group consider the need for the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) to be represented on the SMMG alongside SOLACE.

9.2 In response to this suggestion, it was agreed that DCAL officials would prepare a paper for consideration at the next meeting. **[Action: DCAL]**

9.3 Eamonn McCartan and Paul Donnelly asked members to note that, as part of the wider process of engagement with stakeholders on Sport Matters, it was considering initiating, over the next few months, a series of 'value of sport' road shows. SportNI is also hoping to arrange, in the next few weeks, a major public launch of its SAPAS survey, the emerging findings of which were presented to the Group at its meeting on 25th November 2010.

10. Date of Next Meeting

10.1 It was agreed that the next meeting should take place in April 2012.

Signed: ROSALIE FLANAGAN – PERMANENT SECRETARY, DCAL

Date: 18 April 2012