



WALES AUDIT OFFICE
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Auditor General for Wales

Well-being of Future Generations: An examination of the development of a new community sport model – **Sport Wales**

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This document is also available in Welsh.

The team who delivered the work comprised Sian Davies and Caitlin Smith.

Contents

There are a number of positive examples of how Sport Wales has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when developing its new community sport model. Sport Wales recognises the need to build on this work, to fully embed the ways of working as they deliver the new model across Wales.

Summary report

Summary	4
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Detailed report

Part One: Examination Findings

Sport Wales has developed the new community sport model in response to an analysis of current and long-term needs and pressures but are not yet meeting the expectation that public bodies plan at least ten years ahead	7
--	---

Sport Wales is seeking to improve participation in sport and improve well-being by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of their community sport funding. Sport Wales should continue to explore the root causes of why people do not participate in sport	9
---	---

Sport Wales can demonstrate a clear link between the 'step', the vision for sport in Wales and the national well-being goals but has not fully explored the links between the 'step' and their partners' objectives	11
---	----

Sport Wales has demonstrated a commitment to collaboration in developing the new community sport model although project management and governance arrangements to deliver the model are still in early development	13
--	----

Sport Wales has involved a comprehensive range of partners in the development of the new community sport model but direct involvement of service users has been limited	15
---	----

Part Two: Sport Wales' response	17
---------------------------------	----

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Positive Indicators of the Five Ways of Working	19
--	----

Summary report

Summary

Why we undertook the Examination

- 1 In accordance with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (the Act) the Auditor General for Wales (the Auditor General) is statutorily required to examine public bodies to assess the extent to which they have acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when:
 - a. setting their well-being objectives; and
 - b. taking steps to meet them.
- 2 The Act defines the sustainable development principle as acting in a manner: ‘...which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
- 3 The Auditor General must provide a report on his examinations to the National Assembly for Wales at least a year before each Assembly election. The first such report must be published by 2020, before the 2021 Assembly election.
- 4 During 2018-19 the Auditor General is undertaking examinations across the 44 bodies covered by the Act to inform his report to the National Assembly.
- 5 In May 2018, the Auditor General published his report, **‘Reflecting on Year One – How have public bodies responded to the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015)’**. He concluded that, public bodies support the principles of the Act and are taking steps to change how they work.
- 6 In developing our approach to undertaking the examinations during 2018-19 we engaged with a range of stakeholders including through our pilot work during 2017-18. We also worked closely with the Future Generations Commissioner.
- 7 As the preliminary work in year one included a consideration of how public bodies had set their well-being objectives the principal focus of this work is the way in which public bodies are taking steps to meet their well-being objectives.
- 8 The findings in this report are based on fieldwork that we undertook during the period January 2019 to May 2019. We ran an initial workshop with senior Sport Wales officers in January 2019, which explored how each of the five ways of working had been applied.
- 9 We reviewed key documents including business plans, undertook interviews with senior Sport Wales officers and a range of stakeholders including Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, Disability Sport Wales, Wales Golf and Conwy County Borough Council.
- 10 This report sets out our findings from our examination of the development of a new community sport model, a step Sport Wales is taking to meet its well-being objectives. The report also sets out Sport Wales’ initial response to our findings.

