

Scottish Government Response to Consultation on Giving Children and Young People a Sporting Chance: A Draft Strategy for Scotland

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON GIVING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE A SPORTING CHANCE: A DRAFT STRATEGY FOR SCOTLAND

Introduction

1. This is a report on the consultation, 'Giving children and young people a sporting chance: A Draft Strategy for Scotland' which ran from 9 December 2013 to 2 March 2014. The report:

- Summarises the contents of the draft strategy
- Describes the consultation approach
- Outlines the views obtained
- Outlines how these are reflected in the final strategy
- Outlines next steps

Contents of the draft Strategy

2. The draft strategy was developed with a working group that comprised representatives from the Young People's Sport Panel, **sportscotland**, Education Scotland, Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES), the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), the Voice of Culture and Leisure Managers Scotland (VOCAL), the Scottish Sports Association, Scottish Disability Sport, Scottish Student Sport, Youth Scotland, Young Scot, and Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (the Commissioner).

3. It set out the following:

- A vision that 'We want Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow up actively.'
- The views of the Young People's Sport Panel, with the needs of children and young people summarised as: give us great opportunities, supported by great people, delivered in great places and help us to give what we do a higher profile.
- Current activity under the headings of great opportunities, great people, great places and higher profile, including a number of actions which would contribute to meeting the visions.
- Next steps, including a commitment to continued work with stakeholders, and in particular children and young people, during the consultation period, and that progress would be monitored through the National Strategic Group for Sport and Physical Activity.

The consultation approach

The consultation document

4. The draft strategy set out the Scottish Government's ideas on how the needs identified by the Young People's Sport Panel could be addressed. The consultation sought the views of children and young people and a range of others who are involved in youth sports including parents and coaches, volunteers and delivery bodies on the vision and content of the draft Strategy.

5. The consultation posed 15 questions covering the vision and the four needs identified by the Young People's Sport Panel, as well as providing the opportunity to set out views on how sport can be made inclusive for all, the potential impact on businesses or the third sector, and additional views on any aspect of the draft strategy.

6. The consultation was prepared in line with Scottish Government good practice guidance. It was published in the consultation section of the Scottish Government's website, with the link to the consultation highlighted by way of an email to a wide range of organisations, groups and individuals who might have an interest in the issues covered by the consultation. In addition to this the consultation was publicised on the websites of Young Scot and **sportscotland**.

7. The Scottish Government's aim was to make the strategy not only **for** children and young people but be developed **by** children and young people. In parallel with the standard consultation approach, work was also carried out by the Commissioner, Young Scot and the Children's Parliament, in order to achieve a wider reach across the consultation process. A range of methods were used including an online survey, workshops, and activity sheets.

Consultation responses

8. A total of 56 responses were received to the standard consultation; 5 from individuals and 51 from organisations. The responses of those who agreed that they could be published can be found at the following link:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/03/2142>

9. In addition, there were 2,962 replies from the bespoke work with children and young people consisting of:

- 1,730 young people aged 11 or younger who filled in activity books for the Commissioner.
- 96 young people at primary schools who took part in workshops with the Children's Parliament.
- 654 young people aged 11-26 years who filled in a survey for Young Scot.
- 68 young people aged 13- 21 who took part in workshops with Young Scot.
- 358 young people who took part in workshops led by Legacy Ambassadors, Young Ambassadors and the Young People's Sports Panel.

10. The consultation responses were analysed independently and the report has been published along with a final strategy. The strategy and a range of other documents can be found on the Scottish Government website.

11. The main findings from the analysis of the responses are:

Vision

- Views as to whether the vision is right for Scotland were largely positive, and greater numbers of consultation respondents agreed than disagreed that the draft Strategy provides the right framework to achieve this vision.
- Other issues that consultation respondents wanted to see included in the strategy were more information on long term planning, links to other policy areas and a greater emphasis on early years.
- A key theme emerging was that of partnership working and the need for an integrated approach to sports provision.

