



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Official Report

# HEALTH AND SPORT COMMITTEE

Tuesday 2 October 2012

Session 4

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**Tuesday 2 October 2012**

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**HEALTH AND SPORT COMMITTEE**

**26<sup>th</sup> Meeting 2012, Session 4**

**CONVENER**

\*Duncan McNeil (Greenock and Inverclyde) (Lab)

**DEPUTY CONVENER**

\*Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

\*Mark McDonald (North East 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)

\*Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Lab)

\*David Torrance (Kirkcaldy) (SNP)

\*attended

**THE FOLLOWING ALSO PARTICIPATED:**

Professor David Bell

Dr Joseph Bradley (University of Stirling)

Scott Cuthbertson (Equality Network)

Professor Ian Diamond (University of Aberdeen)

Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab) (Committee Substitute)

Derek Grieve (Scottish Government)

Donnie Jack (Scottish Government)

Professor John McLaren (Centre for Public Policy for Regions)

Professor Nanette Mutrie (University of Edinburgh)

Charlie Raeburn

Shona Robison (Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport)

Rebecca Simpson (Youth Scotland)

John Taylor (University of Stirling)

**CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE**

Eugene Windsor

**LOCATION**

Committee Room 6



# Scottish Parliament

## Health and Sport Committee

*Tuesday 2 October 2012*

[The Convener *opened the meeting at 09:30*]

### Draft Budget Scrutiny 2013-14

**The Convener (Duncan McNeil):** Good morning and welcome to the 26th meeting in 2012 of the Health and Sport Committee. As usual, I remind everyone present that mobile phones and BlackBerrys should be switched off, as they can interfere with the sound system.

We have apologies from Richard Simpson. I am pleased to welcome Rhoda Grant as his substitute.

Agenda item 1 is scrutiny of the draft budget. We welcome our witnesses. Professor David Bell is adviser to the Finance Committee and Professor John McLaren is from the centre for public policy for regions at the University of Glasgow. I invite them to make opening remarks, after which we can proceed to questions.

**Professor John McLaren (Centre for Public Policy for Regions):** Thanks. I want to make a few general points that are worth discussing, primarily because they are not discussed enough.

The Scottish Government's purpose target in relation to health could be said to be to raise healthy life expectancy. That is also part of the 2020 vision for health. Around a month ago, the Office for National Statistics published figures that showed that, from 2006 to around 2009, healthy life expectancy for males in England rose by three years and fell in Scotland by a year and a half. The figure is not as bad for women, but it is still much worse here. In Wales, the figure for men rose by four years. Given that behaviour does not change that much, that suggests that our health system is not operating very well or that the data is complete rubbish, or possibly a combination of the two.

There was no analysis of that information when it came out, although raising healthy life expectancy is one of the Scottish Government's purpose or key targets. There were no comments by any politician in the papers that I saw; indeed, I do not think that any paper even covered the matter. If that is supposed to be the top health target in Scotland and nobody pays any attention to it, we are really talking about inputs all the time—money and nurses, for example—rather than outcomes, which are perhaps more important to talk about. The issue is how we can improve healthy life expectancy. If the data is wrong, by the

way, why is the target set in those terms in the first place?

On the resources side, the contribution of health and social services to gross domestic product is growing at about the half the United Kingdom rate. I am not sure why that is the case, but the difference is quite big, especially as we are talking about such a large part of economy. We also have a falling per head advantage in health spend. The figure used to be around 14 per cent, but it is now about half of that. Again, there has been no analysis of why or where that has happened.

We have productivity figures only for the UK. Those figures show no productivity growth in the health sector over a decade or so, which is not very good. We do not have figures for Scotland, but I imagine that the situation is about the same, or possibly worse.

On health system comparisons, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Commonwealth Fund, for example, consider that the national health service—this applies largely to the English NHS, but it probably applies to the Scottish NHS, too—is very good in terms of equity and that its efficiency is fairly good, but its outcomes, such as for life expectancy, are terrible. Why is that so? Perhaps it suggests that the emphasis on prevention that exists in other countries is not being taken forward as seriously in Scotland and the UK.

That feeds into the Christie commission's report findings that

“a radical shift towards preventative public spending is ... essential.”

More money may have been put into preventative spending, but I certainly would not call it a “radical shift”. That issue needs to be looked at in relation to early years and other areas.

On why Scotland's health is so relatively poor compared to the UK's, the Scottish or Glasgow effect—whether that is a result of alcohol misuse or anything else—is extremely important. I would be interested to know how much research money is going into looking at that issue and its importance—very little, I suspect.

That brings us to the nub of the issue. The NHS's budget is being protected considerably and, if the situation remains the same, it will be protected until 2015-16. Over that period, if health workers' wages are kept flat, as is the case in the rest of the public sector, that will make more than £1 billion of spending money available in the NHS. If that money is not going on staff, what is it going on? There is an opportunity to put money into new things, if staff costs are kept down. It is important, even at this stage, to consider where the best areas are for that money to go to.

**The Convener:** Follow that, Professor Bell.

**Professor David Bell:** I will pick up on Professor McLaren's first point before making some more general points.

The issue of healthy life expectancy is important because it essentially tells you how long people can expect to live with a disability or some form of chronic disease. If healthy life expectancy is not growing as fast as overall life expectancy, the length of time during which someone will experience disability of some form increases.

One of the leading UK experts in this area is Professor Carol Jagger at Newcastle University, who has previously spoken to the Finance Committee. One of her recent reports was on whether the UK's population was getting healthier or less healthy as they aged. Her report concluded that the

"ageing of the population alone, with no alteration in the prevalence of disease"—

which basically means no change in healthy life expectancy—

"or the age-specific rates of becoming disabled, will result in a 67 per cent increase in the numbers with disability over the next 20 years. Numbers of the oldest old (those aged 85 and over) with disability will have doubled".

That reinforces Professor McLaren's point about healthy life expectancy.

In addition, the proportion of the older population

"experiencing one of the key diseases considered"—

which were arthritis, coronary heart disease, stroke and dementia—

"will have increased by over 40 per cent by 2025."

Those are massive changes that are in train and there is no reason to suspect that Scotland will be any less affected. Indeed, if the figures that the Office of National Statistics published last month are correct—there is perhaps some doubt about that—or even if we stay on the same level as far as healthy life expectancy is concerned, a huge train is coming towards our health service system.

As Professor McLaren said, we are not really talking about radical change. The King's Fund in England is putting out regular bulletins about the English health system that say that, although some genuine improvements have been made over the past decade, it is not clear whether the system is in a fit state to deal with the additional numbers that are signalled by reports such as Professor Jagger's.

So far I have talked about the longer term. On the size of the budget, health has been protected since devolution because the Barnett consequential have effectively been handed

straight on to the health service. However, somehow or other—the reasons are not clear, as John McLaren already alluded to—although that should imply that the spending difference between Scotland and England would stay pretty much the same, it appears that the excess of spend per person in Scotland is reducing. It is not clear why that is happening.

There is clearly a case for spend per person being higher in Scotland. The two most frequently cited reasons are the severe inequalities in health in Scotland, particularly the Glasgow effect—which John McLaren just mentioned—and the additional costs of supplying care in rural areas. Nevertheless, something strange seems to be happening as far as the statistics are concerned.

On the budget itself, there is an issue around capital transfer—the Scottish Government is trying to move money from the resource budget into the capital budget. The claim in the budget is, I think, that £700 million will be moved in the period up to 2014-15, of which £320 million appears as a single line in the health budget. It might be worth the committee finding out from the Scottish Government exactly what that means—which resource budgets are falling in order for capital budgets to rise, and which capital budgets are rising. The committee might well be interested in that area.

I have been involved in self-directed support. I am not sure whether the associated bill—the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Bill—has been passed yet.

**The Convener:** It is at stage 2.

**Professor Bell:** A budget is set aside for that bill. Self-directed support is quite an interesting initiative. Scotland has not moved as far as England has in relation to putting spending power in the hands of the person receiving care or health support, but self-directed support is a start. Nevertheless, the budget that has been set aside for the bill is relatively small—about £17 million out of more than £10 billion in total. The self-directed support element is small, so the bill does not suggest a massive change in how social care clients will be supported over time.

John McLaren alluded to pay, and the pay bill in the NHS in Scotland has continued to grow over time. Total staff costs for the health sector grew by 11.3 per cent between 2008 and 2011. Staff numbers grew by 1.3 per cent, so although we have had a pay freeze for some of that period, the pay bill has risen quite substantially. That may be to do with people moving between jobs, to higher-paid jobs or up pay spines and so on. However, basically the overall health service budget has grown by 11.4 per cent between 2008 and 2011

and the pay bill grew by 11.3 per cent. That cannot continue at that pace.

09:45

There does not seem to be a huge appetite for radical thinking about how we deal with the pay bill. A couple of weeks ago, Professor Alison Wolf and Andrew Oswald wrote to the *Financial Times* about setting pay in the public sector. They recommend that, as in Sweden, rather than setting pay at a national level—in fact for most of these wages, we are talking about the United Kingdom level—there should be more local flexibility without spending power being taken out of the local area. There would basically be a trade-off between jobs and wages in the local area, while keeping wages in line with local conditions. I am not necessarily saying that that is the solution, but if we carry on as we are, we will not be able to meet the challenges that I mentioned at the start of my remarks. That is about all that I have to say.

**The Convener:** Thank you for those introductory remarks.

Bob Doris has our first question.

**Bob Doris (Glasgow) (SNP):** Both witnesses have said some quite challenging things. Perhaps I should start by providing a little clarity. Professor Bell mentioned the self-directed support budget. We are not here today to talk about that specifically, so I do not want to dwell on it, but the budget line in the NHS spending plans shows not the size of the self-directed support budget but what is directed from social work departments in local authorities. Spend is redirected from in-house provision to other forms of provision that people choose. It is worth putting that on the record from the start.

Professor McLaren, your evidence was really fascinating. You said that we should be looking at outcomes more than at inputs, but you then gave a series of inputs and compared Scotland with other parts of the UK. I want to clarify some of the figures that the Scottish Parliament information centre has prepared for the committee, get them on the record, and see if you recognise them as an accurate reflection of the health budget.

One thing we want to look at when we discuss the prioritisation or otherwise of the health budget is the share of the Scottish spending cake that is devoted to health. Table 4 in the SPICe briefing shows that, in the coming financial year, the overall share of Scottish spend on health alone will go from 34.4 per cent to 35 per cent. Do you recognise those figures?

**Professor McLaren:** I recognise the figures because I have seen the SPICe paper. Some of the figures depend on what is chosen as the base.

For example, in relation to local government, the share is usually looked at from the Scottish Government's perspective by adding in non-domestic rates income, which makes it look better. However, I am not sure that, in the table that you are looking at, the Scottish budget total includes NDRI. I suspect that it does not, and that if NDRI was included, the table would not show that increase. Generally, if health was being protected and other areas were not, I would expect its overall share to rise, but I am not sure by how much per year.

**Professor Bell:** There is some uncertainty about the size of resource transfers from the health sector to the local government sector, which is essentially what Bob Doris alluded to when he mentioned self-directed support. That money—it is more than £300 million—effectively goes into the health budget but then the health boards transfer it to local authorities. That is interesting, partly because, in cash terms, the share has been pretty stable during the past four years or so.

When we look at the detail, as SPICe has done, there is no clear logic in the share of the budget that moves from a health board to a local authority. We would expect the health boards to be compensating the local authorities for care of the elderly, because care of the elderly, in general, is a joint responsibility and how it is split up is always subject to some debate. However, the health boards with the oldest populations do not seem to be the ones that transfer the most to the local authorities. It is not very easy to get a handle on that area.

What is going on in Highland makes the situation even more complex. There, the health board has taken on the entire budget for care of the elderly in exchange for the local authority doing all the stuff to do with children. How will that be accounted for? How will we know whether that has been a success? I am sure that the health board and the local authority have come to some agreement about that. There must be some indicators that they have devised that will suggest to them whether that has been a useful change in how they deal with such problems.

I broadly agree with the numbers, but there are issues—not massive ones; they are mostly around the edge—that make the situation a little more complex.

**Bob Doris:** That was quite a comprehensive answer to what I thought would be a yes/no question. Thank you. I will try to be more focused in my next question.

There are two other stats that I want to put on the record before I come to my substantive question, which is about outcomes rather than

inputs. The SPICe briefing tells us that £1.1 billion in Barnett consequentials vis-à-vis the UK spend has gone into the health budget since 2010. That is a priority that we are tracking through this process and it seems to have been met. The SPICe briefing also tells us that health boards will receive a 3 per cent cash increase in the coming financial year, which comes to a 0.5 per cent cash increase if we apply the 2.5 per cent deflator. Please do not respond to that. I just wanted to put those figures on the record.

I mentioned Professor McLaren's evidence in my opening question because I was fascinated by the ONS stats from 2009 on healthy life expectancy in England and Scotland. Healthy life expectancy increased by three years in England but went down by one and a half years in Scotland. By and large, the health improvement, efficiency, access and treatment targets and the national indicators for the health service in Scotland seem to be being met. Whether we are talking about the 62-day referral-to-treatment target for the NHS, the 31-day decision to treat to first treatment target for cancer or the alcohol brief interventions, positive things seem to be happening.

When would Professor McLaren or Professor Bell expect us to be able to see progress in the ONS stats? Given that the health budget is being prioritised—it is not just being protected; it has had a small uplift, while other budgets have been cut—we are keen to see improvement. When should we start to see improvement? How should we analyse that as a committee?

**The Convener:** We will not make much progress today if the questions—or, indeed, the answers—are very long. I have a growing list of people who want to ask questions.

**Professor McLaren:** I do not think that you will necessarily see much improvement. I think that the data on the fall in healthy life expectancy is a bit dodgy, but why have your main target based on data that, to my mind, has always been a bit dodgy? That is the case not just in the UK, but in other countries. This is not really about the health system, which I think is probably fairly equitable and reasonably efficient—that is what most of the international studies suggest about the NHS. It is more about lifestyles, behavioural patterns and stuff like that, which more money is being put into.

The Christie commission's main point was that a radical shift, whether in early years intervention or other preventative measures, was needed to get better lifestyle outcomes. Indeed, as other systems make clear, that is what drives healthy life expectancy. International studies demonstrate that it is not necessarily about money; even Scandinavian countries can have very similar life

expectancy outcomes with very different cash inputs.

Again, it all comes down to the debate about what the national health service gets—which is a hell of a lot compared with what the other bits get—and how that money is moved around will be more important in pushing forward the healthy life expectancy issue.

**Professor Bell:** There are different levels of outcome. For a start, there are outcomes associated with the health service, and you can drive efficiency in, for example, waiting times by ensuring people with cancer are seen quickly and so on. However, none of that will be reflected in healthy life expectancy data for some time to come.

That said, another piece of research shows that, of 16 high-income nations, the UK has the second highest rate of mortality that is amenable to health care. We might be getting more efficient at meeting certain targets, but clearly we could be doing some stuff better.

**Professor McLaren:** I would imagine that the USA was the last in that list.

**Professor Bell:** Yes.

**Professor McLaren:** The USA is always last on these lists by a country mile, which means that we are effectively next to it.

**Professor Bell:** A really interesting thing that is happening in the US is that life expectancy is falling among poorer whites—it is a bit like what happened in Russia after the fall of the Berlin wall. Over the past two or three years, life expectancy has been falling because of obesity, heart disease and so on. That has hardly ever happened in a high-income nation in the past 50 years.

**Bob Doris:** Thank you very much. I will come back in later, convener.

**The Convener:** We have all had notice.

**Mark McDonald (North East Scotland) (SNP):** My question follows on quite neatly from your responses to the previous questions. Both of you have talked about making a radical shift in expenditure towards preventative spend and have suggested that we are not seeing that. What, from your perspective, would such a radical shift look like?

**Professor Bell:** I do not think that I said that, although I generally agree with the point. The chief medical officer has an interesting take on this issue that relates to place and the use of assets. Prevention does not necessarily mean spending on the health service; it can mean spending that affects people's behaviours, which might mean spending more in deprived areas. As we have suggested, the problem with such an approach is



that the time before any significant improvements emerge extends well beyond the length of a parliamentary session. Unfortunately, that is the bottom line. We know that other countries spend more on prevention, but simply saying that we need a radical shift towards prevention is like talking about motherhood and apple pie. Everyone agrees with it but no one is absolutely certain what it means, which forms of prevention will give better outcomes 10 years or 20 years hence and so on. Nevertheless, the chief medical officer's comments are worthy of serious consideration.

10:00

**Professor McLaren:** We both gave evidence last year on early years interventions. I think that there was a fund in the budget last year, which is continuing this year. That is welcome but it does not change the focus away from treating illness to preventing it in the first place. Early years goes much wider than health—it encompasses education, law and order and so on—but it would have a big impact on health as well, and health is probably one of the key drivers. Early years is probably the best place to start, because it would have the greatest impact. It may not be exactly in the committee's remit, but it is partly in your remit. It is an important issue that needs to be driven by a number of committees.

