

# Proposed Changes to National Lottery Distribution Fund

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Sport Wales Consultation Response

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Sport Wales is the national organisation responsible for developing and promoting sport and active lifestyles. Sport Wales is an Assembly Government Sponsored Public Body and is funded largely by grant-in-aid from the Welsh Assembly Government. It is also responsible for distributing funds from the National Lottery to sport in Wales.

The Sports Council for Wales, which now trades as Sport Wales, was established by Royal Charter in 1972. Its four broad objectives are to:

- increase participation in sport and physical activity;
- raise standards of performance and excellence;
- improve the provision of sporting facilities; and
- provide technical information and advice about sport, recreation and active lifestyles.

Sport Wales is the delivery arm of the Welsh Assembly Government and it provides advice on the delivery of sport and active recreation policy. It is responsible to the Government for co-ordinating and helping to drive the delivery of the Welsh Assembly Government's 'One Wales' commitments related to sport; the sport and physical recreation elements of 'Creating an Active Wales'; and the delivery of the Elite Sport Strategy. Sport Wales works closely with other key sport and physical recreation providers and delivery agents, particularly local government, national governing bodies of sport and the voluntary sector.

Sport Wales' operational priorities and performance targets are informed by, and respond to, the annual remit letter from the Minister for Heritage which sets out his strategic priorities; any specific policies and action plans; and the wider policies and priorities of the Welsh Assembly Government.

Sport Wales welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation on the proposals to restore the share of the National Lottery Distribution Fund for sport to 20% over a two year timescale.

Currently we provide lottery funding to both increase participation in sporting activity and to specific elite performers via four main programmes:

- Coach Cymru** Coach Cymru is a lottery funded scheme that supports the employment of National Governing Body Coaches at National or Regional level.
- Community Chest** Community Chest is a lottery-funded grants scheme that supports the local development of sport and physical recreation through the distribution of small grants via 22 local authority-based panels. Each panel is compiled of up to 12 members of the local community; this includes a minimum of 3 local authority representatives and the rest from the wider community, the majority of which represent the voluntary sector.
- Dragon Sport** Dragon Sport is designed to offer 7-11 year olds fun and appropriate sporting opportunities. The scheme intends to broaden the sporting interests of children who already take part in sport and to involve children who currently lack such opportunities outside of their school PE lessons. Dragon Sport introduces children to coaching, skill development and appropriate competition using versions of the adult game, modified to meet their needs and skill levels. A portfolio of eight modified sports is used: rugby, athletics, cricket, football, hockey, netball, tennis and golf. Whilst the primary focus of Dragon Sport is improving sports provision for 7-11 year olds across Wales, Dragon Sport also focuses on recruiting parents and other volunteers as helpers to support the development of after school and community sports clubs.
- Elite Cymru** Élite Cymru is a lottery funded programme aimed at providing the most highly promising athletes in Wales with the support they need to achieve their potential. It provides a wide range of services, including sports science support, medical back-up, career and education advice, coaching and access to training facilities. Competitors who meet minimum standards of performance as set by the Governing Body are eligible to apply for support.

The Federation of Disability Sport Wales (FDSW) community programme is also funded by lottery income. The programme seeks to increase participation and club membership of disabled individuals/groups, as well as increasing the number of active coaches and volunteers working with these groups.

Our aim is that Lottery funding should always complement exchequer funding and that any programmes we fund or athletes we support through our lottery income forms part of a wider strategic approach to growing participation and sustain sporting excellence in Wales.

**How would the change benefit you or the sector you represent?**

**What change, if any, would you expect to make to planned levels of grant budgets and payment forecasts?**

Overall we welcome the proposal to restore the share for sport to 20%. When the lottery was first established Sport Wales received £15 million to distribute to the sector in Wales. By 2006/07 this had fallen to £9.5 million. Despite increased ticket sales, we have experienced a drop in lottery income as a result of the funding of the 2012 Olympics. We have tried wherever possible to minimise the impact of this on those bodies and groups we support, but inevitably we had to reassess what we were funding, for example we closed our capital fund. Obviously as we come to the end of this period, we will be seeing the income return to the previous levels and if this proposal is agreed we are forecasting a rise to £12 million by 2012/13.

In terms of utilising the increased funding we would seek to use it to add value to our existing programmes, rather than developing new ones. Our reasoning for this is twofold. Firstly we want to make sure our funding programmes are simple to understand and concise, so developing a further programme may lead to confusion for those applying for grants. Secondly any new programme would need the development of a specific administration system to deliver it and in order to maximise the impact of any increased funding we would want to utilise the systems we have and make sure the bulk of additional funding is channelled to those who need it on the ground.

As an organisation we have two top level aspirations broadly relating to performance and participation, which are:

- *Every child hooked on sport for life; and*
- *A nation of champions*

These aspirations are not mutually exclusive and as an organisation we recognised the co-dependency, for example having more active young people leads to a larger potential pool to identify elite talent from.

We believe that for many communities in Wales sport plays a central role, whether it is taking part in sporting activity or socialising at the local club. We would want to use any increased income to further harness and develop the role that sport plays in local communities. Through research that we have undertaken, we can demonstrate the positive impact that the extra-curricular programmes that we have supported, have had on increasing children and young people's participation in sport. We believe that we need to match this development with access to opportunities within communities up and down Wales. The link between provision of activity in school and provision in the community is critical to getting children and young people hooked on sport and sustaining their

involvement. We would also want to ensure that any provision is accessible to all, recognising and supporting talent to excel.

We would want to work with the voluntary sector and sports clubs to develop their provision, encouraging them to work closely with our partners in local authorities to identify a clear pathway for sporting activity in every community. We know from our research that there are critical points in a young person's life-course (in terms of education and employment) where participation in sport decreases; at the age of 14, 18 and early twenties. We want to see participation in sport sustained throughout a young person's life-course. We want to see communities in Wales where sporting activity is encouraged and owned at the heart of our communities. Where people are not only finding the opportunities to compete and get physically active, but are also volunteering to coach or become involved in the administration of the club to continue its development. As well as growing the star performers of the future, we also recognise that we need to encourage the future administrators, organisers and officials in order to ensure our sporting culture continues to be vibrant.

We recognise that being involved in sport not only has the potential to improve health outcomes, but can also have a positive impact on skills, emotional health and wellbeing, as well as a wider social impact. We want to provide opportunities for the whole community to get involved.

Finally alongside this we would want to support the development of a robust competition structure locally to provide those involved in sport with a challenging environment within which to test themselves. We want Wales to be competitive on a world level and believe that the competitive structure across sports needs to be addressed in order to develop talent.

This is an ambitious programme and we would look to support developments through both small scale capital funding where appropriate, as well as revenue funding. We are already working with our partners in local authorities, as well as governing bodies, to address some of these issues. We would also want to engage the wider sector in a discussion on how we can make the best use of any extra funding and also ensure that the facilities that we currently have are being maximised. Any further funding must add value to what we and our partners are aiming to achieve.

We would be happy to discuss further any aspect of this response.

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