Great opportunities

- Respondents outlined a number of ways in which to build upon existing opportunities, including:
 - offering a wide range of sports to children and young people
 - offering activities at a range of different times
 - creating pathways for progression
 - increased partnership working
 - ensuring that delivery of initiatives like Active Schools is consistent across local authority areas
 - a culture change or a change in attitude so that sport becomes a habit early in life
 - there is a need for a greater focus on sport within the school curriculum
 - references to the need for young people to be involved in the planning and delivery of sporting activities

Great people

- A greater number of consultation respondents disagreed than agreed that there are sufficient opportunities for leaders and workers to develop the right skills (20 disagreed, 14 agreed).
- In considering how to develop and support leaders and workers to provide high quality experiences for children and young people, the key issue was that of training. This included accredited training, training tailored to specific needs, ongoing training and mentoring. There were also suggestions for the need to encourage young people to take up leadership roles and for training to be provided for this.
- Respondents identified some barriers to developing and supporting leaders and workers. The key barrier identified was that of cost.
- Some respondents referred to the qualities necessary in a leader or worker. These included people who are fun, friendly, enthusiastic, encouraging and empathetic to children and young people.

Great places

- In considering ways to build on the current use of facilities in schools and communities and ensure they are welcoming environments for children and young people, respondents noted the need to use a wide range of venues across the community. These included less 'traditional' places such as outdoor areas or green spaces in neighbourhoods.
- Community Sports Hubs are seen to be an important part of the mix and there are some suggestions for introducing more of these.
- A key issue for some respondents was access to sporting facilities because of the way in which they are managed (this generally referred to the school estate which is sometimes managed by external organisations). There were also some issues in relation to the cost of accessing sporting facilities.
- There were some suggestions made for improvements to the design of facilities to meet the needs of a wide range of different users, including those with disabilities or from hard-to-reach groups.

Higher profile

- More consultation respondents disagreed (23) than agreed (10) that they hear or read enough about sport and sporting opportunities for children and young people in their local community.
- Across all respondents, there is a perception of a need for greater recognition of sporting opportunities, and more proactivity in profiling the success and achievements of children and young people.
- Respondents consider a wide range of information channels should be used and these include local and national media, including press coverage, local radio, email, social media. There was also a view that schools and local authorities should play a role.

General

- A number of respondents noted their support for the draft strategy, or for different elements of this. Seeking out, and including the views of children and young people was a positive factor.
- A number of similar themes emerged, including the need for more collaboration and integration, links to local outcomes, indicators and measures of success, offering a wide range of sporting opportunities and a greater curriculum commitment to sporting activities.
- Some respondents commented on elements they felt were missing from the strategy including greater coverage of those with disabilities, those with additional support needs, those in rural communities and those who are currently disengaged from sport.
- There was also a perception from some that the strategy places a strong emphasis on competitive and formal sport and needs greater recognition of recreational and non-competitive sport.
- There were also some requests for more research and evidence within the strategy.

- There were references to the need for equality of opportunity for all children and young people, so that it is fully inclusive. Key issues included access to facilities, appropriate training for leaders and workers, and ensuring that the views of all children and young people are represented on the Young People's Sport Panel, at Community Sports Hubs and so on.
- Respondents noted the importance of the third sector in the delivery of the strategy; for example, the key role they play in providing volunteers, in training leaders and workers, and the provision of sponsorship, funding and advertising. There is also a view that businesses could play a greater role and the benefits that this could bring to the strategy. Skills learnt through participation in sport can benefit individuals in the workplace, and vice versa.

12. Detail of the views of children and young people are set out in reports by Young Scot, the Commissioner and the Children's Parliament. However the strategy highlights the following points:

- A wide range of activities are currently undertaken, both formal and informal, in a wide range of venues.
- Key associations with sport include friendship, learning, fun, being fit and being healthy.
- Children and young people want to be offered a wide range of different sporting opportunities and the chance to try new or different sports. They also want to have a wide range of different venues and to have improvements made to current facilities.
- Barriers to taking up opportunities include time, lack of transport, travel distance, disability, location, cost and lack of volunteers/coaches.
- Parents and teachers play a key role in introducing children and young people to sporting opportunities, as do youth workers and community organisations.
- Children and young people are keen for higher profile to be given to sporting activities, and their successes and achievements including through advertising, leaflets, information in venues, social media and hearing from role models.