Lifestyle, for example smoking and drinking, is important. I could give an enormously long answer here, but I will not. A big issue in Scotland is alcohol. To my mind, the analysis of alcohol statistics is extremely poor. There is an alcohol problem in Scotland, but by and large it is not the one that is described and discussed in Scotland.

Sports facilities are another issue. They are getting better, but it is not that long ago that the number of swimming pools in Scotland was abysmal. More could be put into sports facilities.

There is still the unknown issue of the Scotland effect, which I think is being looked at by the Glasgow Centre for Population Health. The centre and others should be given a lot more time and money to push that forward and understand what is causing the Scotland effect. Hopefully, that can then be addressed directly rather than indirectly, because at the moment we are trying to guess what the problem is.

To reinforce what David Bell said, once problems are this stubborn they are extremely difficult to overcome and can be very costly to overcome. A study that was carried out in the US estimated that to get severely deprived children up to the educational average would require nine times the average budget to be spent on each child. That is America; this is Britain, so it is slightly different, but that gives some idea of the

scale of differential spending that can be needed to overcome these problems.

**Mark McDonald:** Professor Bell talked about the shifts from resource to capital. Audit Scotland did a report recently that spoke about a £1 billion repair backlog in the NHS. Obviously, if we shifted money towards capital in the NHS and dealt with some of that backlog, that would not so much free up resource as mean that resource spend was not being used on, for example, buildings that required significant maintenance and were therefore a drain on the resource budget. We talk about the resource budget reducing because money is being shifted to capital, but that shift to capital may mean that we do not need to spend some of the resource that we were otherwise spending and wasting.

**Professor Bell:** I completely agree. I think of capital spend as increasing the ability of the economy in general to supply goods and services. Specifically, when we are talking about public services, we may be spending capital to save money on the resource budget in the short term and the long term. Even with things such as energy efficiency, additional capital spend may have a short-term resource cost but a better outcome in the long run.

**The Convener:** I think that we are all on the same page. We are here again, where we were last year with the budget and the spending review. The Government said that we needed a decisive shift towards prevention, greater integration, and better partnership and collaboration. The committee said that that should be a priority and that we should be looking at the change fund to help to do that. We had concerns about how we could follow the process, because we could not really scrutinise the health board budgets.

To stop us going backwards, as you described it earlier, you seem to be suggesting that the issue is not just the process—it is about having clear objectives about what we want to do. I think that we are all on the page about a shift to prevention, greater collaboration and integration. The committee and the Government are very interested in how we push forward in those areas. Are you saying that it is not enough simply to shift the budgets, and that we need to be clearer in our objectives?

**Professor McLaren:** I think that some shift of budget is required, but I suppose that I am saying that it requires more a shift of mindset. For example, if in the great public statements and publications that are made everyone says that healthy life expectancy is what we are aiming for but they then completely ignore the published figures showing that the issue is actually declining in Scotland, what is the point in aiming for that as a purpose? You are interested not in healthy life

expectancy—I mean not you personally, but you collectively—but in ensuring, for political purposes, that the NHS gets its Barnett consequentials and that the number of nurses or police is kept at a certain level. However, those are inputs, not outcomes. I understand that it is easier to do that because the press are more interested in such things and it is easier to discuss them, but that does not take us back to the headline or principal outcomes that you are really looking for.

To make that shift, one change that is needed is the mindset in the debate, but money also needs to be freed up. There is perhaps an opportunity to change that funding at the minute because, although budgets are tight, health does not have a tight budget. If the money that David Bell described earlier had not gone into wages, there would have been at least £0.5 billion free to go into other things, which could have included prevention. I do not know who is getting the extra money in the health service—perhaps doctors or perhaps everybody—but if they were getting the same deals as the people in local government, an awful lot of extra money could be spent on the shift into those other areas.

**The Convener:** So the shift does not happen. Although we as a committee and the Government are saying that we need more integration and more prevention, where are the indicators within the budget that there is a determination to make that happen in the change agenda, the preventive agenda and the integration agenda? Where is the shift in the budget that we are looking for at a local level between the health boards and local government? Where is that at a Government level?

**Professor Bell:** One thing to say about boards is that they are allocated money according to a formula, which moves at a glacial pace. The changes in the formula just do not happen very fast at all. That means that, by and large, there are pretty much fixed relative-sized budgets across health boards. Is that a good thing? If there are clearly developing problems that are not picked up in the formula, some health boards will find their cost envelope easier to deal with than others will. All the boards are meant to be under equal pressure because the formula allocates accurately as a measure of the resource pressure, but it is not always clear that that is the case.

**The Convener:** I will take a supplementary on this from Gil Paterson before we move to Nanette Milne's question.

**Gil Paterson (Clydebank and Milngavie) (SNP):** On preventative spending, is there not a kind of contradiction in terms? How can I put it? Is not the barrier to preventative spending in this room? Is it not the political class that causes that because of the very thing that Professor Bell said?

Do we perhaps need a covenant among the parties that, if we identify that we should move forward with preventative spending, we should not be focusing all the time on the headline numbers of nurses or doctors or whatever? We can spend the money only once, so if we spend it on preventative spending, clearly we cannot spend it elsewhere. Therefore, my question to Professor McLaren is: do you have any models from elsewhere where the power of the political class united has been used to drive forward with preventative spending? I do not think that we do that very well here.

**The Convener:** I apologise to Nanette Milne, but before she asks her question I will take another supplementary question on preventative spend from Drew Smith. I ask the witnesses to respond to both supplementaries before we move on to Nanette Milne's questions.

**Drew Smith (Glasgow) (Lab):** I apologise to Nanette Milne. My question is brief.

Professor McLaren made a specific plea on research funding around the Glasgow effect, which I would certainly support. However, do we need a much greater understanding of what preventative spend is before we analyse a lot of this stuff? It seems to me that almost anything can be defined as preventative spend by people who are seeking for us to spend money in their area. Is there a budgetary need for us to spend more on trying to understand what preventative spend is before we then analyse whether or not we have it?

**Professor McLaren:** There is a definition issue. I am sure that the NHS could claim that it should still get all the money because it has all these preventative things, but I suspect that many of the things that it talks about are like providing job training when someone is 16 rather than putting in the money in the early years. They are a help, but the returns are an awful lot lower than they would be if the work was done at an earlier age. Again, those are things that go outside not only the NHS budget but the health budget as a whole. It is important to get that right.

On examples of preventative spend, I hope that I have a good knowledge of economics and finance, but I do not know an awful lot about health. I do not go into the details as I am not a health economist. It is disappointing that we still do not have many academics or think tanks looking at Scotland specifically and coming up with ideas. In London one cannot move for think tanks, certainly around Westminster, but in Scotland there is a lack of people with more information than I have who can help you with these things. I can take you part of the way, but because this is not my specialist area I only have certain examples.

The OECD and the Commonwealth Fund do some good work in the area, so they should be able to give you some good guidance.

**Professor Bell:** On what preventative spend is, my mother always fed me cod liver oil. Was that preventative spend? I do not know. Maybe it was and maybe it was not. She certainly did it with the best of intentions, but that is the difficulty that we are up against with this stuff.

If I can put in a little advert for some work that we are doing with some universities, we were approached by the national institute on aging in the US to put in an application for a study of older people in Scotland that would follow them through time. There are many such studies around the world. Scotland is the only part of northern Europe that does not have such a study. Only by following people through time can we see the beneficial effect of interventions that might have happened 10 years ago. We will hear shortly whether that study will get off the ground, but we have applied to the national institute on aging in Washington to start the process.

**Nanette Milne (North East Scotland) (Con):** My first question is about freeing up cash. As you probably know, we recently took evidence on prescribing and the drugs issue. The drugs that are available to the NHS are under intense scrutiny via the Scottish Medicines Consortium and area drug and therapeutic committees. A whole lot of scrutiny goes on there, but it came out in our evidence session that the same scrutiny is not applied to other procedures within the NHS. Having come through the NHS, I know that some procedures were the flavour of the month 10 years ago, but they can fade into the background while others come through. Is any meaningful research being done on the cost effectiveness of some of the procedures that take place within the NHS, particularly in the acute sector? If not, should there be such research?

Secondly, health boards are asked to make savings year on year. Is that a sustainable approach to the budget?

10:15

**Professor Bell:** My immediate response to the first part of your question is that the Information Services Division provides a huge amount of information about costs but it seems to stop at a certain point.

**Nanette Milne:** I was thinking more in relation to outcomes.

**Professor Bell:** The information is not linked to outcomes, which means that we cannot, for example, find out what different procedures cost in different hospitals. Moreover, there is not much

analysis of what are sometimes very big differences in the costs of procedures across different health boards or indeed different hospitals. That might be perfectly explainable, but it seems a bit odd.

**Nanette Milne:** It strikes me that we are talking about huge amounts of money—

**Professor Bell:** Absolutely.

**Nanette Milne:** —and it might be quite meaningful if we could find out just how effective that spending has been.

**Professor McLaren:** I agree with David Bell's point about the ISD. A couple of years ago, I looked into Scottish health statistics and concluded that there was a great need for more analysis. Various people would tell me, "We've got all this data"; they might have had it—and indeed might have printed it—but they were not really analysing it. The same thing happens with the Scottish economy. The figures are published but they are not really analysed to find out what is happening underneath.

People always say that the NHS needs more money because its costs rise faster than inflation. That might be true but interestingly—this applies partly to the NHS in Scotland and partly to the UK as whole—that is not because of the cost of drugs but because of the cost of the staff, which has been well above inflation for over a decade now. According to figures from SPICe that were published last year, over the past decade or so other non-staff costs have largely risen below the level of inflation. That suggests that, apart from staff costs, the NHS is being quite efficient. Indeed, I hope that that is the case. However, as far as I can see, the figures have not been brought together to allow people to see what various boards do, where they can learn from and so on and to make cross-savings from that.

As for efficiency savings, my view has always been that you can say what you like about them and they will always be delivered, but they are pretty much meaningless. Indeed, that is what most national audit offices say. People will always find a way of saying this or that and you will not be able to prove it one way or the other. It is better to forget them—I do not think that people pay that much attention to them anyway.

With a lot of health stuff—indeed, with public services in general—it is quite difficult to look at cost effectiveness or the productivity of, say, a teacher or nurse versus the productivity of someone in manufacturing. Some progress has been made in health, but only at a UK level; I do not think that there are any Scottish figures yet. The fact that it is difficult simply means that we need to put in more effort if we are to have a better

understanding of what we are doing and how well we are doing it.

**Professor Bell:** To put this in context, I note that between 2008 and 2011 the primary care drugs budget went up by 6.3 per cent against an overall rise of 11.4 per cent. That reinforces John McLaren's point that wage costs are driving up overall costs. That is not to say that it might not be possible to make further savings in the drugs budget; indeed, public health people have suggested to me that drugs are not necessarily being used all that efficiently or properly, and something more could be done in that respect.

**Rhoda Grant (Highlands and Islands) (Lab):** You both touched on the costs of the ageing population to the NHS. What impact is it having now and how will it increase year on year? Is that impact simply a result of an ageing population or a result of an ageing population that does not have good health?

**Professor Bell:** The fastest growth among age groups in the population is in the so-called oldest old—people who are aged 85 and above, who are very likely to be disabled and so will need some kind of intervention.

The one area in which living healthily might not make much difference is dementia, which poses the biggest challenge to the health service for the next couple of decades. The number of the oldest old is increasing most rapidly because of the baby boom. There has been something of an increase over time until now, but the increase in the number of the oldest old people will accelerate as the baby boomers hit their eighties. We might be into the next decade before the full effect is felt, but there is no doubt that it is coming, unless some form of intervention, particularly to assist with dementia, is found. So far, there has been no success in finding a medical intervention for that disease. Once people get above the age of 90, the incidence of dementia is around 40 per cent.

**Professor McLaren:** On the cost of ageing, there will be a phoney war for a while, and it will kick in with a vengeance in the 2020s. We are already seeing it in some countries. Japan and Italy will hit the problem earlier, but we will get there eventually.

We kind of knew that the pensions thing was coming, but we did not do anything about it, and now we are struggling with it. We know that the ageing population is coming; if we do nothing about it, it will hit us. We need to plan for something like that well in advance, but I am not sure that any of the UK countries are necessarily addressing the issue properly.

Good prevention spend and policies will not necessarily save any money because people will still be getting older and the time that they need to

spend in hospital and other healthcare will grow with that. However, if we do not have good prevention methods, the unhealthy part of life expectancy will grow longer and the problem will be even worse. That is why prevention is very important, even if it does not save money.

I am concerned about the care for the elderly element of the budget in Scotland. The idea has been suggested that self-directed support is a good way of going forward because it is more cost efficient. Some countries have gone further than the UK on that; I think that the Netherlands and a few other countries are going with the idea. However, we are sort of stalling on it in Scotland. Some people do not like the idea, but if we do not go with self-directed care, we need to know what to go with, because the current system cannot be sustained. It is too expensive.

**Professor Bell:** All this also means a gradual shift in emphasis from healthcare towards social care, because a lot of the issues around dementia are associated with social care, and we have a completely different funding model for social care. As far as personal care is concerned, it is almost like the NHS, but other forms of care are not. If someone goes into a care home, they have to cover £160 a week of the free personal care and nursing care elements, but the cost is between £500 and £600 a week: that difference still has to be met. Scotland is no different from the rest of the UK; people lose their wealth relatively rapidly if they have a long stay in care. The Dilnot report looked into that and suggested that there should be a £35,000 total cap on social care spend. That would also affect Scotland. We cannot assume that, somehow or other, free personal care has sorted all that. It has not.

**The Convener:** Professor McLaren and Gil Paterson alluded to how we deal with all this when budgets will be reducing into the future. Less money will be available. How can we achieve the change that we need to achieve rather than the change that we can achieve by aiming at the easy targets that we all go for?

**Professor McLaren:** As we have said on a number of occasions, you do not have a declining budget; you have a rapidly increasing budget in the NHS, which is part of the health budget. If you do not spend that on wages, then you have a lot of money, probably up to 2016-17, to put into other things. If you keep the same model as you currently have, the money will just go into the same areas as it did previously. However, the political debate by all parties is still about the full Barnett consequential for the NHS going to the NHS, but you will not change things if that is the case. If you say that the money will go to health as a whole and it goes either into the social care side for the elderly or into more prevention—or a bit of

both—there is a chance of changing things in that way. However, you must get hold of the wages issue to do that. You are, however, on the tail end of the wages issue, because most other parts of the public sector have already taken their wage cuts or freezes. You will have to ask the health sector to do that in the future, but it would have been easier to do it at the beginning.

**Professor Bell:** Just to follow on from that, the workforce is critical to delivery of enhanced services, if that is what we are doing. We are trying to do that against a likely situation of pay restraint for a number of years, so there is a huge problem of incentivising and energising the workforce in order to deliver the services. I think that some work is going on around that from NHS Education for Scotland. I have certainly been at discussions at which there was talk of a public services college in Scotland so that there would be more cross-fertilisation across the different parts of the public sector. Unless we get radical thinking about how the workforce is organised, none of that will happen. It is already a huge problem and it cannot be taken forward unless you take the workforce with you.

**Aileen McLeod (South Scotland) (SNP):** Are any countries embarking on, or trying to do, similar things with models of preventative spend, and which it would be worth the committee's while to have a look at?

**Professor Bell:** I am not sure whether any country is embarking on such action, but I know that the Scandinavian countries and Holland spend higher proportions of their overall spend on preventative spend. That may be a quirk of the statistics in how spend is calculated and so on, but there might be models in northern Europe that would be worth examining to see how those countries implement preventative spend. We know that those countries have better outcomes in terms of, for example, longer survival times after cancer. They do better in a range of health interventions—not necessarily with massively higher spend, but through using different models. The NHS is not mirrored exactly anywhere else. It is therefore worth your while having a look at what others are doing.

**Professor McLaren:** A lot of countries are starting to look at the issue. Incidentally, a lot of countries are not protecting health spend. For example, the Welsh Government is not and the Irish Government is certainly not, mainly through its workforce. However, Ireland's allocation system was pretty crap, to be honest, which the Irish accepted. They got the Economic and Social Research Institute to do a major piece of work—there are many volumes of it—on examples from around the world and how they could reconfigure what they do, given their extremely difficult

circumstances. It is definitely worth looking at that work.

The Welsh considered a different system, using the Welsh health survey, which is different from any other health surveys in the UK in that it used a different way of looking at the allocation. Again, that is probably worth having a look at, although the Welsh have suspended it for political reasons because it was going to reallocate too much—which can never happen.

Last year or the year before, the OECD did a major piece of work that looked at the efficiency of different countries. It worked out that if most countries were to follow best practice, they could improve life expectancy by a couple of years. I suppose that that could be translated into cost improvements as well. In the UK's case—which generally means England—life expectancy has risen by three years, so there is obviously a lot of efficiency. The OECD deemed that the most efficient countries are Australia, Korea, Japan and Switzerland. The Commonwealth Fund and others will know of other areas that see greater efficiency. There are examples around. It is always difficult to translate the example of one country into your own country, but lessons can still be learned from the work that has been done.

