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Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Official Report

HEALTH AND SPORT COMMITTEE

Tuesday 18 February 2014

Session 4

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HEALTH AND SPORT COMMITTEE

5th Meeting 2014, Session 4

CONVENER

*Duncan McNeil (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab)

*Colin Keir (Edinburgh Western) (SNP)

*Richard Lyle (Central Scotland) (SNP)

*Aileen McLeod (South Scotland) (SNP)

*Nanette Milne (North East Scotland) (Con)

*Gil Paterson (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP)

Dr Richard Simpson (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)

*attended

THE FOLLOWING ALSO PARTICIPATED:

Malcolm Chisholm (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) (Lab) (Committee Substitute)

David Grevenberg (Glasgow 2014 Ltd)

Stewart Harris (sportscotland)

Shona Robison (Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport)

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Eugene Windsor

LOCATION

Committee Room 4

Scottish Parliament

Health and Sport Committee

Tuesday 18 February 2014

[The Convener *opened the meeting at 10:04*]

Decision on Taking Business in Private

The Convener (Duncan McNeil): Good morning and welcome to the fifth meeting in 2014 of the Health and Sport Committee. As usual, I ask everyone in the room to switch off mobile phones and other wireless devices. Some members and officials will be using tablet devices instead of hard copies of their papers. I have received apologies from Dr Richard Simpson.

The first item on the agenda is a decision whether to take items 3, 4 and 5 in private. Item 3 is consideration of our approach to the national health service boards budget scrutiny, item 4 is consideration of the evaluation of and future plans for the ask the health secretary sessions, and item 5 is consideration of our work programme.

Does the committee agree to take those items in private?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Community Sport Inquiry

10:05

The Convener: Agenda item 2 is our inquiry into support for community sport. We welcome Shona Robison, who is the Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport; Stewart Harris, who is the chief executive of sportscotland; and David Grevemberg—I practised the pronunciation of that for a while; we had a number of different versions—who is the chief executive of Glasgow 2014 Ltd.

I understand that the minister will make a short opening statement, after which we will move to questions.

The Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport (Shona Robison): I thank the committee for giving me the opportunity to provide an update. I will start with the Commonwealth games, if that is okay.

We are all extremely excited about the fact that Glasgow will welcome the world this summer. Glasgow and Scotland are full of enthusiasm. As the Queen's baton relay makes its journey across the Commonwealth, excitement is certainly building.

Back in October, I was delighted by the feedback that the Commonwealth Games Federation's co-ordination commission gave in what was a very good report, which praised progress on the games and commended the quality of the collaboration between games partners.

All new permanent sports venues in Glasgow are now complete and open for use by the community. Work is under way on the other, temporary venues, including Hampden Park, which is being transformed to host the athletics competition during the games. In addition, the athletes village has been handed over to the organising committee. It will be a home-from-home facility for all the athletes.

As I said, for the past year the people of Scotland have been truly excited about the arrival of the games in Glasgow. That has been shown in the number of people who have applied to be volunteers and in the number of ticket applications. Ninety-four per cent of tickets for the games have now been sold and an initiative has been launched whereby 5,000 legacy tickets will be used to say thank you to individuals and groups who have been involved in legacy 2014 programmes.

On legacy more generally, we are delivering more than 50 national legacy programmes. Research on previous major events suggests that

creating a legacy is a challenge that has to be worked on, which is why we have been working on it ever since we earned the right to host the games. We began that work early and we have continued it.

I will give a few examples. Over the past 12 months, 765 young people have started a sports or events-related modern apprenticeship under the £2.5 million legacy 2014 employer recruitment incentive programme; 64 projects across 20 local authorities have been awarded £3.2 million under the £10 million legacy 2014 active places fund; Scottish businesses have won 73 per cent of the tier 1 games contracts; and 300,000 young people have benefited from the game on Scotland programme.

Although we are immensely proud of our elite athletes and take inspiration from them, we must focus on the bigger picture and ensure that our sports at grass-roots level are fit for purpose. We believe that the Commonwealth games and the Ryder cup will act as catalysts that will help to harness the enthusiasm that exists, but we must ensure that the capacity and resource are in place, particularly if we get the bounce from those events that we are expecting.

Support for volunteering remains a key part of that. Volunteering is the backbone of sport in Scotland—a strong coaching and volunteering base is crucial for the delivery of grass-roots sport. A number of interventions have already been put in place to meet those challenges. Over the next four years, £10 million will be invested in club sport to help clubs to build capacity in a sustainable way. It is expected that around 50 clubs will be supported through sportscotland's direct club investment.

How we harness the enthusiasm and passion to increase participation and physical activity will define what sport will look like beyond this year. When I spoke to the committee last June, I highlighted the Government's commitment to developing community sport hubs and bringing communities together in an accessible way. I am delighted that since then more progress has been made. At the moment, we have 126 community sport hubs, 59 per cent of which are in schools. That is a good achievement and we are well on our way to delivering at least 150 hubs by 2016.

Young people have been very much at the forefront of our ambitions for Scottish sport. At the moment, we are consulting on the youth sport strategy, which will be published this spring and will build on work that has already been taking place.

Before I finish, I will say a quick word about physical activity. Tomorrow, I will launch the new cross-Government physical activity

implementation plan. Part of that is the development of the new and eagerly awaited national walking strategy, which will help us in our ambitions to get people more active.

We are also working very hard with employers to become exemplars in helping their employees become fitter, and tomorrow we will launch the fit in 14 online campaign to encourage employers to play their part.

Finally, members will be aware of the community empowerment bill, which will present us with another opportunity to develop our local sporting facilities in conjunction with communities.

I hope that members have found some of those comments of interest as we move into questions.

The Convener: Thank you, minister. I believe that Gil Paterson will ask the first question.

Gil Paterson (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP): Sportscotland's audit of the school estate is important with regard to the engagement of children and young people. Although we are talking about a great built estate that in many cases has really good equipment, it is still a wee bit underutilised. What progress has been made in that respect? What levers or, if you like, enticements have been put in place, and how encouraging have local authorities been in their engagement and in trying to free up such facilities?

Shona Robison: Before I hand that question over to Stewart Harris, I should say that on the positive side the sportscotland report showed that the school estate is perhaps more open than we thought it was. In fact, most of it is actually open; the issue is that capacity in the estate is still being underused. That presents as much of an opportunity as a challenge, as it allows us to pinpoint where we can help local authorities to utilise the space more effectively.

Stewart Harris (sportscotland): I would highlight our relationship with all 32 authorities as a strong point in getting the information. It was a bit of a challenge but now that we have the information in one place I can categorically tell the committee that local authorities are keen to do better.

As the minister has suggested, we reckon that 60 per cent or thereabouts of the capacity is used in term time and slightly less during holidays. That provides us with the basis for a specific conversation that we can have with each authority about how we can take this issue forward.

That conversation will have a number of fronts, including time allocation, staffing levels and whether the community can be given responsibility to take some of this forward itself. We would certainly be up for conversations on those issues,

because we want to achieve a mixed economy of pay-and-play activities and giving clubs and community groups the opportunity to expand, develop and sustain themselves.

