

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting of the Sport and Activity Working Group held in Committee Room No 1, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 2 October 2008 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Mr A M Millar
Mrs E McAllister

Mr W Fernie

Officials in attendance:

Mr G Watson, Community Development Manager, Education, Culture and Sport Service
Mr A Clark, Active Schools Manager, Education, Culture and Sport Service
Mr A Hoseason, Coaching Development Officer, Education, Culture and Sport Service
Mr J Warde, Principal Facilities Manager, Education, Culture and Sport Service
Miss J MacIennan, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

BUSINESS

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr B Gormley and Ms J Douglas.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group held on 13 August 2008, copies of which had been circulated, were **NOTED**.

3. SPORTS FACILITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

There had been circulated Report No SA12/08 by the Director of Education, Culture and Sport setting out a basis for determining the priorities for future investment in community sports facilities by recommending Highland-wide standards for the level of provision of facilities in Highland communities and measuring existing provision against this standard. The report provided conclusions and recommendations for priorities over the next five years bearing in mind that planned priorities were a prerequisite for some other funding agencies, particularly **sportscotland**, to become involved as partners in a funded programme.

Following on discussions at previous meetings of the Working Group, Members considered the various issues surrounding future swimming pool provision and the different areas of demand. If the Council chose to invest in additional swimming provision, not only would capital costs have to be taken into account but also the considerable on-going revenue implications. Budgets were already under pressure and any investment in new swimming pool facilities would necessitate other projects being cut or deferred to meet the costs involved. Regardless, many existing

swimming pools needed upgrading and investment to bring them up to standard. In regard to the other sport and leisure facilities, on-going costs were investigated and it was recognised that regular maintenance ensured that they were fit for purpose in the long term.

Thereafter, the Working Group **AGREED** to recommend that the Education, Culture and Sport Committee, at its meeting on 13 November 2008, consider the following recommendations:-

- i. to adopt the principle of equalisation of sporting facilities across Integrated Learning Communities, taking into account population and travel times;
- ii. that no new swimming pool provision be considered in the next 5 years of the Capital Programme;
- iii. the five year priority list, as recommended in the report, be agreed;
- iv. meetings be held with partner organisations to discuss external funding and progress reports be brought to future meetings of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee; and
- v. further work be taken to determine the full costs of equalisation and progress reports be brought to future meetings of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee.

4. DRAFT SPORTS AND ACTIVITY STRATEGIES

There had been circulated Report No SA13/08 by the Director of Education, Culture and Sport outlining the latest draft of the Sports Strategy and Activity Strategy together with a timetable for completion.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- specific mention be made as to the provision for unemployed people, highlighting that they could access Council leisure facilities for 50p.
- these benefits also be promoted in job centres and by Careers Scotland in its Back to Work programmes.
- the positive message of helping unemployed people in regards to health and well-being be emphasised.
- those encouraged to use leisure facilities were likely to continue to do so when they found employment.
- Members be informed of the measures proposed to promote the Hi-Life Scheme.
- the possibility of extending Hi-Life to include other facilities, such as Golf Clubs, be investigated.
- more extensive marketing of Hi-Life packages to commercial businesses and to Bed and Breakfast establishments be pursued.
- there was a need to review Sports Councils to ensure sport was effectively promoted, best use was made of their resources and that there was grass roots participation.
- consideration be given to the merits of the five suggested options for the future organisation of Sport Councils.
- the strategy needed to emphasise developments proposed for disabled athletes.
- the Council's Disability Sport Officer be invited to a future meeting of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee to explain work currently underway

- to promote sport and activity to disabled persons.
- it was important to ensure that resources were in place to meet expectations that would arise from the publication of the Strategies.

The Working Group **NOTED** that:-

- i. there would be two levels of publication for the final Sport and Activity Strategies, a short printed document and web publication of more detailed Sports Strategy, Activity Strategy and Facilities Plan, which would include background information, tables and the rationale behind the strategy;
- ii. the Education Culture and Sport Committee would be asked to comment on the main action points proposed for the strategy and to delegate the approval of the final version to the Director of Education, Culture and Sport in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee; and
- iii. the publication of the Sport and Activity Strategies and associated web material was planned for January 2009.

5. GLASGOW COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2014

Mr A Clark, Active Schools Manager gave an update on discussions which have taken place with the organisers of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. In particular, he confirmed that the proposal of Highland School pupils being given the opportunity to visit the 2014 Commonwealth Games had been raised. The organisers had taken this request on board and had indicated that they would respond in due course once more detailed infrastructure arrangements for the Games were put in place. In addition, a further meeting of the All Scotland Group was arranged for 20 October 2008 to which he and the Chairman of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee would attend.

The Working Group **NOTED** the position.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Working Group **NOTED** that the next meeting of the Working Group would now be held on a date to be arranged after the November Education, Culture and Sport Committee.

The meeting ended at 11.45 am.