10:30

**Bob Doris:** We discussed the rapidly ageing population and how we manage that in terms of health and social care. Professor McLaren commented on a rapidly increasing health budget being a political priority that casts a shadow over other areas of the budget. With an increase in health and social care on the horizon, I am looking at the budget lines. In 2010-11—we do not have the figure for what will happen in the coming financial year—there was a transfer of £360 million from NHS boards to social work departments in local authorities. I am not sure how that annual figure is arrived at, and I am not sure what scrutiny there is of whether each local authority makes best use of that money: £360 million is a large input. For example, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde gives £120 million to social work services in local authorities. Glasgow alone gets £72 million of that. Has any work been done on how that figure is arrived at and how well the local authorities spend it? If so, could you point the committee in the direction of that work, as it would be very helpful to see it? If not, what kind of questions would you seek to ask? When we examine the health board budget, it is quite right that we ensure that every pound of that budget is spent well, even if that is within local authorities.

**Professor Bell:** Also related to that is the housing budget. The amount of suitable housing

for elderly disabled people is far short of what it should be.

SPICe has examined transfers and I have had a go at it. The situation is not very transparent and I know of no substantial investigation into how transfers happen. Bob Doris is absolutely right. NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, for example, transfers 6 per cent of its budget into social work, whereas NHS Borders—where, you would think, the proportion should be higher, because it has an older population—transfers only 1.5 per cent. There are big variations among local authorities and there is not much clarity about how transfer happens. It comes from negotiations between chief executives of health boards and chief executives of local authorities and very little is known about the process. It is a very important issue, because we are not scrutinising the whole budget if some of it is going off into another area of responsibility.

**Professor McLaren:** What we said in the Crawford Beveridge report about the need for health and social care budgets to be more intertwined is correct. I guess that that is what the Government is trying to achieve and what all parties want to achieve. If a political commitment is being given to maintain the NHS, in real spending terms, the integration of health and social care budgets will not really work. As Beveridge said, the whole health budget cannot be protected, because it is enormous. The Government should not protect any of it; it should just give health boards what they need. Perhaps money is not needed for ageing so much now and would be better spent up front on other things. Perhaps money will be needed later, when the effects of the ageing population kick in.

The health budget is huge—about a third of the total budget—and it is not broken down and analysed very much. Members should look at how the tourism, Scottish Enterprise or schools budgets are analysed, for example. Much more could be done by Audit Scotland, ISD Scotland or whoever so that we can find things out. For example, as we have both said before, if the relative health spending advantage of Scotland versus the UK has fallen from 14 to 8 per cent in two or three years and nobody has looked at that or bothered to find out why it has happened, perhaps you have too much money.

**Bob Doris:** With the integration of health and social care, how we scrutinise will become increasingly important. The two things that are necessary are a single accountable officer in charge of the integrated services and a single budget. Is there a need for Parliament to scrutinise that single budget as a focus rather than looking separately at local authority and NHS budgets, as we go forward?

**Professor Bell:** That certainly makes absolute sense to me. If health and social care are to go together administratively, scrutiny of them must also be combined.

It is clear that one reason why health boards are taking that approach is to save costs. The average in-patient cost for a week in a hospital is about £2,700, but if the person can be cared for in a care home, the cost will be £500 to £600. Therefore, it is clear that there will be substantial savings if it is suitable for a person to be cared for in a local authority care home. It is about getting people into accommodation that suits them and is most appropriate for them, which may often mean their being nearer home. We might want to have people back in the community for all kinds of reasons.

**Bob Doris:** There would be a better quality of life for them, as well.

**Professor Bell:** Yes.

**The Convener:** There are no other questions on that issue.

I am looking beyond the witnesses at our witnesses for the round-table discussion. That is a reminder that this is the Health and Sport Committee.

I think that the Scottish Parliament information centre briefing says that there are no specific indicators or targets for sport in the budget. Do the witnesses want to comment on that before they leave? Given the preventative strategies, all the enthusiasm about how we can push forward here after the Olympics and the commitment all around, should we be concerned that there are no targets or indicators for sport in the budget?

**Professor McLaren:** There are big issues to do with any large sporting event, such as how it affects the health of the country as a whole, how much it is for elites, and how much carries over. That probably applies to the Olympics, as well. It is rather disappointing that the Olympic stadium will probably be turned into a place for fans of West Ham—I have been there a few times—to go along to and do whatever they do there. There is an opportunity to make a national centre; something like that could be done with the Commonwealth games.

On the other side, if we do not look at what is basically public relations guff from some economists, about the benefits of big sporting events, but look instead at the decent work that is done, we will see that there can be many pitfalls. Many sporting events do not make any money; rather, they lose quite a lot of money in the long run, and the money that is spent on them could have been much better spent in other areas. Nobody ever looks at what all the Olympics money could have been spent on. Obviously, the

Commonwealth games are not on the same scale, but there is still an opportunity to be a bit more hard headed about what will come out at the other end that will benefit Scotland in the longer term.

**Professor Bell:** It seems to me that the big sporting events are probably largely irrelevant to the prevention agenda. It is a matter of getting very young people across the board to participate in sport, and it seems to me that there are good models in Scotland. Clubgolf does very well in trying to expose young kids to golf before they leave primary school, and that sort of thing seems to me to be admirable.

**The Convener:** That helps to set the scene. There has been a bit of light relief from the sobering and challenging evidence that you have provided to us. I hope that we will find that evidence useful in shaping our work programme and budget scrutiny. Thank you both very much for your attendance and evidence.

I briefly suspend the meeting. We will set up for the round-table session.

10:39

*Meeting suspended.*

10:45

*On resuming—*

## Community Sport Inquiry

**The Convener:** Item 2 is the final panel of witnesses for our community sport inquiry. As we have done for previous inquiry sessions, it might be useful for us all to introduce ourselves. I am convener of the committee and MSP for Greenock and Inverclyde.

**John Taylor (University of Stirling):** I am a research fellow at the school of sport at the University of Stirling.

**Bob Doris:** I am an MSP for Glasgow and deputy convener of the Health and Sport Committee.

**Scott Cuthbertson (Equality Network):** I am the community development co-ordinator for the Equality Network.

**Drew Smith:** I am an MSP for Glasgow.

**Professor Ian Diamond (University of Aberdeen):** I am the principal and vice-chancellor of the University of Aberdeen and I am on the board of British Universities and Colleges Sport.

**Nanette Milne:** I am an MSP for North East Scotland.

**Rebecca Simpson (Youth Scotland):** I am youth active manager at Youth Scotland.

**Gil Paterson:** I am the MSP for Clydebank and Milngavie.

**David Torrance (Kirkcaldy) (SNP):** I am the MSP for Kirkcaldy.

**Professor Nanette Mutrie (University of Edinburgh):** I am chair of physical activity for health at the University of Edinburgh and director of the Scottish physical activity research collaboration.

**Aileen McLeod:** I am an MSP for South Scotland.

**Charlie Raeburn:** I am here as an independent consultant, which is difficult to tell you about, but I used to be manager of sport for West Lothian Council.

**Rhoda Grant:** I am a Highlands and Islands MSP.

**Dr Joseph Bradley (University of Stirling):** I am a senior lecturer at the school of sport at the University of Stirling.

**Mark McDonald:** I am an MSP for North East Scotland.

**The Convener:** Thank you all very much for that. After a brief consultation during the break, I

think that it falls to me to open up the questioning. In this session, committee members will try to listen and to encourage debate across our panel.

In trying to provide a seamless connection with our previous evidence session today, I want to put this question to the panel. The SPICe briefing on the budget suggests that the budget includes no specific indicators or targets for sport. Although there are aims and objectives of increasing participation and improving performance, those are currently based on the household survey. Is that a serious approach to the importance of sport in terms of preventive strategies and promotion as a country?

**Charlie Raeburn:** Let me just elaborate briefly before I respond. First, on why I am here, I am taking part today because I have, and always have had, a passionate interest in community sport. I am still a volunteer in a whole lot of different things.

In a way, this is about the infrastructure for community sport. As someone who for most of his life worked for local authorities, I believe that the framework of the legislation and targeting that your question asks about is very limited. I think that it is hugely ambiguous to say, as is currently the case in the planning legislation, that local authorities should just provide adequate and appropriate facilities for sport and recreation. I do not think that there is really much behind that. You could move in a million different directions on that one, which is what we do. The other bit of legislation that exists is about wellbeing, but the complication about wellbeing is how on earth you measure it.

On the issue of the household survey, I believe that you are meeting the Government adviser on physical activity later this morning, but I think that, if we want to measure physical activity in terms of health, that has to be measured by the health world rather than the sport world. That needs to happen along the lines of the guidance, which is that there should be one hour a day of physical activity for young people and half an hour a day of physical activity of moderate intensity for adults.

**Professor Diamond:** A survey such as the one you describe can be an appropriate mechanism for measuring progress over time, as long as a sensible set of questions is asked. I say that because the areas that we are considering are somewhat complex and we cannot simply have one question on a survey and expect it to provide us with targets.

That said, one could put a module together for the household survey that would provide indicators of progress over time. However, before that, we need to decide what we are trying to measure, such as sport and its indication for health, for example. We could measure wellbeing and

participation through the same survey; it would be the most appropriate place to do it.

**The Convener:** The question in the survey is about activity in a four-week period. Is that sufficient?

**Professor Diamond:** Some of the briefings that I have seen appear to mention a relatively small number of occasions in a four-week period, but once in four weeks is scarcely going to have a huge impact on health. We need a much more complex set of questions to understand the types of health and wellbeing on which we are trying to have an impact.

**Professor Mutrie:** Scotland has such a survey in the Scottish health survey. It adequately measures physical activity and sport, activity related to transport, activity at home and in domestic pursuits, and it totals to the 150 minutes minimum that is the current recommendation for achieving health benefit from activity. It can also measure the daily 60 minutes for children. That survey informs the target for Scotland's very good policy, let's make Scotland more active, which is a 20-year policy with the target of getting 50 per cent of the population to reach those minimum activity levels by 2022.

When I reviewed the documents from the Health and Sport Committee and the policies to which it has referred, I was surprised not to see the let's make Scotland more active documentation. There is a clear gap here between sport and physical activity, and I would like to see that gap filled and more of the discussion to be about sport and physical activity. Elements of sport can provide health benefits but not all of it does, and not all the population will ever participate in sport sufficiently to gain health benefits.

We are at a unique moment in time in which physical inactivity is the fourth leading cause of mortality around the world. That is higher than obesity. The Toronto charter tells us how to successfully gain physical activity increases. Seven investments are noted and Scotland is doing them all. One of them is to create a sport for all ethos, which might be where sport and physical activity can join together.

Not to mention the let's make Scotland more active strategy does it a disservice. Around the world, Scotland is seen as one of the leading countries because we have such a policy. We have also had a review of that policy and, to my knowledge, no country has ever had a 20-year policy on physical activity and reviewed it. More important, we are on the road to achieving our target under the policy, which has been in existence for the past 10 years.

**John Taylor:** In connection with Nanette Mutrie's comments on physical activity, we need



greater clarity about what we are talking about when we talk about sport. Are we using the term in the way that many people would understand it, as a rule-based activity? Are we talking more about physical activity, which is just general movement? Are we talking about exercise, or, in some cases, are we talking about physical education? The terms are sometimes confused during debate, which might lead to poor policies. We need to be absolutely clear what we are talking about.

As Nanette Mutrie suggested, some sports can make a contribution to health in certain circumstances, but that is not necessarily true of all sports. I am talking about physical health benefits. Also, physical activities that might not be sports can make a positive contribution to people's health.

**Drew Smith:** I do not want to respond to Professor Mutrie as much as to pose a question on where that takes us. In consciously focusing its inquiry on community sport rather than on physical activity, the committee's intention was to do a service to community sport in its own right and recognise it as an important policy area, rather than to underplay the importance of physical activity. We will certainly come back to that. However, that has led to a tension throughout—and particularly when we discussed the budget—about what we mean by preventative spend and how we define and understand it.

To what extent do you believe that there is such a tension, particularly in a time of limited budgets? There will always be examples of sports groups that say, "Funding is available as long as we focus on physical activity," so they will go down that route. On the physical activity side, there is a tendency to stray into sport because cashback is available down that route. Do we have a clear understanding that increasing physical activity is important for health reasons but that community sport is also important in its own right, and that the two things are distinct but interrelated? How can we strike the right balance in policy making?

**Professor Mutrie:** You are correct to say that both things are important in their own right. Fundamentally, and thinking about the discussion that the committee has just had about sporting events, do we prioritise the chance to get high-performing athletes over work to encourage a healthier nation? No—we want some of each. I presume that there will be a balance that allows sport for its own sake and allows people to reach their potential and to participate for both social capital and the joy of competition. I am not against sport. I am proud to say that I have more than 30 international caps for playing squash for Scotland, so I love that side of it. However, we need a clearer focus on health. I seek more joined-up

policy from Government to show the role that physical activity can play.

We should also consider the committee's discussion about the ageing population and the fact that there will soon be more older adults than younger people in the population. Physical activity can play a major role in that area, because old age is when ill health happens. It is quite difficult to prove the health benefits of sport for children because they are not yet ill. It is not until old age that we see some of the benefits, such as the prevention of osteoporosis, falls and fractures, and benefits for mental health.

One of our recent reports, which is with NHS Health Scotland at the moment, suggests that a conservative estimate of the cost to Scotland of inactivity is £94.1 million per annum. That is £18 per resident. If even 10 per cent of that was spent on prevention, it would have a much bigger impact than many other areas of health spending. That has not been debated much yet—how to spend to save—in the physical activity domain. Sport will play a part, but if we consider the ageing population, it is the more general physical activities of walking, cycling, gardening and dancing that are important. Swimming is another activity that people continue doing throughout their lifespan. As John Taylor said, most of those things are not normally conceived of as sport, and the public do not think of them as such. That is where some of the tension lies.

**John Taylor:** I have a point about the definition of community sport and the challenges around that. Recently, I was involved in some evaluations of community programmes such as the girls on the move programme and Sports Leaders UK, which Rebecca Simpson has been involved in. The girls who were involved in girls on the move largely wanted to do dance leadership courses; they did not want to do the sports leadership course. The courses were very much community based, with very good outcomes for the girls taking part. However, would you regard that as community sport? Many people would not consider dance activity to be sport. From my perspective, though, looking at that particular programme and its impact, it was very much about community-based activity, which could be included in the definition of community sport. That is where some of the challenges lie, with organisations such as Youth Scotland making the case for certain things—what is in, what is out and what we are talking about when we talk about sport.

11:00

**The Convener:** Charlie Raeburn, do you want to say something about Perth and Kinross?

**Charlie Raeburn:** As I mentioned in my submission, Perth and Kinross Council has a very good way of defining community sport and putting it against the backdrop of age stages, or life stages as it calls them. One of the challenges, particularly in the world of what I am calling community sport, is that those involved do not necessarily do it for physical activity. They will generally do it because of the fun and the opportunity. Ian Diamond and I were just talking about that. Ian was a swimming referee, taking kids who had really not been performing top-end swimming but who still wanted the opportunity to perform. In football, the equivalent term would be the guys with two left feet who still want to play football. I gather that the odd MSP game of football is played. It may not be top end, but it is about the enjoyment of being part of something.

I am an advocate of things Scandinavian. The main rationale is obviously a health one, but it tends to be about wellbeing, and being part of a family. If you read the Perth and Kinross framework, you will see how strongly it puts it. The submission from the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities also talks about the need for these extended families. Things like that are not necessarily visible.

In West Lothian, we have set up a big group called West Lothian on the move, for the physical activity agenda. Sport is only part of that. The bit that I am talking about is competitive sport, which is about belonging. I mentioned this three years ago, when the predecessor committee had its inquiry. In this time of strife, when families are breaking up, who do you belong to? Who gives a bit of time to you?

When I retired, a marvellous project for older people was just taking off. The biggest increase in participation in Europe is among people my age. It is not just about physical activity. The evidence is that men especially still want to play something. You heard about the sitting football, or the walking football, earlier in the inquiry. I think that what Drew Smith was talking about was that people need that sense of belonging. It plays a part in the physical activity, and the issue is how we articulate that and how we join it up.

Active recreation, which John Taylor was articulating, is bigger than competitive sport. I have a model here, which I can give to the clerks if you like. It is a study of sports participation in Europe from the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium. The study calls it the church model. In the nave of the church is recreational sport—active recreation—but also community sport. Then there is the spire of the church, which is high-level competition and elite sport. I am really just saying that because I think that it is needed.

When I was a teacher, I needed to know what I was doing, and what objectives and experiences I was going to give people. What is the curriculum? If it is just physical activity, that is not just sport.