We have agreement to work with half a dozen authorities in depth immediately, but the aim is, in time, to get through all 32 authorities and help them develop a better programme. After all, the real answer to the issue is programming, making clear who is working where and so on. No matter whether we are talking about a club, pay-and-play activities, football or whatever, the way forward is to have a greater degree of programming in these facilities.

10:15

Gil Paterson: Given that every high school in my constituency is actually a private finance initiative/public-private partnership project, can you say whether there are any obstacles in that respect? Are you engaging with the companies that own those schools to free up facilities?

I have to say that the facilities in each of the schools are excellent, and I am certainly making no criticism of what is available. I should also put on record that I know about engagement with parks about, for example, floodlit football for the public, which can be only a good thing.

However, looking at the bigger picture and given some of the stories that we have heard in the past about the cost to the public of utilising such facilities, I wonder whether the issue has been tackled. Are you engaged in what I might describe as project freer to free up the good facilities in PFI schools and ensure that they, too, can be utilised?

Stewart Harris: We are going to engage with each of the companies and the local authorities in question in a tripartite discussion about the 10 per cent of the secondary school estate that is PPP or PFI. I know that some local authorities have had some discussions, but sportscotland can lend some weight and perhaps bring some answers or solutions to the table. Although it might represent a smaller percentage of the entire estate, it is nevertheless important and we would like to take it forward.

I am actually quite excited about having those conversations because, with the games coming up and our big public commitment not only to them but to young people in sport, now is the time to take these matters forward.

The Convener: It is up to us to make best use of the other 90 per cent of the school estate. Although I accept that we have an opportunity to use that capacity more effectively, I have to say that the committee found it depressing that 60 per cent of the facilities in the school estate were not

available at weekends or during the school holidays. How did we get to that point?

The Commonwealth games are only a couple of months away, but we are still having discussions with only six councils. How can we step things up and ensure that we create, as part of the legacy of the games, more facilities that are available during the summer and which people can simply drop in at and use for free or for a payment? Can we have a pilot or something?

We certainly need to recognise that we are so far off the pace that we face a longer-term challenge in bringing into more effective use these wonderful facilities, which are in all of our communities but are being underused.

Shona Robison: You make a good point, convener. What has changed—and I have certainly sensed this in my discussions with local authorities and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities—is that we are moving away from our old discussions about the problems of insurance, janitors and so on. We do not now hear those sorts of comments so much, and I think that there is a willingness to look at how the school estate can be opened up in the summer and whether there are more imaginative ways in which we can be a bit more flexible with, say, keyholders.

The community sport hubs are actually a good way of doing that, because they provide a structure with regard to who is using the schools and the volunteers who are involved can be part of the discussions about keyholders. There are practical solutions to questions such as who opens the school, who takes responsibility and so on. As I have said, the good thing is that we are not having the tiresome discussions that we used to have about how difficult the whole thing is. There is an appetite for finding solutions to opening up the estate.

Stewart Harris: I might have misled you, convener, when I mentioned six local authorities. We are working in depth with six local authorities but all our partnership managers are talking to and working with all 32 councils because we have a relationship with all of them. Now that our report is available, the evidence is there and local authorities now have a real self-awareness about the potential of that space. Everyone is galvanised in that respect.

As the minister said, 59 per cent of the 126 community sport hubs that are up and running are in schools. There have been some great examples of time allocation going from, for example, five hours to 38 hours. Armadale academy's time allocation has increased by a third. A lot more capacity is being used and a lot more people are driving towards that aim, which I think is what you are talking about.

The Convener: I understand what you are saying, but it is a matter of building urgency. I think that, in the eight months since we last met, another 12 sport hubs have come on stream. The strategy is moving slowly, and there is a frustration. I know that we cannot make these things happen overnight, and I am sure that you share the frustration. However, in the past week, looking at websites and so on, I have found that it is not easy to find out what is available in local authorities across Scotland—how much it will cost someone who wants to drop in and pay and play, for example, or what it will cost for a family to go and use the facilities.

I am saying that there is a big challenge for us all. Do we need sportscotland to provide more resources? Should there be a greater focus on this issue alone, or should we simply go on as we have been going on?

Shona Robison: You will notice that one of the main things that we consulted on in connection with the youth sport strategy is the idea that every secondary school would either be a hub or have access to one. That puts an extra driver into the idea of opening up the school estate, including during the school summer holidays. We are keen to take that forward as part of the next phase of opening up the school estate and of creating more hubs that will be focused very much around the secondary school estate. I hope that that is something that we will take forward after the consultation.

Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP): I think that my line of questioning might usurp that of a fellow committee member.

There are 17 different sports across Glasgow 2014—badminton, swimming, gymnastics and so on. I have a personal interest in weight lifting, because of the Glasgow Gladiator Programme in Easterhouse. We do not know where the Scottish successes will be, but we know that they are likely to drive greater participation in the sports in which they occur.

If I went to the Glasgow 2014 website today and thought to myself, “I want to play badminton,” “I want to do weightlifting” or whatever, would I be signposted to where those opportunities are in Glasgow? We have a window of opportunity in which people will be absolutely keen to get involved and participate. They will go on the website and try to find out where they can take part in those activities. How well thought out is the strategy to ensure that my constituents—and me, I hope—can get involved with those activities when we get inspired by Scottish and international successes in the Glasgow games?

Shona Robison: We have been encouraging local authorities to present information in a simple

way so that people can see what is going on in their area. We have also tried to gather that on a national basis through the legacy 2014 website, so that we can tell people what is going on in their area. Obviously, such a website is only as good as the information that populates it, and it very much depends on linking into local information channels.

We are not complacent about the issue by any means, and we are stepping up work to ensure that people can, as you say, find their way to the local badminton or athletics clubs. The governing bodies have a lot of good information on their websites but, again, the issue is about ensuring that the process is simple for people and that they are signposted to the right place.

We are on the case, and will ensure that, by the time that we get to the games, the process is as easy, straightforward and joined up as it can be.

David Grevemberg (Glasgow 2014 Ltd): The website is obviously a great starting point and we have signposted a lot of opportunities in a number of initiatives with partners. Volunteering in particular has been a real success. Working closely with Skills Development Scotland and Volunteer Scotland, we have been able to take the momentum that built behind the 50,811 applications and create a tremendous amount of momentum that will benefit people well into the future, whether that involves volunteering for the games or other opportunities.

We have had a remarkable rate of interest. Some 86 per cent of those 50,811 people said that they would like more information on volunteering opportunities. We had their approval to pass their names on to Volunteer Scotland, and they are now part of a broader database.

With our website and all our little microsites, we are always looking at different ways of enhancing community engagement and promoting the longer-term legacy. The sport-specific sites have links to international and national federations and the like. A real narrative around the games involves the ambitions behind them. That element is certainly embedded, but I am happy to take a look and see whether there are ways in which we can further enhance that as we get towards the big push, which will involve saying, “Okay—what’s next?” I am happy for us to take a quick look at that and see whether there are ways of refining it.

