

Scottish Sports Association

National Performance Framework Call for views

A submission on behalf of the Governing Bodies of sport in Scotland



National Performance Framework: Ambitions into Actions (call for views)

Submission from the Scottish Sports Association

The Scottish Sports Association (SSA) thanks the Scottish Government for the opportunity to respond to this call for views. Should any queries result from our response, or if further engagement with the SSA or our members would be beneficial as this process develops, please do not hesitate to contact us.

The SSA is the independent and collective voice for Scottish Governing Bodies of sport. The governing bodies of sport are responsible for the governance, development and delivery of their individual sports and provide a formal structure for over 900,000 individuals in Scotland who are members of one of Scotland's 13,000 sports clubs. Most of these organisations are run on a not-for-profit basis and are managed by volunteers. They provide coaching, competition and participation development opportunities for their local communities and most of the 195,000 people who volunteer in sport do so within the club structure.

The SSA has compiled this response with the input of our member Scottish Governing Bodies (SGBs).

The National Outcomes as outlined in the National Performance Framework are well understood in the sporting sector. The Outcomes underpin the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework, the world-leading framework for sport, physical activity and recreation, and as such the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework is well connected to the strategies of our Members, Scottish Governing Bodies of sport.

The key challenge for the National Outcomes as they relate to the sport and physical activity sector is an absence of value and monitoring placed on cross-cutting interventions. Sport and physical activity and volunteering are two areas that serve as examples of this challenge - these are measured and monitored against a distinct area of the National Outcomes, for example, health, but also deliver contributions across a wide range of additional outcomes, including communities, children and young people, education, economy and more. This cross-cutting impact is not effectively captured in the current usage of the National Outcomes and as such underrepresents the impact that is being made.

On behalf of our Members, the SSA spends a considerable amount of time demonstrating the contribution of sport across other Outcomes. We see the significant benefits of collaborating with partners beyond sport, but, because of the linear nature of the Outcomes, more efforts are spent in demonstrating why there should be collaborations than in developing new opportunities for our Members to engage in these collaborations. The same is true for volunteering. If we can save time on having to make the case, we can invest this time in new opportunities and partnerships to greater progress towards and achievement of our National Outcomes.

The current lack of recognition creates a challenge in cross department working. These themes should be recognised and valued as everyone's responsibility, and not just the division which leads on it. However, such cross cutting outcomes are not always given due prioritisation as they may not be the outcomes by which a Scottish Government division is measured and evaluated - in reality they should be more heavily prioritised if their wide ranging benefits were better understood, appreciated and valued across the range of outcomes.

We have to use wider research from other organisations (for example [our Why Sport Matters resources](#)) to demonstrate the considerable impact that sport and physical activity has across a wide range of Outcomes. As these impacts are poorly understood, we have to continually make this argument to encourage other departments, agencies and partners (and external funders) to want to work with sports for mutual benefit.

The review and analysis of the National Performance Framework and how it is used presents an opportunity for the revision of the National Performance Framework and its Outcomes to better reflect and prioritise these cross cutting themes to promote a range of greater cross Government, cross agency and cross agenda:

- Working
- Partnerships and collaborations
- Monitoring, including holding others to account for their contribution to sport and physical activity
- Funding.

Better representing and understanding the contribution of sport and physical activity would result in those agendas which are the indirect beneficiaries of people taking part in sport and physical activity recognising this contribution and increasing the likelihood of their investment in sport and physical activity outcomes, rather than relying only on the small direct investment that comes from the sport

sector. It also promotes the value of sport and physical activity to other funders, beyond the Scottish Government, and showcases its key contribution across other priority outcomes.

This approach would further leverage sport and physical activity's contribution to the Active Scotland Outcomes Framework, and therefore the National Performance Framework Outcomes, while also adding to the ongoing excellent work of the Active Scotland Division.

In connection to this funding question, it should be noted that volunteering does not appear to be prioritised in the National Performance Framework. This means that volunteering is similarly not prioritised for funding, yet it is a golden thread which generates benefits for individuals and communities across all areas of society.

Our primary ambition for this review of the National Performance Framework is to improve the recognition and contribution of cross cutting interventions, to prioritise investments and opportunities that achieve positive outcomes across a range of the Framework's Outcomes and to better embed cross division and cross agenda partnerships and collaborations. From a sport and physical activity point of view - this could transform Scotland's world-leading policy into world-leading practice, truly realising our shared vision that more people are more active, more often.