**The Convener:** Do any of the other panelists want to respond to that?

**Rebecca Simpson:** I want to pick up on a point that John Taylor mentioned. Youth Scotland works with more than 50,000 young people a year through its membership. Although about 94 per cent of those people engage in sport, they do so not in sports clubs or schools but in youth clubs. How do we capture those figures? Those are young people who probably do not think that they are a member of a sports club or that they are taking part in sport, because they see it more as taking part in games or physical activity. It can be football or handball—it is always a recognised sport—but it is delivered by youth club workers and volunteers, not sports professionals or sports coaches. How do we capture those figures in the sporting world? It is sport but it is also physical activity.

**The Convener:** Does everyone accept that the Perth and Kinross model is a good one that captures the information? Is the debate about sport versus physical activity important at the point of development? That is more about strategy than the sort of debate that we have had around the table here. Does anybody have a view on that? Does it matter?

**Professor Diamond:** I do not know too much about the Perth and Kinross strategy, but it seems to me that the critical point is to identify what we are trying to impact on. Sport and broadly defined physical activity are one of the few things that impact on many areas: they impact on health, social cohesion and, in some areas, crime; and they certainly impact on social esteem and provide an activity for life, if one is prepared to undertake it. However, sport and physical activity will not have a direct, measurable impact on any one of those areas through one intervention. One must look at the bigger picture and at the sort of things that Nanette Mutrie described beautifully earlier. We must ask whether we should invest in sport to try to impact on those things.

The question is how we invest in order to hit people at different stages of their life course and to identify how to keep people moving through transitions in which we see declines in physical activity. We know that, if we want to be a preventive health nation, we need a long-term commitment to physical activity, because healthy ageing depends on it enormously.

**Nanette Milne:** My initial question is similar to Drew Smith's question, but it will perhaps move us on from what has been said. There is a lot of focus

on community sport hubs, which we have heard a lot about during our inquiry. I think that it was a representation from the Ramblers Association that said that there should not be community sport hubs but community sport and recreation or physical activity hubs. What does the panel feel about that? Should we focus on bringing sport and physical activity together as part of the sport hub concept?

**Professor Mutrie:** Yes. The element of the public that we want to reach most is the people who do the least amount of physical activity or sport, but they are not attracted to community sport hubs. The work of John Taylor and Youth Scotland shows that that is the case for girls in particular. If we widened the strategy to cover sport and physical activity, we would at least give a shot to public understanding that it is not just about competitive sport.

An interesting issue is how we train our physical education teachers. We at the University of Edinburgh are one of the major players in that area and we must train teachers to teach beyond the traditional sports curriculum so that we fit in with the curriculum for excellence, which has defined sport, physical education and physical activity as all being important dimensions to teach children. The curriculum for excellence is starting in the right way to educate children early, so in a couple of generations there may not be a tension between sport and physical activity and people will understand that we are looking at health benefits. However, right now we need to do everything that we can to make sport more appealing to the parts of the public for whom it is not. I agree with the Ramblers Association's suggestion of widening the concept of sport hubs to cover physical activity, which is what we suggested in our University of Edinburgh response and which would be an appropriate way to go.

**Charlie Raeburn:** I wrote a paper for the *Holyrood* journal on community sport hubs, which was published about a year and a half ago. I welcome the concept of community sport hubs. Some secondary schools in Scotland are fantastic facilities in their own right, with sports centres, games halls, swimming pools, gymnasiums, fitness equipment, outside pitches and so on all in one place. I tried to make the point in my written submissions that the hubs are a good project, and they are just a project. There are 2,000 odd primary schools and 400 secondary schools—my main point is whether we can open up the school estate. A badminton club may only need the key to the primary school hall, if it is just a wee club—it does not necessarily need the big bureaucracy.

However, before we do anything, we need to consider the point made in "Reaching Higher: Building on the Success of Sport 21", the sport

strategy for Scotland, that 90-odd per cent of the responsibility for developing a strategic approach to sport is at local authority level. Local authorities own a majority of our facilities, and the question is how we use those facilities strategically. Local authorities need a vision of what they are doing locally. They have to accommodate all the types of participation that we have been referring to, whether it is the walking, the informal groups that come once a week, or the competitive sports that tend to meet a minimum of two or three times a week because people have to train and then perform. There are cost issues, so how do they plan that? A very detailed strategy is needed.

The commercial world should also be taken into account, because there are commercial organisations out there. I wonder whether the commercial world could do a little more than it currently does. I would change the budget around and target the people we know about, not necessarily the areas. In an area such as West Lothian, small areas of deprivation are dotted around. Can those be targeted carefully? A facilities strategy is needed—a way to open the facilities up is critical too. That is the other big responsibility for local authorities. They should try to build the capacity of clubs and organisations to take on the facilities. Often, my swimming club will get the use of a pool and it will manage that pool physically. It does not need lifeguards, as it provides its own—it just needs the key to the door.

A lot more thinking needs to be done. I retired from West Lothian Council just when the financial crisis hit the system. Coming from that background, I worry that within local authorities there are so few people left who have that strategic overview and who will be monitoring the 20 leisure trusts that now exist to see what happens. Where is that strategy going to be?

To go back to the question, hubs will be a good start, but they are not the whole thing—the issue is not just about bureaucracy. Some hubs will just be about the use of a school facility. I think that half of the hubs will be more about sharing facilities. We heard that in Argyll and Bute the hub is an area where things are working in a slightly more oblique way—it is not necessarily just about the facility. The idea is critically good, but I have lots of worries around how we monitor it all and set it up strategically.

**Scott Cuthbertson:** On Nanette Mutrie's point about ensuring that we target the people who are not involved in physical activity or sport, a big part of our research into lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender participation in sport is that people feel that they were not being targeted at all. There is a big issue that is to do with not just how we measure overall participation in sport but how we

target key groups that we are trying to get more involved in sport.

Opening up the large schools estates for community sport hubs is in general a good thing—the big irony is that schools are where so many young people were put off sport in the first place. We need to look at ways of reaching people who have those negative associations because of their experiences at school and we need to try to turn those negative experiences into positive experiences.

**The Convener:** That is a broad issue that has been raised in previous panels. Does anyone else want to address that issue?

**Charlie Raeburn:** There has been little support for community sport, as I have tried to describe it, and we have a fragile scenario as a result. Most other countries have intervened and tried to support community sport, and we need to do that. If there are good structures and clubs to go to, people will go. However, if good structures are not in place, there is nowhere to go and we end up with what we used to call football telephone teams—you just phone up 11 guys and shout at them when they are on the pitch. To me, that is not a club, and we need a lot more than that.

11:15

I have the latest figures for participation levels in Denmark, which I will pass to the committee. Interestingly, there is big movement in the sports that girls are involved in. In swimming—I have been involved in that—and athletics, two thirds of the participants are girls and, in gymnastics, two thirds or more of participants are girls. A big change is happening, but it is interesting that we are unable to satisfy the needs of girls who want to play football.

**The Convener:** With previous panels we have heard about whether the hubs can be inclusive and are reaching out to people. There has also been a tension—it was more than a tension last week; it was raw competition—about what is happening in a community, for example in the case of the Glasgow Gladiators Programme, and what is almost an official model developing around the hubs. Is there a tension? If so, how do we deal with that tension of the community clubs versus the hubs to ensure that they work in partnership and that we do not reach a stage where there are big divisions between them?

**John Taylor:** As I understand it, a lot of the community hubs are based around existing clubs. I do not know whether there is a written or unwritten rule, but it appears that there must be three different sports or organisations that come together to create a community hub. I do not know whether that answers your question, but existing

clubs can get involved in a hub and I hope that that will strengthen what happens.

**The Convener:** It is perhaps the case that the physical asset cannot accommodate any more clubs, or that the three clubs rule is too small because most sports take place, and people participate in sport in significantly greater numbers, in community clubs outside the hub.

In the evidence that we heard when we visited Cumbernauld, there was a suggestion that the hub does well but that it has not engaged significantly with the community clubs that are successful in their own right and it does not want to disturb that success. I discussed the matter with Drew Smith and we have picked up a tension, but if that is only a perception of mine and other committee members, that is fine.

**Charlie Raeburn:** For me, the process has involved an exercise of mapping out every kind of demand. When we developed a football strategy for West Lothian, we tried to engage all the football organisations, but the clubs that were the hardest to engage with were those from the pub football leagues because they wanted just to turn up and play football. When we were considering football, we had to say that part of the model must be for the pub football people, even though we were developing community clubs. We therefore had to consider that there is more pay-and-play football but that there are the club structures, too. On the club structures, I have a positive story about all our work to develop clubs, in that we had lots of little teams that are now much more sustainable.

The committee heard from Broxburn United Sports Club several weeks ago. We have looked at clubs of that size, in which the facilities would just be ticking over. One of the first clubs that we looked at was Murieston United Community Football Club in Livingston. The first thing that the club did when it took over the biggest playing fields in West Lothian was to get rid of the fixed goals and replace them with portable goals. Why did it do that? Although it is a bit more of a hassle to take out and put back portable goals, they do not get vandalised. The club now looks after the pitches and everything else.

We have to consider the contracts that are set up and the agreements with a hub or a leisure trust. I was interested in the committee's discussion with Atlantis Leisure, which is based in Oban. That obviously has lots of good practice. The system that it uses works in New Zealand where, instead of having big trusts, the authorities basically ask a trust to look after sports centres. New Zealand therefore does not have one big gross trust that covers a local authority area, as we tend to have. In New Zealand there are several trusts but there are strategic people in the local

authority who set up, agree and monitor what happens.

Commercial operators will want to come in and use the facilities. Examples of such use of facilities are when people who learn to swim or learn to do gymnastics just pay and play, which is different from a club. Aerobics also tends to be done on a kind of pay-and-play basis. It can sometimes be a case of those activities versus the clubs.

For example, one user of the Atlantis Leisure facility is Oban Otters, which is a big swimming club. It struggles to compete with the other users of the pool. That is one reason why, as Ian Diamond knows quite well, community swimming clubs tend to have to train at 6 o'clock in the morning or at other antisocial hours. The system must be set up in a way to enable different kinds of use, and the situation must be strategically monitored.

We should try to take account of life stages, because there is now enormous potential to offer more during the day to people of my age. We have not done enough to intervene and increase activity during the day, when facilities are not necessarily used so much.

**Bob Doris:** I return to the discussion of groups that are less likely to be physically active or involved in sport, which is worth pursuing some more. I will give an example of a group, which is perhaps not underrepresented as such. When I was in Aberdeenshire I was told a story about a boys football team that had provision until 12 but at that point disappeared and did not start again until 19. There was a huge drop-off in physical activity because participation stopped as a result of the activity not being available locally. Whose job is it at a local authority level, at a strategic level or at a national governing body level to identify where the gap is and to implement a strategy to fill the gap?

I give that example because we talk about underrepresented groups, whether that is based on gender, sexual orientation, deprived communities or ethnic background. Whose responsibility is it to identify at the local level—not nationally, because I know that there are national strategies—where the gaps are and to have a strategy to fill that gap in provision? We are talking about not only more people in general but more people in underrepresented groups becoming physically active and involved in sport, so that we narrow the margin of inequality.

**Scott Cuthbertson:** To a degree, it is everyone's responsibility. When we asked LGBT people whose role they thought it was to get more LGBT people involved in sport, the vast majority said that it was the governing bodies'

responsibility. However, sports governing bodies have much bigger responsibilities and roles.

A lot of good work is going on in the communities. For example, Edinburgh Leisure employs someone specifically to look at where there is a lack of participation and to work with groups and individuals who need support. It may be that people want to get involved in sport but do not know how. It is about making it easier for people to do basic things such as establish a group, get a constitution and book meeting rooms. Where people think that the work should happen is not necessarily where it should happen. The leisure trusts should deliver it locally.

**Professor Mutrie:** I will try to answer the question by providing two examples, although I am sure that neither is perfect.

In Fife, I believe that it was the director of recreation, Emma Broadhurst, who initiated a system whereby all schoolchildren participate in a survey called Fife active. Through the annual survey, Fife can monitor schoolchildren's physical activity levels. It is part of the curriculum and the pupils learn something about computing. They insert their physical activity levels and their choices. They say, "We would really like this." I imagine that, in the case of the over-12s football that was mentioned, they might say, "What's happened to our football team?" Efforts are then made to match the needs of the children to the resources that the active schools co-ordinators—and, presumably, the community sport hubs—have. That is one way in which schools can oversee provision at local level.

The other model comes from Glasgow, where there is a physical activity forum at which all agencies with an interest from transport to education—as well as the city's sport and recreation strategic officers—sit round the table. An attempt is being made to make a logic model of how all the elements in Glasgow will contribute to a more active Glasgow and capitalise on the hosting of the Commonwealth games. That process allows for the gaps that Bob Doris identified to be plugged. It involves a strategic plan that includes all the players.

**Professor Diamond:** I was about to say something very similar to what Professor Mutrie has just said. The answer is that no single person or group is in charge of addressing the issue. Everyone—including, if I may say so, the committee—must be involved. "Let's Make Scotland More Active" is a fantastic national policy, but it should be driven by Government into the local authorities and all the players in local authorities. The process should include not just the national governing bodies, the local authorities and the local authority leisure co-ordinators;

transport, education and all the other areas need to be involved, too.

The focus should be on not just what people are asking for but what the evidence says about where the major transitions are. We know that there are major transitions in participation in late and mid-adolescence, which is when it drops off. Let us go to the experts and ask what interventions can impact on that. We should expect those interventions to be made to ensure that opportunities exist. In my view, we cannot be passive and just say, "Let's try and make things available." We need a supply-and-demand approach that involves looking for interventions that will impact on some of the major areas of participation drop-off and, at the same time, talking to people about what they want. It is everyone's responsibility to bring those two aspects together.

**Charlie Raeburn:** I have some information to provide about what we did in West Lothian. Our chief executive was Alex Linkston, who, as some of you will remember, had a big part to play in the work of the Christie commission. He was very strong on locality planning; he was also strong on involving the health service in the set-up through the local community health and care partnership.

We had very strong locality planning. We were asked to ensure that each of our services was represented in that process. To my mind, that helped us hugely. It was particularly helpful for the voluntary groups because, along with the health professionals, we found a way to articulate their challenges at that level. I saw a lot of marriage between the health world and the local authority world. Care of the elderly was one of the biggest examples but, on a smaller level, locality planning was a key part of how we made progress. We got the data zone information about where the deprivation was.

With community sport, the biggest challenge tended to be cost. Once participation goes beyond just turning up once a week to involvement in community sport, which involves playing two, three or more times a week, the cost element begins to creep in. It is a big challenge to manage that.

**The Convener:** Do you want to come back on any of that, Bob?

**Bob Doris:** I was going to move on to another question, but other witnesses might like to comment on the same theme.

11:30

**Rebecca Simpson:** I want just to say that youth work can play a good part in addressing the gap. It often works with underrepresented people in disadvantaged areas who might not take part in sport for whatever reason. A link must be made

between the national governing bodies in sport, youth work and the community sport hubs. How many youth clubs know about community sport hubs in their local authority areas, feel that they can have a relationship with them and feel that they can take their groups into them?

We should invest in young people, because they are the nation. We hope that they will take part in physical activity for the rest of their lives, but we need to get them young. With community sport hubs, we are talking about opening the school gates. Let us open those gates, go out to the young people and build a phased approach into sport and into the community sport hubs.

**Bob Doris:** I think that there is a slight confusion between community sport hubs and the active schools network. The evidence that we took last week showed that the active schools network does not necessarily articulate to the sports clubs and associations in the community. We need more joined-up thinking on that.

I would be interested to know what monitoring is done to find out how representative the clubs and associations are of the wider community in terms of ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. The community sport hubs tend to be a coalition of existing clubs and associations rather than an expansion of the overall amount of physical activity.

That is a comment rather than a question.

**Drew Smith:** I have a question on budgets, national spend and the taxpayer's element, as opposed to everything else about sport infrastructure and community infrastructure in which the inquiry is interested.

Is it inevitable that any spending on attempts to drive up participation in sport will simply increase existing inequalities? Community sport hubs are built on existing local community clubs. They are driven by a feeling that the infrastructure in sport needs to be improved and a desire to work with and support the existing structures. However, the areas where that infrastructure does not exist do not benefit.

We know that investment in sport per se is not necessarily the best way to drive up participation in wider physical activity. We also know that there are underrepresented groups that are unlikely to see sport as their route to a more active lifestyle. Those might be people in the LGBT community, but there may be a tension because, separate from LGBT people who are less active and could do with being supported to become more active for health reasons, there will be people in that community who want to be involved in sport.

To what extent are we just driving existing inequalities through our spending?

**Mark McDonald:** There is obviously an issue with societal attitudes. Contrast the large amount of work that is being done on campaigns such as show racism the red card with the total dearth of work on tackling homophobia in professional sport. In 2012, there has still only ever been one openly gay professional footballer—Justin Fashanu. That suggests to me that we are not tackling homophobia in sport, which will have a detrimental impact on encouraging young LGBT people to get involved in sport, because they will perceive that their community is not welcome. We must tackle that.