Stewart Harris: The answer to Bob Doris’s question is probably that things are happening even more locally than in the Glasgow area; inside communities is where they will happen. That is why we are excited about the role that community sport hubs will play. There are lots of other groups that consider themselves to be hubs. We are focusing a little bit on a group that we are helping to reach the target of 150 hubs; there are 126 so

far. However, it is exciting that we are seeing local growth driven by people in their own areas, so there is a greater understanding of what is available in the area.

If we look at a wide area such as Glasgow, it is still quite daunting, so we are talking about community sport hubs having their own sites. We are talking to all local authorities about taking an integrated approach and breaking that down into community areas. There is no doubt that that will be an on-going process, but there is a commitment to make information accessible.

Bob Doris: I stress that there are 32 local authority areas, but it seems reasonable for me to discuss the one for which I am a member. You say that there is a lot of detailed work behind the scenes, but the person in the street who is inspired will go to the Glasgow 2014 website and click on “participate” or “play” and they will want to get, via their postcode, a fast link to the local badminton club or the local weightlifting club. I know that such a system will be only as good as the information that Glasgow 2014 gets, but at present that facility appears not to be available.

I am delighted that Mr Grevenberg said that he will go away and see whether that can be created so that, whether somebody is in Inverness or Springburn, they can put in their postcode, click on “badminton” or any other sport and be told where the opportunities are. I note that we will not know straight away which sports are the most popular, because I suspect that that will be based partially on where achievement comes among our participating athletes.

My second question is linked to that. The London experience was that, as I said, where young people turn up and want to get involved in a sport will depend on where success comes. Has Glasgow 2014, in conjunction with local authorities, tried to estimate or predict where that success will come and what pressure an increase of, say, 10 per cent in the people who wish to participate in a sport would put on local sport facilities? In other words, does the capacity exist in each local authority area to expand when people wish to participate? Information is starting to emerge that, with the London games, the capacity was not there.

Shona Robison: SportsScotland has focused very much on that issue during discussions with the governing bodies about which sports are likely to see a bounce. They will almost certainly all see a bounce, but there has been a focus on those clubs that have the capacity to expand. The club direct investment has been part of that as it helps them to grow and train up volunteers and coaches. Stewart Harris might want to say a bit more about that.

10:30

Stewart Harris: To reiterate what the minister said, I think that there will be increased interest in all sports. One of the things that we have been doing during the past three or four years in preparation has been working with local agencies, not just local authorities, to build that capacity. It is a continuing process of freeing up, accessing and reprogramming and, as the national agency, we will try to add value to that by directly funding certain clubs so that we can look at how capacity can be grown. Members will probably remember hearing me talk about how it is fine giving volunteers and coaches qualifications, but if they do not have a space to work in, they cannot really grow.

We have made a lot of progress, and I have a good example. Scotland really struggled in the world junior championships in netball, but Netball Scotland saw a huge amount of interest in the game among young people in Scotland. There will be opportunities across all sports.

It is very difficult to target that. SportsScotland’s aim is to create many opportunities that are locally sustainable—that might not include every sport—and that could increase capacity. We will continue to do that with our local partners.

The Convener: Sports clubs and participants have been mentioned this morning. I and some other members have raised the issue that sports clubs were not given priority or privileged access to tickets. Is that the case? If it is, was it not a bit of a mistake not to ensure that those young people who are participating in sport get the opportunity to visit the games from wherever they are in Scotland?

David Grevenberg: There are a couple of elements to the ticketing programme. In March 2012, our board outlined the outcomes that it sought for the ticketing programme. As you would expect, they include filling the stadia and meeting target revenue, but the one that you might think conflicts with that is to have an accessible and inclusive ticketing programme.

Within the ticketing programme, we made a minimum of 70 per cent of the tickets available to the general public for every single session. That is almost unheard of. We offered concession prices because we wanted as many people as possible to be able to get involved. Also, working through Commonwealth Games Scotland, which was our conduit to the Scottish governing bodies of sport, we looked at ways of ensuring that they had adequate numbers as well. However, our principle was that we would open the games up to as many people as possible and create concessionary pricing policies for under-16s and over-60s and so forth that would support that. We did not want to

take an exclusive approach to ticketing; it was much more inclusive.

On top of that, we have created a number of initiatives that the Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council have embraced. We have also been working on the concept of the gift of the games programme. Glasgow 2014 will be implementing an element of that programme that reaches out to more diverse populations—even further than we have been able to reach so far.

We feel that that programme has reached out to a number of people in the public and we continue to work with Commonwealth Games Scotland and the like to ensure that Scottish governing bodies have been embraced.

I have to say that there are still tickets available.

The Convener: That takes me to my next point. If tickets are still available, is there any possibility of looking at ticketing for clubs again? People have said to us that there are concerns—whether real or imagined—in the local athletics and sports club about why they were not given some sort of privilege or promotion. There are people who participate in and deliver sports and the games will be right on their doorsteps. Can anything be done about that?

David Grevemberg: From our standpoint, more tickets will be made available closer to the games, so people should watch this space. We are still very much in the sales process and we want to sell as many tickets as possible, because it will also relieve the pressure on the public purse. We are focused on that right now. People should know that there are still five months until the games and more opportunities for people to be part of the games will be made available in various sports. At the same time, we still have tickets available for six or seven sports and we encourage people to get out there and purchase them.

The Convener: I will leave that with you and the minister. Perhaps you can work something out for those sports clubs.

Shona Robison: The affordability of tickets is different from London—the average price of tickets is very affordable and there are concession prices as well. In addition to that, the legacy tickets are very much focused on the folk you are talking about, convener: those who go along every week, those who are up-and-coming athletes. An element of the tickets that we have announced and that Glasgow 2014 has announced—there will be more on that—has those folks in mind.

The Convener: How do sports clubs get their hands on some of those tickets?

Shona Robison: Glasgow 2014 is doing its legacy tickets in a different way. The Scottish Government is doing its legacy tickets through an

agency; Sportscotland will get an element of those legacy tickets and its clubs and governing bodies will distribute them.

The Convener: So there is a route for those people.

Shona Robison: Yes. We cannot guarantee that a person in a particular club will get one of those tickets, but they will be distributed on the basis of fairness: to people who are committed to their sport at volunteer level, to local clubs and also to participants. There is a route, although I cannot guarantee that everybody will—

The Convener: I understand that.

Shona Robison: We did it with that very much in mind.

The Convener: When will those tickets be available?

Shona Robison: Over the next few weeks all the agencies involved will look in detail at how they can make the allocation of those tickets a fair process.

Stewart Harris: There has been a bit of dialogue between the various agencies to make sure that we have comprehensive cover. We are looking at community sport hubs and getting right into communities and trying to excite them about being part of the games.

The Convener: I hesitate to say this, but I just want to warn you about that division between the traditional clubs and the sport hubs.

Shona Robison: Absolutely.

The Convener: I offer that as a bit of advice, given the evidence that we have had.

Shona Robison: That is fine.

Aileen McLeod (South Scotland) (SNP): I wanted to ask some questions about the draft youth sport strategy, which was published last December. What are the next steps to publishing the final strategy? I think that in your opening remarks you said that it is to be published in the spring.

Shona Robison: It is open for consultation until 2 March, and we will look to publish later in the spring. We have been very keen to involve young people in the consultation, which is challenging. We have gone out of our way. Young Scot and the young people's sports panel have been very helpful in involving young people at the heart of the strategy, so that we can get it right.