What we examined

- 11 We examined the extent to which Sport Wales is acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle in the development of a new community sport model.
- 12 Sport Wales intends to significantly change the way it funds and delivers community sport and physical activity. Currently, community sport is funded and delivered via 22 local authorities in Wales through programmes including the 5x60 sport programme in schools, free swimming for under 16s, Community chest (lottery funding) and Active Young People.
- 13 Sport Wales published a **Business Case for change in Community Sport** in 2016 which set out the challenges facing the provision of community sport and a vision for the future. There are decreasing resources¹ from Welsh Government at the same time as a high ambition to increase activity levels, particularly in the half of the population that are not engaged with sport.
- 14 Sport Wales is moving towards a model where it will commission four Regional Sport Agencies to work in partnership with other organisations and communities to deliver and fund community sport.
- 15 The aim of the Regional Sport Agencies (and of the new community sport model) is to:
 - deliver a step change in participation rates in sport or physical activity;
 - tackle inequalities in sport, particularly the barriers to participation for girls and women, disabled people, lower income families and for some communities; and
 - enable everyone to have the opportunity to achieve their potential in sport regardless of age, background or where they live.
- 16 North Wales is being used as a pilot area. Following a number of sector engagement and consultation sessions, potential partners were invited to submit an Expression of Interest (Eoi). Following this Eoi stage, Sport Wales appointed the Sport North Wales Collaborative Partnership as their preferred partner, which is a collaboration of public and voluntary sector organisations.
- 17 Following the implementation and review of the North Wales pilot, Sport Wales intends to roll out this model across Wales. Stakeholder engagement events in Cwmbran, Carmarthen and Cardiff were held in June 2019.
- 18 In order to act in accordance with the sustainable development principle public bodies must take account of the following 'ways of working':

¹ Community sport funding across Wales was £9.2 million in 2018-19 and £8.9 million in 2019-20. The Regional Sport Agencies will also manage lottery funding within a national generic scheme.

Exhibit 1: the 'five ways of working'

The table below sets out the 'five ways of working' as defined in the Welsh Government's 'Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 The Essentials'² document.

The Five Ways of Working
Long-term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
Prevention How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
Integration Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
Involvement The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

- 19 Our examination found that: **There are a number of positive examples of how Sport Wales has acted in accordance with the sustainable development principle when developing its new community sport model. Sport Wales recognises the need to build on this work, to fully embed the ways of working as they deliver the new model across Wales.**

² Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 The Essentials, Welsh Government (2015)

Detailed report

Part One: Examination Findings

Sport Wales has developed the new community sport model in response to an analysis of current and long-term needs and pressures but are not yet meeting the expectation that public bodies plan at least ten years ahead

What we looked for

20 We looked for evidence of:

- a thorough understanding of current and long-term needs and the associated challenges and opportunities;
- planning over an appropriate timescale;
- resources allocated to ensure long-term benefits; and
- appropriate monitoring and review.

21 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for the 'long-term' that we have identified and used as part of this examination.³

What we found

22 We identified the following strengths:

- Sport Wales has aligned the 'step' with the overall vision for sport in Wales. For example, the community sport model has been designed to help deliver the overall vision by providing more opportunities for people to participate in sport.
- Sport Wales has used a range of evidence to plan for current and long-term need and to inform the design of the model. This has included:
 - The National Survey for Wales and the School Sport Survey which provide information on current need and short-term trends.
 - The Chief Medical Officer's guidelines on physical activity which provide an indication of current and future need and sets out the scale of the problem that Sport Wales needs to address.
 - Work done by Sport Wales on future trends to understand the long-term need for sport, activity and well-being. This is set out in **Acting today for an active tomorrow** (2014) which looks at a range of trends driving a changing relationship with sport to 2026. The needs

³ See Appendix 1

identified in this report are reflected in the development of the step, for example, the report highlights the need to tackle inequalities in sport.

- The business case recognised that the budgets for community sport were shrinking and the 'step' is an attempt to take a new approach that will be financially sustainable.
- The business case looked from 2016 to 2023 which is a seven-year planning horizon. Sport Wales has developed an investment model (five years) to support the roll out of the project. Sport Wales has told us that there is potential to extend this to ten years subject to satisfactory performance.
- Within the business case, Sport Wales provided a vision of what the future of community sport could look like, to help potential partners develop a shared long-term approach. This included moving towards a regional approach to funding and being outcomes based.
- Sport Wales (and partners in North Wales) has stressed that future provision will be based on an evidence based assessment of local and regional needs.