Professor Mutrie made a point about taking a less traditional approach in school physical education. In primary school, part of our PE was ceilidh dancing. I cannot kick a ball, but I can strip the willow. However, the approach has moved on and, nowadays, street dance is becoming more prevalent. In my area, a number of street dance clubs have been set up as a result of television programmes such as “Let’s Dance” and “Britain’s Got Talent”.

There is also a negative side to that, which is that we could all think of some groups that would be happy to suggest that teaching children how to do hip-hop dancing is a waste of taxpayers’ money. How do we tackle those perceptions as well as ensuring that we provide young people with equality of opportunity, so that the physical activity that they get is something that they want to access?

**Professor Diamond:** As I understood it, Drew Smith’s question was on whether investment in sport could simply keep the inequalities going. The answer is that it could, but it does not need to. What worries me about this discussion is that we are searching for one magic bullet that will attack all areas, but things are not like that. Different interventions are needed in different areas and one might allocate resource disproportionately to reduce inequality.

In Scotland, we are lucky to have the group of which Professor Mutrie is the chair. One should ask that group what interventions we need to make an impact on inequality, and how we should evaluate and monitor them in the future. Research evidence shows that differential interventions will reduce inequality, and surely that is what we should be aiming to do.

**Professor Mutrie:** Thank you, Professor Diamond. I agree with what you have just said. Inequality will be driven up if we do not do something different. I offer into that discussion the better education of physical education teachers, coaches and volunteer coaches, who are such a big part of the sport infrastructure and inevitably do not have a four-year degree that might have introduced them to the issues of social inequality

or how to attract the traditionally non-sporty person to their particular activity. We need to invest in coach education and volunteer support. We are not educating volunteers but they are a very big part of the business, as I have read in the committee’s papers.

The committee’s budget adviser mentioned club golf as one of Scotland’s important assets, and it is trying to reach all primary school children through volunteers. We have done some research in that area and the volunteers in that process do not feel that they are supported. They are willing to help, but a little bit more support from the wider golfing world—and that particular world needs to learn some things about inequalities—would help.

**The Convener:** The question that Professor Diamond posed indirectly was about the part of the strategy that identifies inequalities and ensures better resourcing. Your answer confused me a wee bit. In the areas in which we have inequality, we have fewer volunteers with fewer qualifications and less parental involvement. How does your strategy ensure that those people who are working in those areas get the benefit of your direction and Government spend?

**Professor Mutrie:** I would love to think that it was my strategy, but “Let’s Make Scotland More Active” is the Government’s strategy—

**The Convener:** I think that you have accepted ownership and taken some credit for its good and bad bits this morning.

**Professor Mutrie:** I have been helping with it, and inequalities are always mentioned, particularly within health. Any extra spend might increase inequalities.

However, the inequality gap in Scotland is not getting wider. It still exists but the population is increasing. We have increased the physical activity of the most deprived elements of the population a bit, but we have not answered the question of how to narrow the gap. I cannot claim that we have done that.

**The Convener:** The gap exists. Your answer seems to indicate that the strategy does not contain an inequalities drive at this point.

**Professor Mutrie:** It is certainly always a top element to be discussed—

**The Convener:** I know that the words are there but what action is contained in the strategy that will deal with the issue?

**Professor Mutrie:** I honestly do not know the top-level answer to that question. Inequality always exists and we always have to take it into account, but many people have tried and not yet solved the problem of how to reduce it.

**The Convener:** We are all culpable, so it is not just you. I think that Professor Diamond, who posed that significant question, wants to respond.

**Professor Diamond:** I was very pleased to see you pick up the point about volunteering. Volunteering is so incredibly important. Particularly when we are trying to reduce inequalities, it seems to me that there has to be outreach into early volunteering.

I am very impressed with some work that is being undertaken in Aberdeen through which older young people in schools are getting coaching certificates early on. That raises social esteem and raises the whole element of volunteering. Volunteers are not just going to appear; there has to be outreach with the aim of increasing the number of volunteers and making it easy for them, and we need to train them.

To come back to Mark McDonald's point, when I studied to become a football referee, some of the things about coaching and child behaviour that I learned through the videos that I saw were absolutely transformational. Those things hit not just me but all the other learners on that course. We need to bring that into volunteer education at all levels, but we need to be outreaching for volunteers.

**The Convener:** I should note, and give credit to, the young sports ambassadors who we found in Cumbernauld and Condorrat. They were truly inspirational and were doing a great job. Of course, they connected with younger people in delivering a great job. I just want to put that on the record.

I see that I have bids for contributions from John Taylor, Scott Cuthbertson and Charlie Raeburn.

**John Taylor:** Potentially, one challenge in existing sports clubs is when people of like mind come together with very similar views and some of those views are unacceptable to others. There may be a challenge in trying to change existing coaches to be more inclusive and to address issues of sectarianism and racism wherever they exist. To address some of those things, there are some national initiatives in place such as the positive coaching Scotland project, which is supported by sportscotland and the Winning Scotland Foundation.

Another thing that is helpful in addressing some of those issues is getting non-sporting bodies involved in sport. For example, Youth Scotland is involved in the girls on the move project along with Sports Leaders UK. Rather than just sportspeople delivering sports coaching or sports leadership, there are people who come from a youth work or social work background or who are somehow involved in social services. Many of those people tend to be more aware of issues of inequality. If

we can combine the sporting world with the work of social services, youth groups and so on, we will hopefully be able to address the issues and the challenges where they exist.

I remember speaking to the chair of the Scottish Ethnic Minority Sports Association a few years ago about the argument that sport does not address racism. Sport in itself will not deal with that issue; the people who run the sport have to challenge it wherever it exists. I think that, by bringing in joint working between social work, youth groups and the like and the world of sport, we can potentially have better equality outcomes.

**The Convener:** I will bring in Scott Cuthbertson and Charlie Raeburn before I then bring in Mark McDonald. I see that Dr Bradley wants in as well, but I will take those panellists first.

**Scott Cuthbertson:** I want to make two points. First, a lot of really good work is going on to involve minority groups and people who are less involved in sport, but I certainly believe that there is a real lack of sharing that good work. Good work is taking place with sports coaches and rugby union coaches in the Borders and good work is being done in Glasgow with individual groups, but people do not really know about that work so they are reinventing the wheel in different parts of Scotland. If we had a better model of sharing best practice and those good initiatives, we would save ourselves a lot of time.

Secondly, on the point that was raised about like-minded people coming together, people who want to take part in sport need to see that the sport reflects who they are: they want to see black and minority ethnic sportspeople involved; they want to see volunteers who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; they want to see women involved. Unless we get diverse groups involved at the grass roots, people will not see that sport reflects who they are and they will not get involved. That involves training coaches and leaders to ensure that everyone who thinks that they might give something a go is made to feel welcome and can participate to the best of their ability.

11:45

**Charlie Raeburn:** I have three broad points. First, it is helpful if there is a strong enough structure to work with. I have been involved with my club for 40 years. It is a huge club with 400-odd swimmers, but the only people who get involved now are from social classes A and B. The convener is correct to ask about what we can do about the rest of the world if they want to get into my sport. The issue is largely to do with cost. That is why our club is considering setting up a special arrangement with local pools in the more deprived



areas of Edinburgh, so that people can use those pools. In that way, we could end up with some form of transition. Members will understand how some kids who live in Pilton think that Princes Street is a different world. That is why we need something local. We need to try to develop structures. Remember that I believe that there have not been any real interventions to support clubs, which is why we are in such a fragile state.

Secondly, I agree with and want to strengthen the point about supporting volunteers. We have heard definitions of various kinds of volunteers. Coaching is one of the easier roles to recruit people for, while management of the club is one of the hardest. We need to do more of everything. From a twinning arrangement with Germany, I learned how the corporate or business world in Germany helps with the generic development of clubs. You can see how that would really help. We have heard a bit about the issue of volunteers, but serious support for volunteers is really needed.

My third point is a practical one, but a big one. If most of the local authority spend on sport is through the trusts that have been established by 20 of the 32 councils, it is important to work out what is in the agreement that the trusts have. Frequently, that agreement will be based on income generation and on saving non-domestic rates. There is already at least one case of a council that is in conflict with its trust, which has actually reached the courts. It is important that councils retain serious knowledge about and ownership of everything that happens with the trusts. For example, through the trusts, we should try to target inequalities and to find ways of supporting those in the really difficult parts of the world who cannot afford to participate. The trusts should not necessarily compete with the private sector, which can do a lot of things. That is a big issue when we are thinking about how we spend the limited amount of money that we have.

**Dr Bradley:** I am conscious that my work deviates a bit from what some other authorities in sports studies do. Most of my work is to do with ethnicity, religion and nationalism in sport, but I also work on representation and equality. To return slightly to some of the issues that Bob Doris raised, to my mind, there has never been any reaching out in a significant way to ethnic or religious communities, or probably any other community in Scotland, to try to encourage people to do a sport or to participate. That is partly a reflection of wider forces and power structures in society. Although things have been changing dramatically in the past 10 or 20 years, if we checked past memberships, and sometimes even current memberships, of golf and bowling clubs—those are two fairly popular sports in Scotland—we would find that a number of groups do not have access to those sports and clubs.

Coming from an ethnic and religious minority in Scotland, I am conscious of the choices that were available to me when I was a youngster. There seemed to be only one choice as football was dominant in Scotland, although there were one or two other choices as well. We can pick up on the ethnic and religious names of the participants in certain sports in Scotland to see who is included and who is excluded.

Although most of my work over the past few years has been in those fields, I have been involved in a project in North Lanarkshire over the past five or six years that I think is a game changer in many ways. It is getting people involved in sport and getting them to mix and become one community, particularly people from certain backgrounds, and particularly girls. We have broken down a few barriers in getting girls involved on an on-going basis.

There is something else that strikes me. The statistics, the numbers and the studies are absolutely necessary to prove points, to move things forward and to change policy, but the wider cultural issues are also critical. Generally speaking, I do not think that sport in Scotland is always for enjoyment, for health—despite all the campaigns—or for community. The fact that we talk so much about the breakdown of community, the lack of community and the fact that many people are disengaging from community to a greater or lesser extent shows that a lot of sport is not done for community.

Sport is dominated by media images of elite achievement and, particularly in the case of football, by individuals whose moral practices and performances might be considered to be individualistic, materialistic and based around money. That builds an image of sport whereby particular socially constructed images of success dominate and the idea of success is limited. For many people in Scotland, Britain and other western societies, sport is becoming increasingly individualistic. It is something constructed that we go and watch rather than something that we participate in.

The biggest thing that I have been confronted with in trying to get kids to do sport is that they quickly disengage from it: they do not want to do it if they perceive themselves as being unable to do it, particularly in the case of team sports and field sports. That disengagement can be for life, unless they are in a position where they are almost forced to do sport. Through the partnership with North Lanarkshire Leisure and the university, children are basically being forced to do sport—they do not have a choice—and many of them are coming through the barriers that would usually hold them back. However, they disengage easily. The phrase

that I have been confronted with most often is, “I can’t do this.” I hear that continually from kids.

That also says something about the wider cultural issues of confidence in Scotland. It seems to me—this is impressionistic rather than quantitative or qualitative—that confidence is very low. Kids do not perceive themselves as having opportunities or as being good enough, which ties back into the points that I am trying to make about elite sport.

I have engaged with the head of PE at a local high school and we have had some chats recently about the kids who play sports and the ones who do not. The school is probably one of the biggest schools in Scotland and it is good at what it does with sport as it has a sporting focus, yet the teacher has to arrange virtually all the school’s football games for weekdays because the kids do not turn up at the weekends. He is in the situation—as I often am—of having to chap on doors and talk to parents. That brings in another issue. Families are often divided: perhaps the father lives on one side of the town and the mother lives on the other side of the town, and single mothers are often quite difficult in relation to getting their kids to do sport as they did not do it themselves.

There is a guy playing for Hibs just now called James McPake. I think that he went to this teacher’s previous school, which was St Patrick’s in Coatbridge, and he came from the Harthill and Shotts direction. James had to get three buses to come to play football for his school on a Saturday morning—four buses, if it was an away game. A teacher told me that and I know from my experience that you cannot get kids to turn up even if they live at the edge of the park or within 50 or 100 yards of it.

One of the biggest and most critical problems is the wider culture and what kids aspire to. We all know about the issue of children who want to be famous. If you ask them why they want to be famous, they say, “Just to be famous.” If you ask them why they want to go on “The X Factor” or game shows, they say, “Because I’ll be on TV.” That seems a complete contrast to the generation of 30 or 40 years ago. If, 40 years ago, people like us had been sitting here having this discussion, we would not be where we are now. I wonder whether the horse has bolted and whether we are just firefighting.

**John Taylor:** I would like to offer a positive view on the “horse has bolted” comment. I do not think that the situation is as desperate as it seems. There are some serious challenges, but with appropriate, strategic and informed decision making we can make huge inroads in community sport in Scotland. There are plenty of really good, high-quality people doing work out there, but we

also need to develop some of the people who are involved so that they are more aware of the issues that exist.

**Professor Diamond:** I was going to make almost the same point as John Taylor just made. The horse has not bolted—there is just a set of particular challenges that we face as a nation. Those challenges are very similar to those faced by other nations, which is why a comparative international perspective is a good one to have. We need to face up to the challenges and work hard to ensure that we have physical activity—which should be broadly defined and include sport—as a lifetime activity. There are huge reasons for Scotland to do that.

**Rebecca Simpson:** I agree with John Taylor. The horse has not bolted, although we have massive problems, especially regarding young people. When I was at school, most people wanted to be active, but we were active without thinking about being active. We just did things in everyday life that would be described now as being active. Nowadays, I come across young people who could be described as just lazy. They do not want to do anything that seems like an effort, makes them sweat or seems like a hassle.

We are facing massive challenges, but as John Taylor said, there is some great work happening. For several years, we have run a girls on the move project, which works with inactive young girls and gets them to become not only active but role models in their communities who engage with other people.

It is a scary situation but great work is happening. We are facing up to the situation and trying to conquer it.

**The Convener:** Scott Cuthbertson would like to speak, and Bob Doris has a question. Scott, please be quick because we were due to speak to the minister five minutes ago.

**Scott Cuthbertson:** I am not sure about whether the horse has bolted—I really do not know. However, I agree with Dr Bradley that without a massive culture change, we will not get minority groups involved in sport. There is a real barrier that is to do with the culture around attitudes to sport, so I agree with Dr Bradley’s comment.

**Bob Doris:** A lot of what Dr Bradley mentioned is linked to the impact of poverty and deprivation, and how that befalls different ethnic and other social groups in a variety of ways—that can compound things. Do you agree that good-quality youth work and focused local work can inspire young people? We live in difficult financial times and we have a limited pot of cash. Has that cash been targeted in the most effective way to address those inequalities? I do not take the view that the

horse has bolted whatsoever. In middle and upper-class parts of Scottish society, people are running to the swimming pool, cycling to school and so on—a lot of good things are happening. The question is about how inequalities befall different people in different parts of society. The horse has not bolted, but are we targeting scarce resources in the most effective way to address the inequalities?

**The Convener:** Gil Paterson can ask a question if it is relevant to that point, and then Dr Bradley can respond.

**Gil Paterson:** I, too, do not think that the horse has bolted, but I certainly think that the horse has an enormous problem.

12:00

**The Convener:** It is overweight. [*Laughter.*]

**Gil Paterson:** My weight goes to my nose, I am afraid.

I raised a son who is over 40 now, and I have a young girl of 11. I do not think that the problem that we are discussing is caused by inequality. I honestly do not think that anyone could have come from a poorer background than I and my friends did, but we played sport all the time, although we did not know that that was what we were doing.

We could break the television and the handset and take the mobile phone away to stop young people texting, because the distractions for them in that regard are an enormous challenge. I know that because I see it in my household. I am coming around to Dr Bradley's side to some extent, but perhaps in a slightly different way. The issue is how to engage with young people. For example, my daughter is good at gymnastics and very active, and her mother looks after her well and takes her to things. However, it is an enormous challenge for me to get her away from "The X Factor" and all the things that young people nowadays do that I cannot do. That is the case in other families, too.

**The Convener:** You got the debate going, Dr Bradley, which is important.

**Dr Bradley:** In a sense, the analogy of the horse worked, but I am not sure that I anticipated the response. I do not think that the horse has bolted and that we should not do what we are doing. An incredible amount of good work is going on. I would not be involved in the project in North Lanarkshire if I thought that the horse had bolted.

If we had had the time and foresight 40 years ago, we could have prevented many of the things that we now see. Gil Paterson's point is what I was getting at in terms of wider cultural factors and

distractions. Generally speaking, facilities in our society are huge in comparison with what existed 40 years ago. I come from a generation that played on ash parks and things like that. We think that kids are spoiled for choice now, which they are. It is not always to do with poverty or being underprivileged, because some of the wealthiest or best educated people can be among the most broken people in society. We need only look at some of our pop stars, football stars and Hollywood stars to see that they are among the most broken people, although they are wealthy in a material sense.