A lot of work has gone on to build on the draft consultation. We had a lot of feedback from a lot of governing bodies and sports organisations, as you can imagine, which we will take on board. The young people's sports panel will analyse the

responses as well and give us its view of the feedback on the consultation.

We will pull all that together. A number of good suggestions have come in, which we want to reflect in the final strategy that is produced.

Aileen McLeod: One of the key actions in the draft youth sport strategy was to fully involve disabled young people in physical education and sports provision. Obviously, since the Paralympic games in 2012 we have seen a lot of interest in disability sport. In the region that I represent in Scotland, the Dumfries and Galloway branch of Scottish Disability Sport recorded a fantastic success last year at the national junior championships for swimmers with a sensory impairment or physical disability. The region's swimmers were also well represented in the medals table.

It is vital that we are inclusive and use the youth sport strategy as a way to offer opportunities to all our young people. In the written evidence that the committee received, Scottish Disability Sport mentioned the development of a sports inclusion model. Key to that is that our clubs are inclusive and that coaches and volunteers are educated and trained. Will the minister give an update on how the sports inclusion model is being developed?

Shona Robison: Absolutely. One of the consultation's key findings was the need to ensure that hubs and clubs are accessible and to build in an inclusion model so that accessibility becomes part of the way in which clubs go about their business.

Sportscotland has done a lot of work in that area to ensure that its work with and funding for clubs and hubs is tied to openness and inclusiveness. We will pull all that work together and listen to what SDS has said. There is a big opportunity to ensure that the new sport strategy lifts that work up a level and drives it forward even further.

We know what works and our model involves using funding to encourage that activity. We just need to ensure that the strategy shifts that work up a gear.

Stewart Harris: We are very encouraged by the PE work that is happening in schools. Members will remember that we have talked about an ambitious system for sport in Scotland in which schools, clubs and performance are all connected and resourced. There is national and local commitment to those aspects and an inclusive commitment to all the young people in Scotland.

The focus on disability in and around facilities involves both hubs and clubs, and I can reassure the convener that the £10 million that we have put aside to invest over the next four years is aimed

mainly at the traditional sports club in addition to the £1.5 million per annum that we are investing in the community sport hubs.

We are quite excited about what we are seeing. The Paralympic games did a great job in bringing disability and people's achievements into people's front rooms, and there is now a real acceptance of how we can move forward together. That is tremendous, and I look forward to greater progress. There seems to be a lot of commitment in that area and we will move work in that regard forward.

Sportscotland will be speaking to Scottish Disability Sport soon about its forward plans and how we might progress opportunities together.

David Grevemberg: The Commonwealth games, while they are not related directly to the sport strategy, form a complementary narrative and a piece of the puzzle. There is a fully integrated programme for the games that includes the largest parasport programme ever on offer at a Commonwealth games, with 22 medal events over five sports.

In addition we are setting new standards in the way that we are approaching the 2014 games that can be applied to future games and to major events in Scotland. The bounce on the back of the Paralympic games in London set the bar very high and in many respects has inspired us to push that agenda forward.

That is evident in our approach to delivering the venues and ensuring a dignified, independent, once-in-a-lifetime world-class experience for all patrons. We have been able to ensure that the approach trickles down through our ticketing programme and our volunteering opportunities for people with a disability.

We are working with an empowering model that will only raise the bar further and push the agenda forward. We have also embedded an integrated approach in the way in which we promote the games—for example, we are using people with a disability in our communication and promotion, which complements a lot of the good work that is already being done.

Shona Robison: To add to the comments from David Grevemberg and Stewart Harris, sportscotland are discussing with Scottish Disability Sport how both organisations can take that work to another level through the SDS athlete academy, which will provide a pathway for young disabled athletes who are inspired and show some promise in a particular sport and want to take their interest further. That will be an exciting development and we are happy to keep the committee informed about those discussions as they progress.

Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab):

There is a lot of talk about the legacy from the games. Having spoken to people from other areas that have hosted the games, I know that legacy always seems to be difficult to pin down. What would you view as a successful games legacy?

10:45

Shona Robison: We will measure success over 10 years, because we cannot measure it in a matter of weeks after the games. The work started on the day that we won the right to host the games but, as you know, legacy programmes take a long time to come to fruition and show the benefits. We have worked with statisticians and have set up a lot of programmes. In the early days, Richard Simpson took a lot of interest in the data sets that we were going to use to measure the success. A lot of work has gone into setting up those measurements so that, over milestones throughout the 10-year period, we can measure in a more in-depth way what success looks like.

Many people are actively measuring things such as participation in sport within communities and within hubs, rather than providing the one or two snapshot measurements that we have at the moment. The Scottish household survey is one of those, but it shows only a certain moment in time and is very much about self-reporting. Some of the measurements that we are putting in place are more about drilling down and looking at how active young people and people of all ages are within their communities.

We are also putting in place measurements to look at the on-going legacy in terms of economic benefits, and a lot of detailed work is going on in the east end of Glasgow to measure the impact of regeneration on that community. On a range of levels and in a range of legacy areas, we are trying to measure as comprehensively as possible so that, over the milestones for a year's time, five years' time and 10 years' time, we will be able to comprehensively tell the story of what the legacy from the games has looked like. I am not sure that that has been done in that way before. There have been attempts to do it, and we believe that it is a better way of telling the full story than one measurement and a snapshot in time. The process will evolve over a 10-year timescale.

Rhoda Grant: Will we have access to those measurements? Will the committee be able to follow them through that timescale?

Shona Robison: Absolutely. All that information will be in the public domain. We have put the data measurements in the public domain, so all the baselines are there. It will be a comprehensive package of information. I have said before that I am keen to keep the committee updated on the

issue and, as reports come in and the data set is populated over periods of time, I will be happy to ensure that the committee has sight of all that. It will all be in the public domain anyway.

David Grevenberg: We have been quite popular for saying that the ambition behind the games has probably been greater than the games themselves, in some respects. From the organising committee's standpoint, to have such commitment and ownership of the legacy agendas both at the local level, from Glasgow City Council, and at the national level, from the Scottish Government, is a breath of fresh air in the world of sport. The narrative that we have been using lately, as we have engaged more and more people with the games, is "Have you practised legacy today? Legacy is not something that happens to you; it happens by you." That is a friendly challenge to get people engaged, find ways of being inspired and make a difference with that inspiration.

Three areas come to mind in which we have already started to see a big impact. First, if we measure legacy on its generational impact, there is no question but that the facilities and infrastructure projects that have been delivered well before the games, which are both community relevant and world class, will be gifts that keep on giving, whether to Glasgow or to further afield. There are some fantastic stories about venues that are really having an impact now that have been inspired by the games and are not necessarily just for the games.

My second point is about how the three sectors—the public, private and third sectors—are working together smartly. We would not have had nearly the success that we have had without that partnership working. That is a true testament to the volunteer programme, the ticketing programme and our community engagement programmes, which show the three sectors working together smartly to make a difference. Our sponsors have gotten on board and recognise that corporate social responsibility is a powerful vehicle in relation to community engagement and community benefit through the games.

