

Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport

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The Scottish  
Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Duncan McNeil MSP

Convener of the Health and Sport Committee

Health and Sport Committee



LEGACY 2014  
XX COMMONWEALTH GAMES  
SCOTLAND

Sent by email to : [Healthandsport.committee@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Healthandsport.committee@scottish.parliament.uk)

13 March 2013

Dear Duncan

## **RESPONSE TO REPORT ON INQUIRY INTO SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY SPORT**

Thank you for your letter of 30 January and the report on the Health and Sport Committee's inquiry into support for Community Sport. I welcome this opportunity to respond to your recommendations.

Scottish Ministers very much welcome the Committee's findings. As I made clear in my evidence to the Committee, we are committed to increasing participation in sport and to getting the population of Scotland more active. Community engagement and development lies at the heart of our manifesto commitments on sport and the inquiry has helpfully highlighted how we can work together in realising our shared ambitions, acknowledging as we do the real benefits to be gained for the nation and for the population as a whole.

Whilst I recognise the Committee's recommendations are generally supportive of the approach we have adopted in developing community sport, I can also acknowledge that there cannot be room for complacency given the magnitude of the task which we face. As the Minister will lead responsibility, I am determined to continue the good work which is already being undertaken at community level to ensure that not only is there measurable progress but that our key aims are also being delivered.

My response to the Committee's specific recommendations to the Scottish Government are detailed in the attached Annex.

I hope this is helpful and I would be happy to provide further clarification if necessary.

Yours sincerely

**Shona Robison**

**RESPONSE TO REPORT ON INQUIRY INTO SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY SPORT**

**Recommendation 3 – The Committee encourages the Scottish Government and all those in the sporting sector and beyond to show leadership by supporting volunteers in sport more actively and by promoting a culture of volunteerism.**

Having a strong and sustainable coaching and volunteering base is crucial to the delivery of all sport and physical activity. Our success in increasing levels of participation, supporting a strong club network, delivering athlete pathways and getting the best out of individuals, stands or falls by the number of people who give up their time on a regular and committed basis.

That is why support for volunteering is a priority. Whilst the recent announcement that over 50,000 people have applied to become a volunteer at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games is fantastic, and shows that the appetite for these roles is considerable, we need to ensure that the enthusiasm and motivation for individuals is also made appealing and relevant at a local level.

The Commonwealth Games will act as a catalyst to help deliver this objective. For example, after the Games finish, data on all volunteers who have agreed that their information can be shared will be passed to Volunteer Development Scotland. They will then contact potential volunteers about other opportunities which are available and how they can get involved. We will also ensure that the Glasgow Organising Committee's communications to all applicants recognises the value of volunteers and points them to examples of specific volunteering opportunities that may be of interest to them such as sports volunteers, Youth Legacy Ambassadors and Young Sport Ambassadors.

For many people, the opportunities to volunteer are restricted by work and other time constraints. We firmly believe that we have to lead by example in addressing these issues. That is why having looked at how to promote volunteering amongst our own workforce, we have introduced a commitment which allows staff up to 5 days paid special leave to undertake volunteering options for the Games.

**Recommendation 4 – To this end, the Committee requests that the Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport provides an update, with input from sportscotland and other key players, on all aspects on volunteering in sport before Parliament moves to summer recess in 2013. The Committee is particularly interested in qualified coaches and the state of readiness for the increase in demand for club sport that is hoped will materialise on the back of Glasgow 2014.**

In my earlier response I set out the importance which the Government attaches to this issue. I warmly welcome the opportunity that this additional time period allows for us to work with our key partners to look at this in greater depth. I will be happy to report back to the Committee on this specific issue before the summer recess.

**Recommendation 8 - The Committee took evidence on the Cashback for Communities programme but wished to learn more about the correlation between where the money is recovered from and where resources are deployed. The Committee therefore awaits the report of Inspiring Scotland's evaluation of the programme with interest.**

This Government believes that CashBack is an excellent and constructive way of using monies seized from criminals to give young people the opportunity to raise their sights and ambitions and develop their potential through sport.

Over £50 million recovered from the proceeds of crime has now been invested or committed throughout Scotland, directly benefitting over 600,000 young people and generating over 11,000 young person volunteers who are now putting something back into their communities.

Of that investment more than £24 million has gone to providing young people with facilities and positive opportunities to take part in sporting activities in communities across the length and breadth of country.

I understand that the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Kenny MacAskill MSP, will write to the Committee separately on this issue.

**Recommendation 13 - Further to the quality Network and Scottish Transgender Alliance in the *Out for Sport* report, the Committee seeks further information from the Scottish Government and sport's national agencies and its governing bodies on what steps are being taken to challenge and eradicate homophobia and transphobia in sport.**

We believe that there should be no barriers to participating in sport or to developing the potential of individuals, irrespective of their sexual orientation. Having said this, we do recognise that there are perceived barriers in place. That is why we have made resources available to tackle this issue, including

- funding of £106,000 to Leadership and Active Participation in Scotland (LEAP) to build participation and ensure a positive legacy from Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games for LGBT communities they will be working in partnership with **sportscotland** to discuss how their organisation can increase profile and participation of LGBT groups via Sport Governing Body's (targeting the 17 Commonwealth games sports in the first instance) and via Legacy programmes such as Community Sports Hubs and Young Ambassadors.
- LEAP will also build the capacity of the LGBT community through a combination of sports and outdoor activity development, targeted towards individual groups, the LGBT community and wider society

**Recommendation 14 - The Committee also seeks further information from the Scottish Government regarding how Community Sports Hubs are sharing best practice in the area of equal opportunities.**

The active legacy of the Commonwealth Games aims to increase the number of opportunities available to all groups in society so that they can participate in sport and physical activities. Initiatives such as Community Sports Hubs are a good example because one of their key objectives is to provide tailored programmes according to the needs of the local community. It recognises the diversity of need and experience, which is important for the increased participation of equality groups.

Best practice is progressed through **sportscotland** and the Scottish Governing Bodies of

Sport so that, for example, consideration of LGBT and indeed all equalities issued are mainstreamed in sports development plans so that they meet existing equality legislation.

This will bring influence to bear on clubs and their respective policies allowing for consideration of local circumstances across the range of equality issues rather than adopting a prescriptive approach which is counter to community led activity. This is particularly the case in relation to Community Sport Hubs which are expected to be community led and delivered.

**Recommendation 15 - Swimming is a key component of “physical literacy” but the Committee was concerned to learn that 25% of children leave primary school unable to swim. The figure is likely to be even higher in deprived areas. The Committee welcomes the views of Save the Children Scotland and Scottish Swimming (who relayed the statistic), the Active Schools Network and the Scottish Government on what can be done to remedy the situation.**

This Government is committed to provide all children with the opportunity to learn to swim and to have access to the right facilities so that they can keep swimming. We have therefore invested considerably in recent years with over 12 new and upgraded swimming pools, making swimming more accessible and available.

Crucially though over the last two years we have also invested £1.2m in direct funding to the Swimming Top up programme. This is solely designed to increase and improve the numbers of primary school children who can swim and during 2012/13 there was a real push to reach those children in deprived areas throughout the country.

I believe that this is a successful initiative. To date the figures show that there was an increase in over 60 % of children on the programme improve their standard of swimming. Of children with a disability, 75% have made significant progress which is a direct result of the extra attention swimming teachers provided to this group.

To date Scottish Swimming have issued 10,000 certificates to Local Authorities to present to children who have achieved the basic Triple S standard (ability to swim 25 m along with basic water skills.).

We are monitoring this programme closely - the next evaluation stage report is due in the summer of 2013.