It is about what people have inside them and what has been constructed inside them by the wider culture and the media. An awful lot of people in society, particularly kids, do not aspire to the right things. That might be a moralistic or personal perspective, but it is what confronts me when I look at the kids I deal with. I probably deal with 300 kids a week. If a kid does not see that he is going to make it in football by the time that he is 10, 11 or 12, or if he has not signed professionally as a youth footballer with a club by the time that he is 12 or 13—or if he signs but it does not work out—he is gone from football by the time that he is 14 or 15.

I have a friend whose boy is now 22. He played in a local league when it had about 20 under-12 teams and 18 under-14 teams. However, by the time that he hit the under-16 age group, there were only 16 teams; by the time that he hit the under-18 group, there were only about eight clubs; and by the time that he got to the under-21 stage, they had to move 10 miles away to get a competitive league. That reflects the fall-off of young players.

**The Convener:** We get your point, Dr Bradley, but we have other pieces of evidence about the tens of thousands of young people who are registered for amateur football and the tens of thousands of people who are still volunteering in that area. Our inquiry is not looking to solve all Scotland's problems in that regard. However, some of the points that you made applied to the football team that I ran 20 years ago. When youngsters got to 14 or 15, parental support dropped off—those who provided transport on a Saturday dropped away, for example. Such situations have been with us for some time, although there may be greater challenges now because of the increased choices that young people have.

I am trying to focus our inquiry—I hope that Mark McDonald will get on to this; I will bring him in next, so I am trying to give him a clue or a cue—on looking at how we support volunteers, who are crucial for all the activity that we have described.

I am delighted that, even with all the professional work that you do, Dr Bradley, you are still a volunteer and making a contribution. As we have not really looked at that important area, I wonder whether, with members' permission, we might conclude our discussion with it. I certainly hope that Mark McDonald's questions will focus on support for the volunteer workforce and on the contribution of volunteers and whether there are things that we are not doing.

**Mark McDonald:** Convener, I have a feeling that you want me to ask about how we support our volunteer workforce. [*Laughter.*]

Before I was elected, I was a volunteer and was fortunate enough to be involved in a fairly active club that allowed its coaches to get coaching badges and so on. However, as a number of clubs are essentially one or two-man—or indeed one or two-woman—operations, they might not have the infrastructure to allow them to access coaching badge courses or other training courses that would help to give those involved with the club a better experience. Should we take a more targeted approach and decide, for example, that club A is being run very well and does not need the kind of support that might be needed by club B, where we might need to go in and help coaches and volunteers with their development? Do we need to go out and find those clubs and people so that we can develop them?

Was that all right, convener?

**The Convener:** Thank you very much, Mr McDonald. Does anyone wish to respond?

**Scott Cuthbertson:** I am very lucky to be on the committee for an LGBT-friendly badminton group in Edinburgh. I would never have thought of doing it but someone said to me, "You like badminton, don't you? Can you come along and help run a group?" I do it in my free time and very much enjoy it.

Edinburgh Leisure has given us really good support with regard to training, advice and guidance, funding for small projects and help in getting funding to get more people active. When I started, we had only one court on a Tuesday night; we now need three courts and have 30 or 40 people coming along. It is very enjoyable.

However, that is what happens when the system works. When a similar group in Glasgow asked the local leisure trust for support, it was told, "We see you're a specific group. Can you not open things up?" Sport is supposed to be for everyone, but that group did not really get the support that it needed.

There is good support for volunteers in some areas, but the picture is patchy and certainly could be better. Of course, that is largely down to

whether people share good practice. We need to sell to leisure trusts the benefits of providing such support not only for them but for the long-term physical and mental health of people in their areas.

**Charlie Raeburn:** I have articulated some of this already, but my point is that responsibility needs to be enshrined at the local authority level. Nothing is more important. Although sportscotland is now providing strategic support in regional areas, we need to think about the needs of the different kinds of volunteers that you have heard about. For a start, we need to update coaching qualifications. Secondly, if we want people to take on more and more responsibility for facilities management—which, given that there is no money, is what I think should happen—we need to educate and support them in that work. Indeed, the people who work in leisure trusts might be able to do that, because they tend to come from facilities management backgrounds. Thirdly, the private sector and the corporate world are very good at helping clubs with constitutions, financial management, communication and other necessary elements.

Ideally, local authorities would have a central point for dealing with such issues. I tend not to split sport from all the other voluntary activities that take place, and I wonder whether we can find some way of supporting all voluntary organisations well at a local level.

Sometimes the costs—for updating courses, for example—are passed on to the clubs, which is yet another challenge for those organisations. Any support should be directed at trying to enable, educate and empower local people. We should listen to the volunteers a bit more: in today's world, we sometimes just hear what is happening at the top and do not listen to the people who are doing the job.

I have a document here on that very subject, called "Human resource management for volunteers in sports organisations in Europe", which I will give to the clerk. It is a collective study, and it is critical for us to look at how that type of approach can be applied here. To date, not enough of that has happened in our country.

**Professor Mutrie:** As with many of the things we have discussed, there is no magic bullet. One option might be to ask sportscotland whether it can, in distributing grants to governing bodies, direct more money towards supporting the volunteer workforce, to try to enforce more support for volunteers at a budgetary level.

**Professor Diamond:** To answer Mr McDonald's question directly, I believe that we need to target resources at reducing inequality, and that includes among volunteers. If someone wants to get a

coaching badge, that will cost money, which can be a limiting factor for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, who—if we are trying to reduce inequality—are the people we most want to encourage.

The Scottish Government has rightly put an enormous amount of effort into reducing inequality—through higher education funding, for example—and we need to do that throughout all aspects of society.

**John Taylor:** I want to comment on volunteering and the potential benefits from investing in the development of volunteers and leaders, using the examples of the girls on the move programme and the Sports Leaders UK programmes.

I estimated—it is a pretty rough estimate—the amount that went into those programmes and the returns from the young people involved who became leaders after taking part in courses, although I note that some of them had been leading before then. In general, the contribution that they make to their local communities over a period of around 12 to 18 months, through their work and the time that they spend running activities for young people in local groups, almost covers—at a rate of £10 to £15 an hour—the cost of the investment in volunteering or leadership programmes.

Developing people who will become volunteers is a really positive investment, because those people will contribute by leading in their communities. It is important to understand that there are positive benefits. For the young women who took part in the girls on the move programme, there were significant increases in their self-esteem and in their knowledge and understanding of leadership and time management. They developed a lot of skills. That is an area of positive investment that has positive outcomes in local communities. It makes opportunities available for others to take part in activities that might not otherwise have existed.

**The Convener:** Are there any other comments in response to Mark McDonald's question?

**Charlie Raeburn:** As a final point. I should have mentioned that the document to which I referred says that each club should try to have a post for someone who manages volunteers.

**The Convener:** I thank you all for your attendance and participation. Your evidence has been interesting and challenging, and it has given us a great deal of food for thought for our overall inquiry, which we appreciate.

I will say at this stage, as I usually do—although we are constrained by time today—that if you feel that we have not covered any particular area that

can be dealt with very briefly, you can take the opportunity to put it on the record now.

**John Taylor:** By speaking now?

**The Convener:** Yes—if you feel that we should have covered a certain area that you came to tell us about or which you feel is particularly important, please mention it now. You can also drop us an e-mail and correspond with the committee before we compile our report, which is still a couple of weeks away.

12:15

**John Taylor:** I will throw in something that might be quite controversial.

**The Convener:** Good.

**John Taylor:** I have spoken to a few people who have been involved in the physical education world, and it seems that physical education in Scotland is upside down. Skilled physical education teachers are found in secondary schools. Many of those teachers have trained for four years, but such teachers—or indeed any peripatetic physical education supports—are often not found in primary schools. Primary school teachers deliver physical education lessons, but they are not skilled in doing that. Some of them enjoy it, but they recognise that they do not have the skills to look at a young person and see how they are developing.

Let me throw an issue into the pot. It would probably be better if physical education teachers were based in primary schools so that they could put the appropriate physical literacy and other physical education input into the development of young people who, when they left primary school, would have confidence in their physical abilities and be aware of what was needed to do different activities. That particularly applies to girls. There might then be a greater chance that young people would have a physically active lifestyle and engage in sport, as they would know that they were capable of that. Of course, I do not know whether there is absolute proof that that would happen.

**The Convener:** Thanks for that view. The Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport will be here later. Perhaps one of our questions could be a starter for 10 on that issue, to find out her views.

**Charlie Raeburn:** I will make two points. First, I think that it was agreed last week that another 60 new schools are to be built, but what will actually be built is an issue that is still flying around. I am pleased to say that I co-operated in the development of guidelines for what is built for each school, the kind of school that there should be, and the number of gyms, games halls and

swimming pools that are needed. It is also important that we put in a base for the community. I am anxious about there being that base, because for all the indoor sports, the social side is hugely important. We should ensure that there is a space for people to have their meetings, as most indoor sports are peripatetic—they move all over the place and have no home.

I am also anxious that the guidelines—which are only guidelines—are met as far as possible when new schools are built. I am worried about budget reductions in the drive to get new places built. I noticed that a headline in *The Guardian* yesterday, I think, made that point for England. Perhaps cheap schools are being built quickly. I simply do not know.

**The Convener:** That is a legitimate and interesting question.

**Charlie Raeburn:** My final, separate point is linked to everything that I have tried to say. We need stronger legislation on local authorities' responsibility in all of this, including the world of voluntary activity.

**The Convener:** Okay.

The inquiry is live and on-going, and we can be communicated with. Please do not hesitate to contribute further to it. Thank you once again for all your time and evidence.

I suspend the meeting while we make arrangements for the next session with the Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport.

12:18

*Meeting suspended.*

12:23

*On resuming—*

**The Convener:** I welcome the final panel in our inquiry into support for community sport. Shona Robison is the Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport. Andrew Murray is a physical activity champion; Donnie Jack is deputy director for sport and physical activity; and Derek Grieve is team leader for sport and physical activity policy in the Scottish Government.

I invite the minister to make some opening remarks.

**The Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport (Shona Robison):** Thanks very much, convener.

The committee chose to undertake a very good inquiry, which I have followed closely. It is pivotal to the delivery of the Government's commitments on sport and physical activity and is, of course,

timely in light of the summer that we have just had and the resulting upsurge of interest in sport and physical activity. We need to do what we can to ensure that the momentum continues, and we are working hard to do that.

Last week's debate was constructive, and it was good to hear the views of members across the chamber on such an important topic. Helping Scots to get more active and to stay active is our overriding legacy ambition, and people's ability to access sport and physical activities in local communities is central to achieving it. We know that the challenges are stark; I am sure that Andrew Murray will say more about them later.

The evidence shows that 2,500 Scots die each year as a result of physical inactivity. That is why we appointed Dr Andrew Murray as our first ever physical activity champion to implement some important initiatives to tackle a huge health challenge. We want to ensure that people of all ages have access to sports and activities in their local areas. Local authorities will be key partners in achieving that, so we want to work with them to address the issue of how current facilities meet the sports needs and aspirations of local communities.

I am aware that the cost of accessing activities has been raised during the committee's evidence sessions, and I recognise the fact that cost can be a significant issue for some families. Although many local authorities and leisure trusts offer a wide range of discount schemes, I hope that all facility owners and operators will look at how to address the issue of affordability. Affordability of access is a key element of the community sport hub model that is taking off across Scotland.

The committee has heard from those who have given evidence that sport is as much about people as it is about places. We recognise that volunteering is the backbone of sport. Success on the sporting field is inspirational, but each medal comes out of years of dedicated hard work and we recognise the enormous contribution that has been made by the army of committed volunteers, coaches, trainers and, of course, families.

The need to enable inclusive access for all Scots has been an important theme. We recognise that sport has the power to change lives for the better, irrespective of any physical challenges that people might face. In that regard, I am pleased that the Commonwealth games that will take place in two years will see the highest level of parasport integration that has ever been achieved.

I know that the committee has been looking at cashback, through which we have involved 100,000 youngsters who have benefited from activities that have been provided by, for example, the Scottish Football Association and Scottish Rugby Union programmes.

It is very important to get young people involved, but we want to ensure that people of all ages are involved. The walking strategy that I announced in May will build on the investment in the core path network and specific interventions to support people walking. That is very important for older Scots, who make up the biggest number of those who take advantage of paths for all.

Finally, I want to use the power of the Commonwealth games in two years, and of course the Ryder cup—the recent tournament was a fantastic success and provides a backdrop for Scotland's hosting of the event in 2014—to make more Scots active. We need to see a legacy from all those events. As the committee knows, we have launched a new £10 million games legacy fund to help local communities to deliver their own legacy within their community.

On that note, I am happy to answer questions.

**The Convener:** Thank you. I suppose that the challenge for the committee is the same as it is for health. We need to follow the money to test the Government's ambition, but it is difficult for us to follow the money. SPICe has already said that there are no specific indicators or targets within the context of the budget. I am sure that you heard that question earlier.

You mentioned cashback, and we have the contributions from the lottery and local government, although that might not be for this committee to discuss. We also have contributions from the clubs, the private sector and sportscotland. How do we measure the Government's ambition against the backdrop of where the cash is being made available? More important, how do we ensure that the money goes to the right geographical areas and to those who are more difficult to reach?

**Shona Robison:** That is a pertinent question. We are getting better at that, but we have had to work at it and we will have to continue to work at it. First, we have to get the baseline from which we measure success. That is quite important. How can we know that something has worked if we do not have a baseline from which to measure it? For example, comprehensive monitoring will be done of what community sport hubs deliver. We will ask how many people who previously were not active have come through the doors and are now more active in a sport.

12:30

In the past couple of years, the funding relationship between sportscotland and the governing bodies—which are pivotal and key to delivering access to clubs—has been transformed. The governing bodies must now set targets on participation—on the number of young people and

people of all ages who will come into a sport and join clubs—for the public money that they get through agreements with sportscotland.

Sportscotland is undertaking a study to get a baseline on how open the school estate is. That will allow us to measure how open it becomes after we take the initiatives to try to open it up.

Sportscotland has a good relationship with local authorities. They agree plans, so if, for example, funding is to go via sportscotland to local government for a capital project to create a new facility, the increased participation that that project will deliver is discussed.

We are getting better at that. There is still a way to go until we are where we want to be and we can say, "This is where we were, this is where we're at now and this is where we're going on targets." However, we are putting in place measures that will allow us to have a proper view of what has been achieved.

**The Convener:** We have heard evidence about all the activity in which we collectively take great pride—we certainly got a buzz when we visited the new stadia in the east end of Glasgow. Do you accept that there is a gap between what is happening on the ground and the big projects, such as the Olympics and the Commonwealth games? There is concern that the benefits of those projects do not get down into community clubs. The activity at a lower level continues almost separately from a lot of the bigger initiatives.

**Shona Robison:** I suppose that there is a pyramid, at the top of which are elite-athlete performance facilities. The new national performance centre, which will be delivered by 2016, will sit at the top of the pyramid. Below that are the regional facilities, such as those in Toryglen, Ravenscraig and Aberdeen, which provide a mix of elite-athlete performance-level facilities and community access.

Under that are the community facilities that you talked about. That is why we have made it clear that the key legacy outcome for the Commonwealth games in 2014 is the community sport hubs, which are intended to open up facilities. We are asking how we unlock some of the very good facilities in schools, for example, and how we give encouragement to clubs that want to open their doors more and to bring in other sports, to make it easy for people to access in their communities sport or a physical activity, whatever the activity is. The community sport hub initiative comes from that background. As you know, we aim to deliver 150 hubs by 2016, and perhaps we will go beyond that.

That work is important. There is a pyramid. We must have the stuff at the top and in the middle,

but none of that counts unless we have enough access at the bottom. If we do not have that, young people will not come through the system and end up going up to elite performance, if they want to do that.

**The Convener:** I will get a response to one of the last points that the previous panel made. The Government plans 60 new schools. We have historical difficulties with facilities and access under previous builds. I presume that you have had input into the 60 new schools, to ensure that they fit the community sport hub model.

**Shona Robison:** Absolutely, and we will continue to work on the more detailed plans around new schools as well as the refurbished school estate. It is about using money in a smart way. It does not always take a lot of money to make the difference between a school being accessible and its not being accessible. For example, having a community access door that is separate from the access that the school uses can make the difference between the school being easily opened to the community after hours and its not being easily opened. It does not necessarily take a huge amount of money; it is about thinking it through. We will continue to have those discussions to ensure that, when we have new school estate coming on, it is as good as it can be with community access in mind.

**The Convener:** The comment was made in the context of other debates that were taking place in another part of the UK. There were stories going about that the building was being done on the cheap and that, as a consequence, compromises were being made in and around that. You are saying that that is not the case.