Last but not least are reputation and recognition. There is no question but that the 10-year journey that Scotland has travelled in hosting this fantastic event has raised Scotland's profile as a fantastic place to be entertained, do sport, live and do business. That can only get stronger.

Stewart Harris: I will add a little detail to what the minister said. Because the active schools programme has been in place for 10 years, we have a note of every club that is connected to every school in Scotland—we have a similar picture in relation to community sport hubs. We have a list of the 29 clubs in Armadale, and

underneath that we have all the participation data for each club, so we can measure constantly.

That means that we have a tool that we did not have in the past, which allows us to have specific conversations—just as we are doing in the context of the school estate—to analyse where there has been success and where we need to make improvements. That commitment to continuous improvement is where we are at. We also know that it costs £62,000 per annum to make Armadale sustainable. We have a figure for each club and hub—I emphasise again that we support clubs and hubs. That is exciting, and it enables us to take things forward.

A good outcome, for me, would be a greater degree of sustainable community sport, which is embedded in communities and has the ability to grow when resources—nationally and locally—allow. It is about communities taking things forward, rather than having things delivered to them. That is what I find exciting about the games and their legacy.

Shona Robison: I point Rhoda Grant and other members to the assessing legacy 2014 website, which shows the range of indicators that we have, tracked from the baseline in 2008. The site was updated in December and will give members the current position. It will continue to be populated so that we can measure against the baseline indicators.

Rhoda Grant: Given that the Glasgow Commonwealth games organising committee will cease to exist after the games, who will be in charge of the legacy and taking it forward? I understand what you are saying about community and all the layers of involvement, but once we remove the committee that has a focus on the issue, how do we ensure that the focus remains?

Shona Robison: The other games partners will do that—the Scottish Government and the agencies that are involved, such as sportscotland and Glasgow City Council. The Government and the council have agreed to work together to bring together all the legacy information. Post-games, the assessing legacy 2014 website will continue to be populated and will be a source of information. Glasgow has its own legacy information site, which tells a Glasgow-focused story, whereas our focus is Scotland wide; we are sharing information so that we can tell the full story. To cut a long story short, the Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council will be the key partners in ensuring that the work continues.

The Convener: Armadale is a good example of what the committee is looking for, in relation to not just inputs but monitoring outcomes. Is such monitoring in place for all 126 sport hubs?

Stewart Harris: At the moment we have 103 sets of data, but we aim to have data for all hubs. I think that the last time you and I discussed the matter I said how strongly I felt about the power of such local information. For the first time, we have the opportunity to analyse the situation. Even better, the people who run the clubs and hubs have the chance to say, “We need to do this better”, or “We could work better with that club across the road.” There is real potential. If there is an outcome of the games that I am excited about, it is the information that gives us that power.

The Convener: What is our target for sport hubs? What does that figure of 126 community sport hubs represent in relation to schools in Scotland?

Shona Robison: At the moment, about 59 per cent of those sport hubs are in schools. Our target was 50 per cent—we wanted at least half the hubs to be in schools. When we get to the target of 150 hubs by 2016, I am quite confident that at least half the hubs will be in schools.

Clearly, the youth sport strategy and the next phase of sport hubs are very much focused on secondary schools. We are discussing with sportscotland what that might look like in detail and laying out what will happen after 2016.

The Convener: Yes, that is important.

Shona Robison: The model works, so why would we not want to do more of it? The question is how we focus more of that development within schools. There are a lot of different models for hubs—we do not want to stop any of those models from happening, because they are all good. However, having hubs within schools ties up so well with opening up the school estate in a managed way that we want to step up that side of things. That is why we are focusing on hubs in secondary schools.

The Convener: What information do we have on the 1,300 sports clubs in Scotland? Do we have any of that analysis? In my area, there is a bit of tension between local clubs and their national associations. The clubs say to me that they do not see any benefit coming down to their clubs. What are we getting for the 1,300 clubs? How do we help them?

Stewart Harris: Where we are at with local clubs is very similar to what we are doing with hubs. I will give you a little breakdown of the resources that are going into local clubs. There are 13,000 of them—I think that you said 1,300. Most of the clubs are very small entities that are not really sustainable, so we have been on a deliberate track of bringing people together. That is making things much more sustainable.

Through the direct club investment strand, which goes from sportscotland direct to the clubs, we will help 200 clubs over the next four years. Part of the deal is that they regularly provide us with information. The other element of the £10 million investment for club sport was the creation of 48 regional development officers through governing bodies—again, that is about national-local partnership and capacity building.

I was able to do an induction with all those officers. I was very clear that the only conversation that I want to have with them in a year's time is around the questions, "Where's the list of clubs you've been working with? What's the information you have from them? What do you see as success with each of them?" We estimate that if each of those 48 officers works initially with about six or seven clubs, we can build up to quite a big total of individual geographic hubs and clubs from which we can get that kind of data.

Again, I issue a general invitation to members—if any of them wants to talk about that investment in relation to their own areas, I am happy to take them through what is happening.

The Convener: Has any of the national associations had its funding reviewed? Can you review their funding if you do not believe that they are delivering?

Stewart Harris: Absolutely. It is an on-going process for us. We review each sport; we work on a four-year cycle and we expect them to have a four-year plan. Some sports are weaker than others in governance, development or performance and we will take action when that happens.

The action can be in two forms. We can take a very supportive action—we do that anyway; we provide support when we work with each sport on its improvement model. Also, if things are getting difficult, we do not hesitate to take away some resources—we have taken some performance programmes in-house in sportscotland. However, the ultimate aim is to build the sport back up again. Taking funding away is not a punitive measure and it is not an action in isolation. It should be about improving governance, for example—we took some very strong action against gymnastics, as you probably remember. We have had one or two other very difficult conversations with certain governing bodies and we would not hesitate to continue to take such actions.

Shona Robison: One key outcome for the funding agreement is obviously performance and ensuring that the targets are met on the elite side. The other key outcome strand is participation and setting targets with governing bodies around the growth of participation—that has to be done

through the clubs. There is then a conversation with the governing body and the clubs about growth and participation; sometimes that is a difficult conversation as well. It is part of human nature that sometimes folk like to just be left to get on with things and to do them in the way that they have always been done; however, that is not always the best way when it comes to opening the doors and growing participation, so that can be quite a difficult conversation to have.

11:00

Linking the funding to an increase in participation and improved governance and performance is a way of driving opportunities for young people and making that more systematic. Over the past few years there has been a big change from what used to be done, but that is the right way when we are using public money.

The Convener: We have heard in evidence that participation is particularly low for certain groups and geographic areas. We can all point to situations in our communities in which at one end of town there are successful clubs with volunteers competing with one another while at the other end of town there are no volunteers; good facilities in the wrong areas; tribalism; and all sorts of barriers. Have you identified areas in which we need to do more and are there special measures that you can take to create some advantage out of disadvantage, if I can put it that way?

Stewart Harris: I will repeat myself, but I hope that you are beginning to understand why. We are creating an approach that is more systematic; it is not project based, but about infrastructure in schools and communities. I think that we are getting to a place where we have a foothold in every school in the country and we are creating a fairly sizeable group or cohort of clubs. Now that we have that, we can begin to look, in conjunction with local agencies, at special measures that may be required. We cannot do that from the top down; it is very much about our relationship with local partners.