23 We identified the following areas for improvement:

- The work on future trends affecting sport and activity is a commendable action to understand long-term needs. However, this work was completed in 2014. These trends could have changed in five years and Sport Wales need to keep their understanding on future trends up-to-date.
- Welsh Government statutory guidance on the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Shared Purpose: Shared Future) states an expectation that public bodies will look at least ten years ahead. This is relevant as Sport Wales are planning to make significant changes to community sport funding to make it more sustainable in the long-term. Sport Wales has a seven-year business plan for the new community sport model and a five year (with possible extension to ten year) funding model; Sport Wales should consider how it can further develop its planning for the long-term.

Sport Wales is seeking to improve participation in sport and improve well-being by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of their community sport funding. Sport Wales should continue to explore the root causes of why people do not participate in sport

What we looked for

- 24 We looked for evidence of:
- a thorough understanding of the nature and type of problem the step could help prevent from occurring or getting worse;
 - resources allocated to ensure preventative benefits will be delivered; and
 - monitoring and review of how effectively the step is preventing problems from occurring or getting worse.
- 25 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for 'prevention' that we have identified and used as part of this examination.⁴

What we found

- 26 We identified the following strengths:
- Sport Wales recognises that community sport funding has to change as finance is becoming increasingly challenging. At the same time, Sport Wales is aiming to deliver a step change in participation rates in sport or physical activity, tackle inequalities in sport and enable everyone to reach their potential in sport.
 - Sport Wales recognises that levels of sport participation are variable and there are persistent levels of latent demand that are not being met.
 - Sport Wales has information on the factors affecting participation in sport from the School Sport Survey, the National Survey for Wales, the FE Sport and Active Lifestyles Survey and **Acting today for an active tomorrow**.
 - The delivery of the 'step' offers the potential to use data and evidence to allocate resources and provide services on the basis of current and future need, rather than to allocate funding based on historical precedent.
 - The specification documents for the North Wales pilot sets a number of delivery outcomes related to increased participation in sport.
- 27 We identified the following areas for improvement:
- Sport Wales does not fully understand the underlying reasons why some people do not participate in sport. This understanding would provide reassurance that funding is being used to tackle problems at source and that

⁴ See Appendix 1

interventions are likely to be effective. Sport Wales has information on factors affecting participation in sport, however the root causes of not participating in sport, often bigger and more complex societal issues, have not been explored in as much detail. Greater focus on understanding the broader causes of why people do not participate in sport will help identify which partners they need to work with in delivering the step and how they can help contribute to the delivery of partners' objectives and wider outcomes.

- Gaining a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons why people do not participate in sport would help Sport Wales to take a system-wide approach to monitoring and evaluating the success of this 'step', so that the effects on partner organisations are also being recorded. For example, by recording reduced burdens on health services.

Sport Wales can demonstrate a clear link between the ‘step’, the vision for sport in Wales and the national well-being goals but has not fully explored the links between the ‘step’ and their partners’ objectives.

What we looked for

- 28 We looked for evidence of consideration of:
- how this step could contribute to the seven national well-being goals;
 - how delivery of this step will impact on Sport Wales’ well-being objectives and wider priorities; and
 - how delivery of this step will impact on other public bodies’ well-being objectives.
- 29 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for ‘integration’ that we have identified and used as part of this examination.⁵

What we found

- 30 We identified the following strengths:
- The vision for sport in Wales was launched in July 2018 and sets out clearly and comprehensively how the vision relates to the national well-being goals. For example, Sport Wales makes links to ‘A Wales of cohesive communities’ by committing to work with other organisations to create routes into sport across education, housing, social care, youth services, religious settings and more.
 - As the vision for sport in Wales developed, the new community sport model evolved to align with the vision. For example, the ‘step’ reflects an emphasis in the vision that there needs to be a better understanding of sport needs and gaps in provision, and that opportunities should be provided for everyone to get involved in sport.
 - Sport Wales intends that the next iteration of its strategy will set organisational outcomes (to help deliver the vision) which will also be their well-being objectives.
 - Sport Wales has good links with key partners that enable discussion about joint working and the potential integration of objectives.
 - Sport Wales staff stated that they had improved cross-organisational working but more could be done.
- 31 We identified the following areas for improvement:

⁵ See Appendix 1

- In an integrated system, there would be a clear understanding of how a 'step' contributes to an overall approach to improving well-being. Sport Wales has not fully explored how the new community sport model relates to the well-being objectives of other public sector organisations (including the objectives of Public Services Boards).
- Sport Wales has worked to reflect the Well-being of Future Generations Act ways of working in the development of the 'step'. To ensure integration going forward, the five ways of working need to be reflected in the funding and delivery of the new community sport model going forward. For example, by ensuring that funding decisions are being made in accordance with the five ways of working.

Sport Wales has demonstrated a commitment to collaboration in developing the new community sport model although project management and governance arrangements to deliver the model are still in early development

What we looked for

- 32 We looked for evidence that Sport Wales:
- has considered how it could work with others to deliver the step (to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its well-being objectives);
 - is collaborating effectively to deliver the step; and
 - is monitoring and reviewing whether the collaboration is helping it or its stakeholders meet well-being objectives.
- 33 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for 'collaboration' that we have identified and used as part of this examination.

What we found

- 34 We identified the following strengths:
- Sport Wales is working with a number of existing and new partners to develop the 'step'.
 - As part of the North Wales pilot, Sport Wales held engagement sessions for potential partners, followed by consultation sessions with organisations to discuss the approach.
 - As a result, Sport Wales is working with new partners that could help them meet their objectives, for example Housing Associations.
 - The procurement process was developed collaboratively and the Expression of Interest stage required the preferred partner to demonstrate a collaborative approach to delivery.
 - A partnership of six Local authorities, two Universities, the Health Board, PHW, Disability Sport Wales, six Housing Associations and GwE have been appointed as the preferred delivery partner for the North Wales pilot (North Wales Sport Collaborative partnership).
 - Partners reported that Sport Wales had encouraged them to consider who else they needed to work with to deliver the step.
 - Within the North Wales pilot, partners reported the ability to have honest and open conversations even when facing challenges in the process.
 - In parallel, Sport Wales has worked extensively with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) to ensure that they can link in and support the new community sport model.

- Sport Wales has put in place arrangements to evaluate the collaborative element of the 'step'.
- Sport Wales has planned for a transition period as part of the procurement process. Sport Wales will support the North Wales Sport Collaborative partnership through the first year of its operation or until they are able to demonstrate full sustainable viability.

35 We identified the following areas for improvement:

- There have been initial difficulties around project management in the North Wales pilot and governance arrangements are still being considered. This is valuable learning from the pilot that can be used in the next stages of the roll-out of the new community sport model.
- A detailed plan for the initial transitional period when the Regional Sport Agencies take over the delivery and funding of the community sport model will help reduce the likelihood of teething problems. Initial monitoring of the new model will help detect any issues at an early stage.
- Sport Wales has good relationships with a number of partners and is seeking to further extend its network. Better coordination of work with partners will help ensure that Sport Wales is maximising the benefits of its organisational relationships.
- Public Services Boards (PSBs) have not been significantly involved in the development of the new community sport model to date. There would be potential benefits for Sport Wales, Regional Sport Agencies (RSAs) and the PSBs themselves in greater collaboration on this work.

Sport Wales has involved a comprehensive range of partners in the development of the new community sport model but direct involvement of service users has been limited

What we looked for

- 36 We looked for evidence that Sport Wales has:
- identified who it needs to involve in designing and delivering the step;
 - effectively involved key stakeholders in designing and delivering the step;
 - used the results of involvement to shape the development and delivery of the step; and
 - sought to learn lessons and improve its approach to involvement.
- 37 Our examination was also informed by the positive indicators for 'involvement' that we have identified and used as part of this examination.