**Shona Robison:** There will always be challenges for headteachers who have a school building to manage with various activities going on within that building. Through the work of sportscotland and Education Scotland, we have helped those headteachers—I am talking more about the existing school estate than about the new school estate. We want to ensure that, with the right support, they can utilise the space that they have available in a better way. I am talking about very simple measures such as multi-use games areas in playgrounds, which allow more PE to take place in all weathers. Simple measures that do not cost a huge amount of money can make the difference between a school meeting its PE targets and its not meeting those targets.

There is a wealth of evidence of innovative approaches that have been taken, which we are sharing with headteachers and schools to make it easier for them to make the best of the accommodation that they have. I think that, with the right support and innovation, we can deliver that in every school. It might be easier to do that in

some schools than in others, but there is no reason why, with a bit of innovation, we cannot make it happen in every school.

**The Convener:** I reserve the right to come back on the role of headteachers, as that is an interesting question.

**Bob Doris:** I want to ask a bit more about community sport hubs and the active schools network. Those are beneficial new initiatives and the context is the need to maximise the benefit that they bring.

We heard evidence last week that there is not always co-ordination between the activities that are available in the active schools and what the community clubs and associations in the local area can provide. We were told that a range of activities is provided via active schools but that, once the children leave school at half past 3 or when they leave secondary school education and there is no local sports club that allows them to continue their participation in sport, there is a dramatic fall-off.

How do we ensure that there is a bit of co-ordination with the local clubs so that they can have a footprint within any active schools network? How do we ensure that that engagement exists so that the participation endures at those points of transition? A lot of the evidence shows that, when children reach that difficult age, just before they leave school, their participation starts to go off a cliff a little bit and rarely recovers. Is there any co-ordination between sports clubs and other local physical participation options and what is happening within active schools? If so, who is monitoring that?

**Shona Robison:** Like everything else, it works better in some areas than in others. We are working on that. Sportscotland is the key because it funds active schools and, through its relationship with each of the 32 local authorities, it is able to address where things are working well—which is great—and where there is not the co-ordination and communication that there should be. Sportscotland has regular discussions with each local authority and points out where there are gaps. The active schools co-ordinators are critical links between schools, clubs and communities, and ensuring that pathways between them exist.

Clubs need to be welcoming and to open their doors to new members. That happens in the main but, as ever, some are better than others. It is partly about ensuring that there is a clear pathway to local clubs for children who experience a sport for the first time at school through active schools or by some of the governing bodies coming into schools and providing particular programmes. When a person who comes to the end of their school years has a good association with the



clubs, we hope that it will continue. That is very important.

That is all work in progress and, to return to the earlier point, it depends on headteachers being welcoming to clubs coming into schools and establishing a relationship. It also depends on clubs welcoming new members. The people who can make that happen are the active schools coordinators, supported by sportscotland.

**Bob Doris:** Will sportscotland be able to provide some results from the monitoring of that strategy in one or two years so that we can see whether the situation improves over time? I appreciate that work is being done that has not been done before—we welcome that—but we want to ensure that it is being monitored so that we can see a progression through the next one, two or three years. Would that be sportscotland's role?

**Shona Robison:** Yes. Sportscotland has been collating data and it is able to say how many sessions have been delivered through the active schools network. We therefore have the baselines from which we can measure what is being done through active schools being more active and measuring to show that they are doing more, as we want them to.

We also need to measure how many children went on to join a club, what pathway they took and how successful it was. Those things are important, and we will measure them. We should be able to provide more detail on that during the next year or so.

**Nanette Milne:** Given that physical activity—although not necessarily sport—is crucially important to all ages, whether it be walking or whatever, the Ramblers Association and the University of Edinburgh have said that they would like to see community sport hubs being widened out into community sport and physical activity hubs. What is your reaction to that and how could it be done?

**Shona Robison:** Some hubs are doing that already. Paths for all and walking groups are linked to some hubs, so the opportunity for that exists. To be frank, I do not really see a distinction between sport and physical activity. I know that we call one of them one thing and the other the other, but at the end of the day we are talking about people being active. I do not really care how people get active; it does not matter whether it is through dance, walking, jogging, cycling or traditional sports.

It is a case of horses for courses and there should be a choice. There should be something for everyone. To some extent, the hubs are quite organic. Some will be centred around those clubs that make it happen and take the initiative, but it is important for sportscotland to have the discussion

about the concept of a hub in a particular place and ensure that it is widened out to include all local clubs. On opportunities for walking, paths for all is a great success, but it should be linked to the hubs.

I am very clear that there should be no distinction. We call the hubs community sport hubs but, in essence, they are community activity hubs. They are about being active.

**Nanette Milne:** That is what I meant. The word “sport” in community sport hubs might be offputting to some people, whereas the term “sport and physical activity hub” would be much more inclusive.

**Shona Robison:** Okay. We can certainly take that point away with us and consider it, but we are looking to maximise the activities that will attract people who are not active at the moment.

**The Convener:** How many community sport hubs are up and running? The hubs might be organic and the process of building one left to local communities, but when do we reach the point at which we need to give people a gee-up if we do not see progress?

12:45

**Shona Robison:** Derek Grieve will give you some figures.

**Derek Grieve (Scottish Government):** At the moment, 25 hubs are up and running, live and operational, with a further 41 in development. That means that 66 community sport hubs are in place in Scotland.

**The Convener:** When will those that are in development go live?

**Derek Grieve:** Each hub has its own development plan that will vary depending on where it is and the activity that is undertaking.

**The Convener:** If they are still in development this time next year, will you count that as a success or failure?

**Derek Grieve:** The top-line target is for 150 hubs to be in place by 2016. It is likely that the 41 in development will have moved to the live stage by this time next year.

**The Convener:** So you expect them all to be in place by 2016.

**Shona Robison:** All 150 will be live by 2016. We are certainly on target—

**The Convener:** Are there any intermediate milestones or will they all simply go live three months before that date?

**Shona Robison:** No. It will be a gradual process. Many hubs are already in the pipeline but

they are—how can I put it?—the lowest hanging fruit or the easy ones to put in place. Going back to your question, I suppose that there are areas where more work needs to be done and, as always, some will come to the table a bit more slowly. SportsScotland is responding to a rush of proactive initiatives from schools, clubs and so on that are saying, “We want to become a hub” but, at some point, we will have to look at whether there are areas in which we have not seen the same level of activity, interest or proactive approaches. In those cases, sportsScotland will gee things up and perhaps bring people together a bit more than it has had to do in other areas.

**The Convener:** Is there a point at which you as minister and the Government will have to evaluate the difficulties of that happening in certain areas?

**Shona Robison:** I am very confident that we will deliver the 150 hubs by 2016. However, we want those 150 to have a good geographical spread, to be in all 32 local authorities and to be a good mix. One of our targets is for 50 per cent of hubs to be located in schools. As a result, we must ensure not only that we put in place the top-line 150 hubs, but that there is a good spread.

Given that this is a really good model, the question then is: where do we go next? We will need to have that discussion.

**Drew Smith:** My first question is related to that very point. I understand your comment about low-hanging fruit; indeed, in this inquiry, I have expressed concern that there is a danger of simply supporting existing activity and directing investment at the people who clamour most for it and can tell us that they can do something with it. In response to the suggestion that there was always a risk that investment in community sport might increase health inequalities, the previous panel agreed that that is a risk unless we purposely try to avoid it happening. What is the Scottish Government doing purposely to avoid that? Do you feel that more needs to be done to address that concern?

**Shona Robison:** As I have said, we have set a target of locating 50 per cent of hubs in schools, many of which will be in what I suppose could be described as areas of significant deprivation. We must ensure that we not only have hubs of the willing and able, but that we focus on schools or clubs that might need some more support to come together in a hub. I agree that it will not happen automatically; indeed, through sportsScotland’s work to map all this out, we will ensure that we do not simply give the money to the first 150 that come along, wherever they happen to be, then say, “That’s fine” and tick the box.

As I said, it is about more than that. It is about the geographical spread—I want hubs in all 32

local authority areas—and, within that, it is about ensuring that there is a good spread in the areas that are hardest to reach. For me, schools are part of the answer to that. We are unlocking the school estate, and many schools are located in the communities that we want to reach.

We must maintain a watching brief. I am happy to provide updates as we look further into where we might need to be a bit more proactive and whether there are gaps. If members feel that there is a lack of activity in an area where there is potential for a hub but not much sign of anything happening, I am certainly keen to hear about it. SportsScotland can help to bring people together in an area to get interesting discussions going on development of a hub.

**Drew Smith:** I am grateful for that answer and I am glad that you used the word “map”.

I also have a concern about cashback for communities. Do you consider it to be reasonable that we should have a postcode map of where the cashback for communities money is spent? As I understand it, the guidance says that most of the money should be spent on engaging young people who might be at risk of getting into trouble, but why not spend all the money on that? Are you content that it is completely clear that the money is going back to the communities from which it came? The SPICe briefing mentions that the Government talks about £26 million being spent on cashback for communities, but £1 million of that was for sponsorship of the Scottish communities league cup. How does that sit with the purpose of the scheme?

**Shona Robison:** I will start with that last point about the communities league cup. That issue comes back to how we ensure that the money that we spend has the biggest reach. The Scottish Football League clubs are actually quite often located in some of our more deprived areas and they have a good reach. The investment in the communities league cup is directly linked to the participation of young people in programmes in the clubs. In particular, we have asked the clubs to include young people who might require diversionary activities. We have also asked the clubs to consider the potential for becoming hubs. I could mention a number of SFL clubs, but will use Stenhousemuir as an example. It has been a good model and has done really well in bringing in many kids who, frankly, would otherwise be out on the streets. That is what I have in mind. Much of the investment in the cup is linked to the development of hubs.

We also considered whether the clubs can use some of the resource—we have allocated some of it specifically for this purpose—for youth employment initiatives in the clubs. That might involve bringing in young people and giving them

employment experience that they would not otherwise get. Again, that is about reaching young people who are perhaps furthest from the labour market and who do not have experience. We are not just saying, "Here's some money for the cup. Enjoy." We are trying to link the money to development in communities. We feel that SFL clubs have a role to play because of their location and community reach. We are working on that.

On cashback for communities more generally, Inspiring Scotland is doing an in-depth evaluation of all cashback projects. It will look at many matters, including who the projects have reached, where they have reached, what they have done, what has been achieved and whether they represented value for money. We will use all that not just to look back at what has been achieved, but to set clear guidance for us for future investment. We have a new strategic group that looks across the directorates in Government to ensure that if money becomes available—of course, the problem with cashback is that it is intermittent—there is a proactive strategic agreement on where the money will go in order that it has most impact. The Inspiring Scotland evaluation will answer many of the questions that you pose.

**Drew Smith:** It would be good to see that evaluation when it is produced. Is the information on the communities cup likely to be published or is it confidential Scottish Football League information? Could it be made available to this and other committees? There is a pattern of the Scottish Government—in various guises—sponsoring that competition and, if that is likely to happen next year or at any other point in the future, we would want to know whether the clubs have met clear outcomes or whether they banked the sponsorship because sponsorship from Tennent's was not available this year.

**Shona Robison:** We can provide some of that information.

**Donnie Jack (Scottish Government):** One of the conditions of the funding is that we have seconded someone to the SFL to ensure that the outcomes that we expect are delivered. We would be happy to report back to the committee with all the details once the sponsorship has ended.

**Drew Smith:** Thank you.

**Aileen McLeod:** I have a small supplementary on the evaluation work that Inspiring Scotland is doing. When will that work be completed? Can you give us a publication date?

**Donnie Jack:** Inspiring Scotland has been commissioned to undertake the work only recently. It is in hand, but we expect that the earliest that it will be completed will be towards the end of the

year. I can certainly provide an update for the committee, if that would be helpful.

**Aileen McLeod:** Thank you.

**Mark McDonald:** One of the themes that we have touched on in the past two weeks—I joined the committee halfway through the inquiry—relates to volunteer development. I was a youth coach in a football club that had a strong infrastructure and which could send its coaches for their coaching badges. I contrast that with the situation that exists elsewhere. Many clubs do not have such an infrastructure; they struggle to get a significant number of volunteers and their volunteers cannot easily access coaching badges and first aid courses.

A separate group of volunteers are those who hold positions in clubs. In some communities, it is easy to find someone to be the treasurer who can keep an eye on the numbers and find funding for the club, but in other communities it is difficult to get people who have the knowledge base and the time to devote to that. What can the Government do in terms of identifying where support is needed for volunteers to get such qualifications? It will be the people at the clubs, whether they are young people or adults, who will benefit from having better-trained volunteers delivering coaching and so on.

**Shona Robison:** One of the benefits of the hub model is that, instead of clubs being left to do their own thing, they can come together and share expertise; in some cases, they might be able to share people. That means that a small club that is struggling with child protection policies or whatever can access the expertise that is available to be shared. We will see that benefit coming to fruition.

The Scottish Sports Association has been good at helping some of the smaller governing bodies through its club network. It has done a lot of work on some of the more challenging tasks, such as developing a child protection policy. I saw at first hand some of the work that it is doing to support training and to offer it alongside bigger governing bodies and clubs, so that smaller organisations do not have to manage all the challenging issues themselves.

Is there additional support that we should mention, Derek? Sportscotland obviously provides support.

**Derek Grieve:** Over and above the work that the minister has mentioned, there is the work by the Winning Scotland Foundation, from which I think the committee has heard evidence. It has links with employers through corporate social responsibility, which involve their providing expertise and support directly to clubs.

13:00

**Mark McDonald:** Equality of opportunity was raised at last week's meeting. Would two young people from different communities—one from an area of deprivation and one from an area that is not deprived—have the same opportunity to participate in sport and to develop as sportspeople? There is discussion about how the money filters down to clubs in harder-to-reach areas. Are you confident that initiatives such as cashback for communities are making a difference for areas that, in the past, would not have received that kind of funding or support?

**Shona Robison:** The schools of football—there are now also schools of rugby—were among the first tranche of programmes to be funded through cashback for communities and are located in schools that have challenges. They have been really successful in helping young people who were not having the best experience at school and who were finding school difficult. The young people have to enter into a contract: if they want to be involved in school football, they have to attend school and maintain and improve their academic performance. There are incentives for young people who enjoy sport more than they enjoy school through putting the two together and saying that they are interrelated. The young people can enjoy their school football experience, but they have to improve their attendance and behaviour in order to continue to be part of that. It is a good programme that has worked very well and is being expanded.

Some of the work that is being done around Young Scot provides opportunities for young people to become coaches and volunteers through school programmes. Part of that is about confidence building. Those young people might not always be first in the queue to volunteer because they might not have the confidence and all the rest of it to do that. It is about trying, through some of the initiatives that Young Scot has developed and through the schools, to reach out to young people who might not be first in the queue but who have the skills to become young leaders in their schools, and to become youth volunteers and young coaches. Derek Grieve or Donnie Jack might expand on that.

As we get closer to the Commonwealth games, there are huge opportunities for young people through the games legacy programmes and through volunteering at the Commonwealth games. Those who are furthest from the labour market might not have the opportunity to do that sort of thing, in normal circumstances. It is about trying to reach out to those young people and offer them a chance. They might not come forward, but we must recognise their potential and reach out to them.

**Derek Grieve:** The only other thing to mention is the young people's sport panel, which offers young people the opportunity to have a direct say and to help to shape the future of how sport is delivered in Scotland.

**Shona Robison:** The youth sport strategy that I announced gives us the opportunity to look at these things in a bit more detail and to consider where things have been working well, particularly in reaching out to young people and giving them that experience. I have met many young people who tell me that if it had not been for sport they might not have remained at school because sport gave them an opportunity to enjoy school as they never had before. Sport can be a powerful tool in that regard. Through the youth sport strategy, I want to look at how we can do that in a more strategic and organised way so that it happens everywhere and more young people get that opportunity. Some schools are very good at offering those opportunities to young people who lack confidence, but some require more support to do that.

**Mark McDonald:** I certainly relate to your point about the link between sport and academic performance. A child was brought by a friend to the club in which I was involved. That child was at risk of exclusion from school, but being involved in a team sport dramatically improved how he performed at school.

Another issue that has come up in relation to equality of opportunity is differing participation levels for males and females. To engage young females in sport to the same degree as young males is perhaps difficult. For whatever reason, some sports have a gender divide.

How do we encourage activities that are not necessarily sport? We have spoken about street dance, which involves a lot of people and is a physically demanding activity but which would not be called a sport under anybody's traditional definition of a sport. Could such activities, which are not necessarily sport but which improve young people's physical activity rates, be looked at in relation to sport funding or sport development?

**Shona Robison:** We have had interesting initiatives, such as the girls on the move project and the fit for girls project. They have shown that targeting girls—mainly through dance—and training girls to be dance leaders can have a transformational effect on girls and their confidence. Girls bring in their peers and, through word of mouth, we get a lot of girls who would not automatically go to a club. That has worked pretty well.