I want to stress the potential that we now have. We are three or four years down the track towards creating a sustainable legacy for community sport; I do not think that anyone else, in any other games, has got near to that. We are excited about it, but we do not underestimate the challenge of sustainability. There needs to be a local commitment, too. Local authorities are going through tough times budget wise, but we continue to have conversations with them about maintaining the commitment and seeing the value of sport in communities and communities of sport. That is really important. Again, we would like to have a conversation with members round the table and

politicians nationally and locally, because I think that you can all help.

Shona Robison: One of the discussions that we are having that might interest you is around the next phase of community sport hubs and the focus on schools. The issue is what more we can do for schools that are located in more deprived communities. Do we need to do something a bit more targeted to encourage those schools to become hubs and to support the clubs in those communities, which might not have the same volunteer capital as clubs in other areas and might face a few more difficult challenges? The issue is what more we can do to target those schools and communities to ensure that young people in those areas get the same opportunities through their school estate being open, hubs being vibrant and there being new clubs and sports opportunities that they might not otherwise get. We are having a conversation at the moment about how we do that.

Colin Keir (Edinburgh Western) (SNP): I have taken quite a lot from the panel's comments. I am absolutely delighted that you are having conversations with local authorities and PFI/PPP contractors, particularly because over the past six or seven years in my area, we have had no shortage of problems from a number of schools that were rebuilt. My own old school is a prize example, in that the only thing that was kept from the original school was the bottom football pitch, but when we tried to put a football pitch in there, we were told that we could not because it was down in the plans as being a green space. That seems absolutely daft, but that is how that school was contracted. To this day, nothing has been done about that.

Another issue is the hub in my area, which is five minutes from where I live and has wonderful facilities. However, I used to hold a surgery at the hub, and there was next to nobody there. The swimming pool was empty because people could not just walk in and use it. Any improvement in that regard would be absolutely fantastic.

I am sure that the minister is fed up of hearing me rattling on about what happens in the late teens and before the elite period, if you like. How do we keep people involved? There is a fair drop-out rate among youngsters, particularly in the mid-to-late teens. What are we doing to try to keep teenagers involved in sports?

Shona Robison: We have already talked about the challenges of PFI/PPP. There is now more of an ability to have a conversation about access, but many of the contracts are fairly old. Discussions are being had on better access, and they will continue. One of the important things that the member might have seen in the youth sport strategy is the role of sportscotland in having earlier discussions in the school building

programme. Instead of discussions on sports facilities in a school happening at the end of the process, the aim is for that to happen at the beginning. Sometimes, simple changes can make all the difference when it comes to the actual use of a building and sports facilities. That is an important change, and we are keen for it to happen.

On the drop-out rate, we have been looking at life-changing moments and considering how we keep young people active when they leave school. The colleges and universities have an important role in trying to ensure that young people who have been fairly active in sport at school do not stop being active when they go to college or university. A lot of proactive work is going on to identify and keep those people active, and potentially to encourage them to take up coaching opportunities. Actually, that happens for some people while they are still at school. Many senior pupils are going down the coaching road, which is good—they are a great resource. We definitely need to do more on that, and we are always looking at ways of trying to ensure that people do not slip through the net.

Stewart Harris: This sounds a wee bit simplistic, but the answer is to make sport more accessible locally. The evidence that we hear from talking to young people across a range of outlets is that they are more likely to participate if the activity is on their doorstep. That is why we have talked about using the school estate more. The minister made the key point that more young people are now involved in leadership and working in hubs and clubs. That attracts other young people to stay, because it is not just an adult environment, and they can identify with their peers.

The approach has to be local. For me, Scotland is well set up for that. We have lots of towns and distinct communities that each have to be provided for, so we cannot take a global look. Although there is a national picture that we can help with, we are very much getting into individual communities with our local partners to try to arrest the trends that Mr Keir talks about. We have seen a huge positive movement in that direction.

Colin Keir: When people move on to the competitive side, there is a huge jump between someone who is 17 or 18 and someone who is 22 or 23, particularly in some sports. In a sport such as athletics, in some cases there is quite a jump between those who are 17 and those who are more mature, and there is quite a drop-out rate.

You talk about partners and getting into localities. Throughout the country, we have traditional public parks with pavilions and stuff like that. I declare an interest, as a member of a rugby club that uses a pretty clapped-out building—

throughout the country, that is not unusual. It is not quite the hub—the hub is a mile or so up the road—but it is a long-established club, and I could mention a couple of dozen others in the Edinburgh area that are in the same situation.

How can you get involved with those people? How can you get involved with the clubs to help them deal with local trusts or councils, which tend to run the parks and pavilions and can be a bit restrictive at times?

Stewart Harris: There are two tracks on which we can help with that. The first is our annual conversation with local authorities and, usually but not always, their trusts—we now insist that everyone is around the table for those talks. We try to project the facility priorities at all levels, whether they be adjustments to a sports centre, a new centre, a new school or public parks and clubs.

Secondly, we look at both the public and voluntary sectors, and any club can apply directly to us and have a conversation with us about its changing facilities. We have had some really great projects. The emphasis for us right now is on clubs, as you have probably gathered, through both the hub and club strands, and people development and facility development go alongside that. We are happy to talk through the governing body or directly to the club, and we can bring resources to that.

Colin Keir: A common thread that I have come across is the fact that a club's ambition is a bit greater than a trust's ambition.

Shona Robison: Sportscotland can be a good mediator and bring parties together for difficult discussions. That has happened quite a lot. The active places fund was set up with that scenario in mind, as we wanted a fund that could be accessed reasonably easily. A case must be made and a club has to show that the funding is going to lead to growth in participation, but whether the funding is for doing up the pavilion or creating changing rooms, reasonably small amounts of money can be released reasonably quickly, which makes a difference in helping a club to move on and provide a more inviting environment. That is exactly what that fund was created for. It sounds as though there is a conversation to be had with the organisations in your area.

Stewart Harris: Such intelligence is really helpful. Our aim is to ensure that everyone who can contribute locally does so in an integrated environment. There are sometimes disparities in ambition, but we are prepared to get into those conversations and mediate if required. Solutions can be accelerated if there is someone there who can bring some resources—that is important, as it gives us a lever.

Colin Keir: The difficulty is in the fact that the public park is council owned, the facility is run by a trust and the club is there on a long-term lease. There is a three-way problem, in that the local authority may not have the funds, the trust is not really interested because it is not one of its big areas of expertise and the club is just sitting there. That is a problem not just for the club that I happen to be a member of—there are examples all over the Lothians and probably all over Scotland.

Stewart Harris: There are already some good examples of negotiation—which can take time—with the local authority or the trust about giving over pitches on long-term leases, and we will explore all such models. As I said earlier, there is a mixed economy that could be vibrant across Scotland, with pay-and-play for those who choose that as well as clubs and hubs that are more sustainable in their own areas and which have their own facilities. In some cases, the clubs manage facilities—Lismore Rugby Football Club is a good example of that. The club has built its own clubhouse and the City of Edinburgh Council has given Inch park to the club, which now looks after it and allocates it. Cricket, football and rugby work closely together there and it is a great success story. Previously, growth was stunted because the clubs were not really supported. I would be happy to chat to you after the meeting about the specific club that you mention.