What we found

- 38 We identified the following strengths:
- Sport Wales considered who it needed to involve in different stages of developing the new community sport model.
 - The invitation for engagement events set out their ambition for the range of stakeholders that they wanted to engage with and over 200 people attended these events from a diversity of organisations interested in community sport provision.
 - Sport Wales also encouraged its existing partners to consider who else could add value to the development of the 'step'.
 - In North Wales, a number of established and new partners are working with Sport Wales through the North Wales Sport Collaborative Partnership.
 - The involvement of new partners, such as Housing Associations, aims to enable greater reach into populations where there are lower levels of sport participation currently.
 - Sport Wales also held a 'national conversation' which informed the development of the vision for sport in Wales. As the vision developed, the new community sport model evolved to align with priorities identified in the vision, for example understanding sporting needs and gaps in provision.
- 39 We identified the following area for improvement:
- Welsh Government statutory guidance on the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Shared Purpose: Shared Future) states an expectation that public bodies will involve a diversity of people and communities in decisions which may change the services provided to them. Direct engagement with service users during the next stages of project roll-out and delivery will

provide valuable insight particularly in the assessment of evidence of need and assessing gaps in provision. This will help provide reassurance that new provision on the ground reflects what people actually want.

Part Two: Sport Wales' response

40 Following the conclusion of our fieldwork we presented our findings to senior officers of Sport Wales at a workshop in May 2019. At this workshop Sport Wales began to consider its response to our findings and as a result of discussions at the workshop and further reflection on our findings Sport Wales has developed the following actions.

Long-term

- We will continue to use insight to shape the delivery of our strategy, including updating our understanding of future trends affecting sport participation in Wales.
- We will undertake forecasting work to consider how the organisation will look in 10, 15 and 25 years, which will help us develop our planning for the long-term.
- We will continue to use a five-year commitment with potential to extend for a further five years (subject to satisfactory performance) in the roll out of the new community sport model across Wales.

Prevention

- We will establish a physical activity observatory in partnership with Public Health Wales & Natural Resources Wales delivering a publicly available resource that presents up-to-date evidence on the level of physical activity in Wales, based on robust data, through an accessible, interactive web based portal.
- We will continue our partnership with Welsh Government on a £5.4 million Healthy and Active Fund, which is seeking to better understand issues affecting physical inactivity for some of the most vulnerable groups in society. Part of this work will deploy a common evaluation framework which will be externally evaluated, and will build our collective knowledge of the factors affecting physical inactivity.
- We will evaluate the new community sport model periodically, both individually and through the Sport Wales Outcomes Framework.
- We will continue to commission studies such as the Social Return on Investment, which evaluated the system-wide impact of sport and in particular mapped its impact on preventative approaches to health concerns.

Integration

- We will carry out a wider exercise to map Sport Wales' wellbeing objectives to those of Public Service Boards. The outcomes of this exercise will inform the commissioning of the future rollout of the community sport model.

- We will produce a new resource strategy that aligns to the investment principles within the new Sport Wales Strategy, providing a clear line of sight to the five ways of working.

Collaboration

- Findings from a review of the commissioning approach to develop Sport North Wales will be built into a revised process for the rollout across the rest of Wales. The process will also have an additional stage built in allowing time and support to develop collaborative partnerships.
- A review has been undertaken of the commissioning approach used to develop Sport North Wales and the findings from this review have been built into a revised process for the roll out across the rest of Wales. Various elements, including the need for project management and greater clarification on the governance arrangements, will need to be evidenced through the revised commissioning process. The process has also built in an additional stage allowing additional time and support to develop collaborative partnerships.
- As part of the commissioning process Sport North Wales and subsequent Sports Partnerships will be required to submit a detailed Transition Plan to provide confidence that they can manage this stage of the process. This will be reviewed by a team bringing together both internal & external expertise and will ultimately form part of the Full Business Case submission. The Full Business Case will be presented to the Programme Board for assessment and approval prior to Contract being awarded.
- During the transition phase Sport Wales will allocate appropriate staff resource to ensure that the Partnerships are fully supported and also feedback early learning to inform future Partnership development and transition.
- While cross-departmental work currently allows for this coordination, we will formalise this process by developing a system where all partner interactions can be logged and analysed.
- During the rollout of the new community sport model across the rest of Wales, we will encourage Lead Partners to engage across their region, including linking with PSB's, at the Expression of Interest (EoI) and Invitation to Submit Outline Solutions stages and as they develop their plans in more detail.