Final Strategy

13. Following consideration of the consultation response, the Scottish Government developed a final strategy which aims to better reflect some of the issues which respondents felt were missing from the draft. It recognises that the consultation provided a rich set of information on the views of children and young people and those involved in delivering sport, and urges those involved in delivery to consider how the published material can inform the work they do.

14. As set out in the summary of the consultation analysis, a clear theme emerged in relation to the need for more collaboration and integration in the delivery of sport for children and young people. In addition to this, the efforts taken to hear the views of children and young people was viewed positively, and there were suggestions that this needed to be sustained.

15. The final strategy recognises that positive outcomes for the people of Scotland will be best delivered by working with people – drawing on the talents and abilities of our communities – rather than doing things to them. In this light, it makes

clear that the document is part of a process, setting out a vision, principles and outcomes which can guide the actions that we collectively take to deliver sport for children and young people in Scotland.

16. As an important step in developing further collaboration, the Scottish Government has liaised closely with COSLA on the content of the final strategy, and continued to work with the Young People's Sport Panel. This has allowed the document to contain a foreword by a member of the Young People's Sport Panel as well as a joint foreword by Shona Robison MSP, the Cabinet Secretary for the Commonwealth Games, Sport, Equalities and Pensioners' Rights, and Councillor Harry McGuigan, COSLA Spokesperson for Community Wellbeing.

17. Taken in order, the final strategy contains:

- The forewords referred to above.
- Introductory material setting out the background to the consultation, material on current provision, and where children and young people want us to be. The material on current provisions highlights the important roles played by a variety of organisations and individuals in Scotland, in response to suggestions that the draft strategy did not fully do so. The section also highlights some websites where additional material can be found.
- A revised vision that 'Scotland is a great environment for children and young people to embark on lifelong participation in sport'. While there was broad support for the original vision, it was also noted that there was no specific reference to sport in the vision. The revised vision sets out more clearly the specific role that sport can play in achieving a more active Scotland. The section also highlights participation in sport as an expression of children and young people's rights, and the role that it can play in ensuring children's wellbeing.
- A number of important principles which emerged through the consultation:
 - That hearing the views of children and young people is crucial. The strategy notes that the Scottish Government will continue to work with representative bodies on how that can be best achieved.
 - That collaboration is crucial. The strategy refers to some positive existing work and notes that the National Strategic Group for Sport and Physical Activity provides a forum to build on current collaboration.
 - That there must be a focus on reaching children and young people who are disengaged, and on using sport to make a difference to the lives of children and young people.
 - That sport for children and young people must be fun.
- A number of outcomes which provide greater information on what the consultation has highlighted as important under the four headings of great opportunities, great people, great places and higher profile.
- A section on next steps which restates: the need to put the views of children and young people at the heart of delivery of sport; the need for effective collaboration; that the document is just one part in a journey which will require wider collaborative effort; and the role of the National Strategic Group for Sport and Physical Activity in monitoring delivery of the strategy.
- A number of actions in an annex which form a starting point on the journey of delivering the vision.

Conclusion

18. The final strategy takes account of the content of the response to the consultation, both by children and young people, and those who deliver sport – particularly in terms of the principles and outcomes outlined. However it is clear that the document represents just one part of the process and that wider collaborative effort will be needed to achieve the vision. The consultation response represents a valuable set of information which should help to inform the actions taken by those involved in the delivery of sport.

19. As mentioned above, delivery of the strategy will be monitored by the National Strategic Group on Sport and Physical Activity. The Group is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Commonwealth Games, Sport, Equalities and Pensioners' Rights chairs the National Strategic Group for Sport and Physical Activity with representation from a number of partners including Transport Scotland, Education Scotland, **sportscotland**, NHS Health Scotland, COSLA, VOCAL, and SOLACE. The remit of the group is to provide i) a strategic overview of the delivery of the Government's sport and physical activity policy commitments underpinned by specific objectives; and ii) a forum to discuss, support and assess our collective delivery of a range of strategic objectives.



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