11:15

The Convener: Full points to you, Colin, for getting that plug in—we all do it at times. The example raises broader issues, however, which we all come across in our constituencies.

Even when there is an acceptance of responsibility by a bowling club, cricket club or whatever, we still bump into the problems of investment in and maintenance of those facilities and community assets. Short leases, for example, prevent people from getting a lottery grant or money from sportscotland to do up the toilets. That is a very interesting issue within the wider issues that we are discussing this morning. Might those on the committee—and indeed, those outwith it—who are interested be able to discuss with you how we might assist progress in that area?

Stewart Harris: Absolutely.

Nanette Milne (North East Scotland) (Con): I have been very encouraged by what I have been hearing, particularly about the younger people who are coming up, and hope that when we look back on this in 10 years' time we will find that the legacy has definitely worked.

Minister, I presume that you still have in your sights those who would never think of sports clubs or active participation, or couch potatoes who might watch the Commonwealth games on the television but would never dream of doing anything else and who, because of obesity and other problems, are costing the health service an awful lot of money. Does getting those people more active come into your plans? I hope so.

Shona Robison: Yes. I suppose that in many ways the physical activity implementation plan is, along with our physical activity investment, targeted at groups that might be harder to reach. That is why we have introduced the active girls programme, which is delivered through sportscotland and is targeted at trying to keep teenage girls active. We know that girls are reasonably active until secondary 1 and 2 but then, for all the reasons that we already know about, all of that falls away. The active girls programme looks at the evidence base for using dance and other things that girls might be more interested in, although it does not really matter what is used as long as it keeps them active and is something that they want to do.

At the other end of the spectrum, paths for all has been really successful in using walking as a tool to involve people who—for decades in some cases—have not been involved in any physical activity whatever. Quite a few people have been referred to local walking groups through keep well checks and the health service. The approach has been tremendously successful and we are providing quite extensive funding for it.

The new national walking strategy will take things a step further by looking at how we can step up walking, which is so easily accessible to everyone, and get those who are not active at the moment active in some way. There is good evidence that someone who becomes active wants to become more active, and there is quite a lot of crossover from walking groups to, say, jogging groups, as people begin to expand the amount of activity that they are involved in. The challenge is to get them to take that first step, but once they have taken it they tend to get quite enthusiastic. Indeed, many of the volunteer walkers have themselves moved from very sedentary to quite active lifestyles.

There is no magic bullet here. We are trying to provide a variety of activities for everyone and make it easy for them to get involved, and I suppose that the two examples that I have highlighted have broad appeal but target folk who might be quite hard to motivate.

Nanette Milne: I am glad that you said that the health service might be initiating some of that work, because I was thinking in particular of 40, 50

or 60-year-olds who might not be doing any exercise at all.

Shona Robison: We are looking to roll out the brief physical activity intervention, which has been pioneered and developed by Dr Andrew Murray and is being tested at the moment. It works in the same way as, say, the brief intervention on smoking; essentially, it allows a health professional to have a conversation with a patient about their lifestyle, the amount of activity they undertake and so on and then to signpost them somewhere local that they can access easily. It is a really good way of using the broad NHS workforce to signpost people in a certain direction.

Obviously, we cannot force folk to do physical activity; however, although it is all voluntary, we can incentivise and encourage people to take it up. Indeed, that one conversation might be enough for someone to take stock of what they are doing and how it impacts on their blood pressure and their general health and think about how physical activity could make a marked improvement to their life. That is the message we need to get across in that one-to-one opportunity with a general practitioner, nurse or whoever the health professional might be.

Stewart Harris: I was up in Oban the other day and was given a briefing about a project called healthy options, which is connected to the local sports hub, Atlantis Leisure—it is a social enterprise but, for me, it is the local sports hub.

Healthy options is a well-established programme that addresses people in the area who have difficult health issues. I had a conversation with a gentleman who had had a brain tumour quickly followed by a heart attack. He said to me that the programme had saved his life, got him back into being positive and got him back into part-time work. It was an inspiring story.

That can be done with good conversations with the NHS. It would have to work both ways, because sport would not be able to resource that locally itself; the two would need to come together.

Healthy options is an inspiring story. If you can get up to Oban, you should go and have a look at it. It is a really interesting programme.

David Grevemberg: We have tried to complement with as much promotion of the healthy, active lifestyle agenda as possible for people of all ages. Our sport your trainers campaign, which we have tried to promote every year on Commonwealth day—I think that we are on our fourth year now—is about trying something new and becoming more active. It builds a sense of awareness.

We have also been positively challenging people to be more active, to volunteer and to be

more creative. That is also empowering and inspires a sense of the social connectedness around an event such as the Commonwealth games. Typically in games environments, that builds up a bit of a trajectory and momentum and people want more of it. It is absolutely brilliant that many community-based organisations have grabbed hold of the theme of the games and are using it in their normal programming to inspire people. From that standpoint, it is creating momentum for people of all ages.

On embedding values and rights and planting the seeds, through our partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund—UNICEF—one of the things that will continue well after the games is the push for the child rights journey legacy programme, which works with schools throughout Scotland to let children know their rights, which include a healthy, active lifestyle. That is important, it will impact our societies and it is about children being able to lead the way. As idealistic as that may seem, some really tangible investments are now being made that will benefit people for the long term and put pressure on us all to become more active. My two children are certainly holding me to account on the theme of the Commonwealth games.

The Convener: What lessons do we take out of the review of "Let's Make Scotland More Active: A strategy for physical activity" that took place in 2013? What actions will come out of that?

Shona Robison: I suppose that the fact that we are launching the physical activity implementation plan is the next stage of that. It is recognised that getting people more active cannot be the responsibility of just one part of Government, so it is a cross-Government plan. It considers, for example, how we get people cycling or out of their cars when going to work from a cross-Government point of view. It is not just my domain, thankfully; it is everybody's business.

That plan has emerged as a key plank of how we take the review forward. Within and underneath that, there are various initiatives about how we effect change. The national walking strategy is part of that. How do we get people out walking? Is it the easiest, most affordable form of physical activity. Other measures make it easier for people to cycle safely, such as investment in the cycling network that Keith Brown announced.

We are trying to join up what the Government is doing, make more sense of it and make it all face in one direction. If there was one magic bullet, it would have been used long ago. The process is long and lots of forces are working against us, such as the advertising of unhealthy food—we are trying to get people to work off that food by being more active. Constant effort is needed to get people into a lifestyle that will lead them to be

healthy through childhood and into adulthood. That is not easy. We are putting together all the building blocks. What I will announce tomorrow is part of that; it is not the only part, but it is an important plank.

The Convener: What opportunities will sportsScotland be given to get some of the health and transport budgets and co-ordinate activity? We talk lots about the preventative strategy, which is the right idea—all of the committee is on board with that. We can prevent people from going into hospital and increase socialisation through exercise, such as just going for a walk. It is not beyond even me to have good long walks, rather than vigorous exercise—it is an enjoyable experience that does people good. Does sportsScotland take seriously the opportunities for it? How does it ensure that it has a key role in getting good outcomes?