Involvement

- As part of the Commissioning Process partners will need to demonstrate that their plans are based on insight and evidence and therefore will be expected to demonstrate how they have engaged with their community both in the planning stage but also on an ongoing basis to ensure that their plans remain valid for the communities that they serve.

Appendix 1

Positive Indicators of the Five Ways of Working

Exhibit 2: Positive Indicators of the Five Ways of Working

The table below sets out 'positive indicators' for each of the five ways of working that we have identified. We have not used the indicators as a checklist. They should be viewed as indicators. They helped us to form conclusions about the extent to which a body is acting in accordance with the sustainable development principle in taking steps to meet its Well-being Objectives.

What would show a body is fully applying the long-term way of working?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a clear understanding of what 'long-term' means in the context of the Act.• They have designed the step to deliver the well-being objective/s and contribute to their long-term vision.• They have designed the step to deliver short or medium term benefits, which are balanced with the impact over the long-term (within the project context).• They have designed the step based on a sophisticated understanding of current and future need and pressures, including analysis of future trends.• Consequently, there is a comprehensive understanding of current and future risks and opportunities.• Resources have been allocated to ensure long-term as well as short-term benefits are delivered.• There is a focus on delivering outcomes, with milestones/ progression steps identified where outcomes will be delivered over the long-term.• They are open to new ways of doing things which could help deliver benefits over the longer term.• They value intelligence and pursue evidence-based approaches.
What would show a body is fully applying the preventative way of working?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The body seeks to understand the root causes of problems so that negative cycles and intergenerational challenges can be tackled.• The body sees challenges from a system-wide perspective, recognising and valuing the long-term benefits that they can deliver for people and places.• The body allocates resources to preventative action that is likely to contribute to better outcomes and use of resources over the longer term, even where this may limit the ability to meet some short-term needs.• There are decision-making and accountability arrangements that recognise the value of preventative action and accept short-term reductions in performance and resources in the pursuit of anticipated improvements in outcomes and use of resources.

What would show a body is taking an 'integrated' approach?

- Individuals at all levels understand their contribution to the delivery of the vision and well-being objectives.
- Individuals at all levels understand what different parts of the organisation do and proactively seek opportunities to work across organisational boundaries. This is replicated in their work with other public bodies.
- Individuals at all levels recognise the cross-organisation dependencies of achieving the ambition and objectives.
- There is an open culture where information is shared.
- There is a well-developed understanding of how the well-being objectives and steps to meet them impact on other public sector bodies.
- Individuals proactively work across organisational boundaries to maximise their contribution across the well-being goals and minimise negative impacts.
- Governance, structures and processes support this, as do behaviours.

What would show a body is collaborating effectively?

- The body is focused on place, community and outcomes rather than organisational boundaries.
- The body has a good understanding of partners' objectives and their responsibilities, which helps to drive collaborative activity.
- The body has positive and mature relationships with stakeholders, where information is shared in an open and transparent way.
- The body recognises and values the contributions that all partners can make.
- The body seeks to establish shared processes and ways of working, where appropriate.

What would show a body is involving people effectively?

- Having an understanding of who needs to be involved and why.
- Reflecting on how well the needs and challenges facing those people are currently understood.
- Working co-productively, working with stakeholders to design and deliver.
- Seeing the views of stakeholders as a vital sources of information that will help deliver better outcomes.
- Ensuring that the full diversity of stakeholders is represented and they are able to take part.
- Having mature and trusting relationships with its stakeholders where there is ongoing dialogue and information is shared in an open and transparent way.
- Ensure stakeholders understand the impact of their contribution.
- Seek feedback from key stakeholders which is used to help learn and improve.

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