Stewart Harris: We would like a lot of the good practice that is going on locally to be showcased a bit more. I go back to my comments about the system and how agencies and sectors work together. When I was sitting in a room in Oban the other day with NHS practitioners, sports practitioners and the healthy options programme leader, who also has a medical qualification, the key for me was to look at how they are beginning to work together. The issue is not sportsScotland taking a budget but organisations deciding to work on the issue locally.

NHS Highland has still to decide on the future of the healthy options project. I will look at that closely, because it is key. I was staggered to find that 3,500 people in the area have acute conditions that make them fearful of being active at times. The project has already got more than 500 people involved to different degrees. The way forward is to get closer to having joint working towards the same outcomes, rather than taking each other's resources. As the minister said, the issue needs to be considered at the national Government level, too.

The Convener: I was thinking more about a sharing philosophy than a cash grab.

Stewart Harris: That is correct.

Shona Robison: We are talking more about evolution than revolution. The NHS has begun to be particularly interested in work in relation to rehabilitation. For example, the Peak in Stirling has a rehabilitation suite to which the NHS refers folk who have had heart attacks, strokes and so on. The brief intervention approach has involved the NHS recognising its role and opportunities.

However, a lot of that is further down the line. We need to get better at the preventative end, before folk are in the rehabilitation zone because something has happened to their health. The brief

intervention approach is part of that, but we also need the NHS to provide opportunities for earlier intervention.

The NHS is looking at how to use its estate a bit more effectively. A lot of it is good, open space. The NHS is looking at how to use the space around hospitals to get people—not least NHS staff—more active.

That is not revolutionary stuff; it represents evolution and moving step by step to persuade the NHS that such work is in its interests. I hope that if we showcase local examples to others, we will get a lot more buy-in across the country.

Richard Lyle (Central Scotland) (SNP): I am sure that every committee member would join me in complimenting Mr David Grevenberg for his work on the Commonwealth games, and in wishing him well for the opening of the games, which I—as a couch potato—am looking forward to. I also mention the work that Stewart Harris has done at sportscotland, and I pay particular tribute to the minister for the drive that she has shown over the period.

11:30

We last met the minister during 2013 and—as Bob Doris said—we visited the new sports centre, the Sir Chris Hoy velodrome and the facilities in the athletes' village. What a transformation! I stay 14 miles out of Glasgow, and the transformation through the facilities that have been built in Glasgow by the Government and all the other agencies is absolutely fantastic.

I will come on to my favourite point on sport hubs. I remind Stewart Harris of a comment—I remember it well—that he made when we met last. He said that he wanted to see as many schools as possible becoming sport hubs. We have 126—59 per cent are in schools, as has been said—and we will have 150 by 2016. How many will we have after 2016? I know that that is to look well into the future, but in my area—Gil Paterson spoke about this earlier—there is one sports hub and another local facility has applied to become a sports hub.

As a politician, I have always over the years been driven by considerations of cost. People just do not have enough money to spend £10 or £15 on such facilities. I was impressed by the point that in Glasgow the cost will be kept down in order to entice people in. What are we doing about cost?

A lot of the 32 councils are putting their sports facilities into trusts. Are we having discussions with trusts? Trusts have been successful in some areas—I must pay tribute to North Lanarkshire Council, where the trust has been successful.

What are the criteria for people who want to establish a sports hub and to move things forward

with trusts in discussion with local councils and sports associations? I have asked a lot of questions.

I thank you again for all the work that you are doing, guys.

Shona Robison: Thank you for that; I am blushing. I will answer broadly and then Stewart Harris can come in with some detail.

The next phase for hubs is critical, which is why we have been looking, through the youth sport strategy, at where we go next after the first tranche of 150 hubs and what we learn from that. The lesson that we have learned is that there is an opportunity to focus on secondary schools.

I am aware that in Richard Lyle's patch the aim was that 50 per cent of secondary schools would become hubs. The conversation that we have been having has been about how to take that forward across Scotland. That would require negotiation with 32 local authorities, but resourcing can oil the wheels a bit. How do we give every school that wants to become a hub the opportunity to do so, and ensure that those that do not want to become hubs have access to the facilities of a hub? In some ways that would be quite transformational. We are talking about a huge number of schools—we are talking about every community having within a reasonable distance a school that has its doors open most of, if not all, the time. That is part of the discussion. How do we make that happen? How do we encourage local authorities to buy into that, so that we can deliver real change?

Stewart Harris is closer to the criteria.

Stewart Harris: It is important to stress that our approach locally has always been integrated. We get everyone round the table in order to ensure that there is a single plan to which everyone can contribute. We are still a wee bit away from that, however, because there are some differences of opinion.

Trusts have been a positive vehicle, but more and more they are having to be commercially driven. I said earlier that there is a balance between a pay and play approach, where people can just go along and play, and a club and community driver. The two can sit very well together, but that requires integration.

The criteria around community sport hubs probably fit with criteria for the more traditional type of clubs. They are about bringing people together. Hub applicants have to show how they can bring people together; there must be a range of different sports and there should be an aspiration for communities to lead, although not necessarily to own. Ultimately, we are looking to grow the capacity of and participation in hubs and

clubs. We have not produced a large rule book—there is one page of A4 with four or five criteria on it. Anyone can apply.

I have not forgotten what I said about every school; it is always right to have long-term ambitions, and schools in Scotland are perfectly placed to be great community sport hubs.

Shona Robison: Affordability is part of this. We have made it quite clear that part of the oiling of the wheels—sportsScotland helping hubs—is that hubs have to be affordable and must not price people out of using their facilities. We recognise that cost can be a barrier. Hubs can be a good answer to that, and actually some carry little or no cost.

Stewart Harris: It is interesting that our research has shown that charges are generally pretty much the same. I think that we mentioned a cost of £62,000 a year to make the Armadale community sports hub work. We are hearing that the community is being more positive about attaining that £62,000: its income could be grants; it could be fundraising. There are really positive community benefits to that—people working together, being together and socialising together. Ultimately, those who want to participate in sport are also doing what they want to do.

There is a powerful community tool that I am excited about, but integration is the key. We cannot have people sitting outside the tent; everyone has to be inside and talking about what they can contribute.

Richard Lyle: I highlight to Mr Grevemberg my entry in the register of interests: I am the convener of the cross-party group on the Scottish Showmen's Guild. I also compliment you on your work in ensuring that people are getting facilities locally.

You need not give the idea away, but will the opening ceremony be fantastic? With the greatest of respect to the minister, I hope that she is not going to jump out of a helicopter.

Shona Robison: Me? No!

David Grevemberg: The opening ceremony is definitely an area of focus right now. We want to get the show off on the right foot, so we are planning for it to be fantastic.

Richard Lyle: Thank you.

The Convener: That is all you are getting, Richard.

Richard Lyle: That is all I want.

The Convener: I thank the minister, Mr Harris and Mr Grevemberg for their attendance and the evidence that they have provided. I look forward to engaging with you in the future.

11:38

Meeting continued in private until 12:26.

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