However, we felt that such initiatives were patchy—something happened here and something happened there—so we pooled and wrapped up

all the funding in the active girls funding, which we are delivering through the active schools network. That will ensure that activities happen everywhere.

I return to Nanette Milne's point about dance opportunities and about hubs providing a range of things. Through the active girls funding, we will ensure that dance opportunities are available through schools to encourage girls to take part in PE, activities during school and extra-curricular activities. We will ensure that dance is an important part of the active schools initiative and the hubs. The active girls funding will help to ensure that initiatives happen everywhere.

I do not care what the activity is; if it works, we should do more of it. Such initiatives have been a success and we want to do more of them.

**The Convener:** I call Aileen McDonald—I mean McLeod. I do not know where “McDonald” came from.

**Aileen McLeod:** My question is on a similar point to one that my colleague Mark McDonald raised, so you might have answered it already. The point was made in last week's evidence that coaches have a fundamental role to play. In the wake of the Olympic games, a lot more youngsters are coming through the doors of our local clubs—particularly athletics clubs. We were told that more than 100 youngsters turned up at—I think—Motherwell Athletics Club, but only two coaches were there to provide support.

I am aware that Volunteer Development Scotland and sportscotland have a framework for volunteering, but does more need to be done? Do we need measures that go above and beyond that framework? What support do we need to put into our communities to ensure that more coaches come through the system?

**Shona Robison:** The framework is good. If something works and it ain't broke, why fix it? However, the question is whether there is enough capacity. The answer partly concerns the change in the funding relationship between sportscotland and the governing bodies. Sportscotland now drives a much harder bargain with the governing bodies. When they get public money, that involves visible target setting, which is available for everybody to see on the web. For X amount of money, a governing body will have targets to deliver A, B and C.

Part of that is about governing bodies growing capacity so that they have more coaches. Part of it is about targets for more coaches, targets for volunteers and targets for expanding club numbers by opening up clubs to more children and young people in particular. All that is about building capacity so that clubs can welcome children and young people who would come in,

whether that is after an inspiring sporting event or whatever.

We are not quite there yet—clearly there are pinch points and sometimes clubs struggle with what is a great story of enthusiasm from kids who want to try out a new sport. I am keen that we focus on that more as we head towards the Commonwealth games, and that we look more closely at capacity building with sportscotland, so that we are confident that clubs will, come the Commonwealth games and the interest and activity around that, be in a better place, be able to welcome new members and—more important—be able to keep them. You know what it is like—if a kid turns up at a club and they do not have a good experience, they do not come back. It is important that potential new members have a positive experience. Capacity building needs to be geared up a bit towards the Commonwealth games. We will be looking at that with sportscotland.

**Bob Doris:** I heard at Aberdeen Sports Village when the committee visited it last week that the great enthusiasm for participation following the Olympic games—enthusiasm that we will see again with the Commonwealth games—meant that supply could not possibly meet demand, because the demand was so huge. On one level, that is a nice problem to have. However, on the topic of qualified coaches, although I fully support the professionalisation of coaching and certification of best practice, if it is not possible to meet demand fully, will we have to look more at volunteer coaches who are working towards qualifications? We need to make sure that coaching certification is not a barrier to assisting young people because it may not be possible to meet that demand ahead of 2014.

**Shona Robison:** There is a balance to be struck because we have to make sure that clubs are run in a proper way and that they are run by people who have the right training and support. The framework was developed in the first place to ensure that proper training underpins the people who have key positions within clubs. Without doubt the volunteer workforce is the key to that, so we need to ensure that we support volunteers to help us deliver that expansion and capacity building in local clubs. People will volunteer at different levels; not all of them will want to become coaches—some will just want to help out at the club in a more informal way. That is fine. Again, it is horses for courses.

As part of our discussion with sportscotland about how we build that capacity, we will have to look at how many more people we can bring through as coaches. What is the support mechanism around that? What other roles are there to support the expansion of clubs? Where are the gaps that will stop a club being able to take

in more young people? Those are points that we have to discuss. In two years' time—when even compared to the Olympics we are going to have a huge upsurge of interest—some of the sports that perhaps are quite small at the moment, that perhaps do not have the capacity of some of the bigger sports and clubs, could end up being the ones that are suddenly overwhelmed by interest. People could see a sport that they have never seen before and want to try it. We will have to ensure that we get some more support around that—we will pick it up with sportscotland over the next few weeks.

**The Convener:** That is an interesting area. I am sure that you have seen that the committee is looking at workforce planning and human resource management in terms of that whole tremendous resource; a significant number of our volunteers are coaches as well. I do not know how much information we have and whether we can work out the big numbers in terms of where the volunteers are. We know that there will be almost an overabundance in some areas, while other areas will be underresourced. I do not know how quickly we can get to that type of work.

It was mentioned this morning and in written evidence, I think, that Denmark has produced strategies around the human resource management of volunteers. Are you alluding to that in relation to your work with sportscotland or just the gathering of facts and figures?

13:15

**Shona Robison:** It is more about the deal that sportscotland has struck with each governing body on what it will deliver for public money and ensuring that the capacity-building part is given prominence. When the governing body tells us that it will deliver X per cent growth in clubs and club membership for the money that it gets, we should ensure that that is delivered, because that will build the capacity for new people, particularly children and young people. We should ensure that aims are deliverable and that we know what will have to be done to deliver them; for example, how many more volunteers will be required, how many more coaches will be required to train, and how that training will be delivered. We should ensure that such things are built into the contract.

**The Convener:** That is only one aspect. We have received lots of evidence about drop-outs and the number of volunteers being no greater than it has been in the past 10 years or whatever. It is not as if there is growth to meet the demand to which Bob Doris referred. It is a matter of sustainability. Are workforce planning and human resource management helping volunteers to deal with issues and encouraging them to volunteer for longer? We can spend a lot of money to get

people through the door now but not have them in a year's time.

**Shona Robison:** There is always a cycle of volunteers in sport or any other area. It has always been the case that people will come and go for employment or family reasons, but we can have an impact in situations where volunteers leave because of a bad experience in a club, they do not feel valued, or nobody says "Thanks." We can support clubs in some areas to ensure that they do what they can to keep volunteers. Again, the Scottish Sports Association has been very good at giving guidance and support on that to some of the smaller governing bodies and clubs.

We have a big opportunity with the Commonwealth games. We are looking for 15,000 volunteers. People who have not volunteered in sport before will come into volunteering to help with those games. The trick will be to harness people in the workforce beyond the games and get them plugged into their local clubs and hubs so that they want to continue to do things as a result of their experiences of, and enthusiasm for, sporting events. That will not happen automatically. With the database that we are building up for the 15,000 volunteers, huge efforts will be put into trying to link people back into their locality to continue volunteering there.

**The Convener:** Does sportscotland have any plans to build on its current work on minor interventions when people have had bad experiences or fallen out? Does it plan to have a real focus on retaining volunteers?

**Shona Robison:** Yes. Sportscotland gives that issue a lot of prominence in the framework, its discussions with governing bodies, and the advice that the governing bodies should give their clubs on good practice, on how to make volunteers feel welcome, on how to ensure that they are offered training and their interest is kept—perhaps by encouraging them to take up training opportunities—and on how to ensure that their experience is as good as it can be. All those things help to retain volunteers, but people's lives change and it can, for whatever reason, become difficult for them to volunteer. However, barriers that can be removed should be removed.

I am keen to ensure that we give retention a lot of prominence in the run-up to the Commonwealth games, which will involve the influx of a new volunteer workforce. That workforce will not necessarily stay around unless we harness it and encourage people to volunteer on a longer-term basis, so we will put a fair bit of effort into retention.

**Gil Paterson:** I have a question on the same area.

It is clear from the evidence that, while an enormous number of volunteers are involved in sports and activities in general, there is an enormous amount of wastage. From what witnesses have said, it seems that that is a generational thing.

That is more for comment—I will come on to my question, but it would be great if anyone has anything to say on that.

We need to find the golden nugget to retain people who volunteer. I am picking up from the evidence that the wastage does not really lie on the coaching side, as, although there may not be enough coaches—or rather, we would like more—they tend to stay on as time goes by. However, family members such as mums and dads who volunteer tend to move in and then back out again when their child moves on. Perhaps we could find some way to encourage them, such as through an award.

People have also raised the issue of access to hubs. You mentioned, minister, a physical door into hubs—making a doorway for people to walk through that is not the usual door. There may also be a psychological barrier to the hub—I do not know how real the issue is, given that there are already 25 active hubs—and some clubs may not gravitate towards the hub because it is in a school or a particular establishment. Are there lessons that we can learn from previous experience? Is that just a worry, or is it actually happening? If it is happening, how can we encourage more people to come in and use those facilities?

**Shona Robison:** It is partly down to how the hub is promoted. To come back to an earlier point, people need to know that they do not have to be sporty to come along to the hub, in contrast to how they might view a gym or whatever. The hub has to be promoted as something for everyone. Running a range of activities in the hub helps to break down the perception that it is only for folk who are interested in football or whatever, so we need to get that right.

The discussions that sportscotland will have with the folk who come together to develop the hubs—in which some public money is involved—will be very much about inclusiveness and the need to ensure that all clubs are involved if they want to be and are encouraged to join in.

There will be discussion about how hubs reach out to communities that are not already involved with a club. It is not just about all the clubs coming to one place with the members that they already have, but about the hubs reaching out to folk who are not active at present.

The hubs are also about offering opportunities. To return to the point about volunteering, the hubs can potentially offer volunteers a much better

experience and enable them to work together. There are more opportunities and things going on, and more roles for volunteers to get involved in, which are all well supported through the hub infrastructure. That can offer volunteers a very good experience, as opposed to a situation in which things are perhaps not as well organised. There are opportunities in that regard.

In the past, volunteers have tended to be in a certain age band, for obvious reasons. We need to open up opportunities for younger people to volunteer, whether that involves folk working with employers who are prepared to support them in their volunteering efforts or folk volunteering through universities and colleges.

A lot of work is going on through sports organisations at universities and colleges to link into the local communities and provide volunteering opportunities. That is good for people's CVs and it creates a good opportunity for the hub and the clubs locally.

We are trying to think a bit differently about who volunteers. Parents were mentioned earlier. They are a hugely important resource, but they are often not asked. Parents drop their kids off and nobody asks them whether they can give a couple of hours of their time. I have been in that situation. My daughter has been involved in a number of clubs and I do not think that I have ever been asked whether I can give a couple of hours—maybe they did not want me. [*Laughter.*]

**The Convener:** They know how busy you are, minister.

**Shona Robison:** The point is that clubs are sometimes not good at asking whether somebody can help out and give a bit of time. They need to get better at that because a lot of people are willing, but they need to be asked. They also need to be thanked for what they give. There are some very simple things that we need to get better at.

**Gil Paterson:** Does the new hub structure suggest that retention will be easier?

**Shona Robison:** It is too early to tell that. My instinct tells me that it should be, as there is more support for the volunteering effort underpinning a hub. It is not one club in isolation; there is a sharing of training resources, experience and people. People can move between clubs, so if a club is struggling with whatever, there are other clubs within the infrastructure to support it. All of that leads to a better all-round experience for people who are giving their time, as they feel more supported. Time will tell, but I am optimistic that the hub model will help to retain volunteers.

**Nanette Milne:** I have a question on the importance of building confidence and physical literacy in children, particularly in primary school

kids. At the end of the previous evidence session, it was said that we have PE upside down at the moment: the professional PE teachers are in secondary schools, whereas it was felt that it is much more important to have them in primary schools where they can focus on a child's development and what is needed for that. Perhaps the professional training is needed more in primary schools, but a lot of kids are taught PE by their class teacher. What are your thoughts on that?

**Shona Robison:** We need to support classroom teachers in primary school to be as confident in delivering PE as they are in teaching maths, reading and science. Given the challenge of ensuring that every child gets access to physical education, the classroom teacher in primary school will be absolutely critical; the question is around how well supported and trained they are. A lot of resource has gone into additional training and support for them, but I am keen for it to be built far more into their teacher training. We should be equipping primary school classroom teachers to teach PE in the same way as they teach other subjects.

Is there scope for more partnerships? I think that there is. In some schools, there is a partnership with local coaches helping the classroom teacher to teach a session on a particular sport. Those partnerships should be encouraged. Ultimately, the classroom teacher is responsible, but they should be supported and should have the right training. Often, local clubs and governing bodies coming in with coaches can help them to deliver particular aspects of PE, which is a good thing.

Part of the new deal that we have through some funding for local authorities and through Education Scotland is about delivering better training for primary school classroom teachers. A lot of the younger teachers who are coming out of teacher training are quite comfortable and confident about delivering PE. The challenge is perhaps around those teachers in the workforce who did not get that experience through teacher training and do not feel as confident in teaching PE as they do in teaching other subjects. That is where we need to focus a lot of our support.

13:30

There are some great examples of different ways of delivering PE. I do not know whether you have seen any of the better movers, better thinkers material, but its very simple concept is about ensuring that any teacher can deliver the model because it is about linking across the curriculum. The way it works is that the teacher uses counting and a lot of information gathered from other parts of the curriculum to deliver a PE session that starts from the moment that the

children go into the gym hall. Teachers get it because it is very much about the way that they teach—it just happens to be PE that they are teaching—so it demystifies PE in some ways. We have been looking to Education Scotland on how we roll out some of that training to help our primary school teachers.

There are already good links between secondary schools and their feeder primaries in supporting some of the classroom teachers to deliver PE. We want to strengthen and continue those, but we have to recognise that the classroom teacher in primary schools is still going to be centre stage in PE, so we need to ensure that they have the confidence and skills to deliver it properly.

**Nanette Milne:** The teachers would have to know, at each stage of physical development, what should be taught to kids to take them on to the next stage.

**Shona Robison:** Yes, I think that some of that has to be captured better within teacher training, but we also need to ensure that those who are already in the system have enough confidence around what should be done to impart those basic skills at an early stage, moving through to perhaps an interest in specific sports.

As children get older within the primary school, that is where clubs can really come into their own in harnessing those basic literacy skills and converting them into interest in a particular sport. If you have those basic skills, you can play any sport, but there is a need to harness and develop those basic skills that the child has already developed. We are working on that, we recognise the challenge and we are very much working with Education Scotland and sportscotland to support classroom teachers to be able to deliver that in a way that children actually enjoy—we want them to enjoy PE at school.

**Drew Smith:** Clearly, the Scottish Government's commitments to the Commonwealth Games Federation have implications for the resources that are available to you and how those should be spent. Obviously, the Commonwealth games are a huge priority. Can you say a little about the approach that the Government takes to allocating funding to sport at the national level, both in the budget that you get within the overall Government budget and in your priorities about what should be done with that? In the first week of our inquiry, we heard from sportscotland, which has had quite a significant reduction in the resources available to it. Sportscotland very loyally said that it was becoming leaner and more efficient and was still delivering on all the priorities that we all would want to see. What is your vision for how we use the money that is available to us for sport?



**Shona Robison:** The revenue side of sportscotland's budget has stayed pretty consistent, but there has been fluctuation in two aspects. One of those was a peak in sportscotland's funding in 2009-10 when it was given additional money for its move to Glasgow, so there was a bit of a spike there. That means that you cannot really compare that year with the following year, given that additional resources were put in for that specific purpose, so you would have to go back to 2007-08.

Secondly, if you look at the budget over the past year and going forward, there has been a reduction in capital spend because, as you know, capital budgets across the piece have been reduced. The Scottish Government's capital budget was reduced by a third, so that has an impact on all budgets. Where sportscotland has an advantage, I suppose, is that it gets quite considerable additional lottery moneys. Its revenue budget has remained consistent because we felt that that had to be given priority, given that it funds active schools and the governing bodies, so all the activities that draw on the revenue budget will continue and there will be no impact on them, and sportscotland will be able to make up for the reduction in its capital budget through the use of additional lottery moneys—it can use lottery moneys for revenue or capital. We have asked sportscotland to prioritise to ensure that, through the use of lottery moneys, capital spend is not impacted by the reduction in core capital moneys.

In addition to that, sportscotland has been given other capital money streams. For example, it has been given an additional £10 million through the games legacy fund, which will fund capital projects at a community level. Taken together, sportscotland will actually have more capital money to spend over the next few years; it will just not be from the core capital budget that the Scottish Government provides. There should be no impact on sportscotland's ability to fund local capital projects because it is able to draw from other sources.

**Drew Smith:** I suppose that people will see the direct impact of budgetary pressures in community sport at the local government end. We know how much of the money that supports community sport comes from local government.

To what extent are you concerned about—and monitoring—the choices that local government is making around community sport and what they might mean?

On a related issue, we considered at the start of the inquiry the responsibilities on local government to promote and support sport. Responsibilities are quite limited at the legislative level: there is a requirement to provide an appropriate level of facilities for recreation, but there are no clear

duties on other parts of the public sector to support people in sport or our aspirations to increase participation. Is the legislative framework adequate?

**Shona Robison:** It is clearly a broad duty, but it is difficult to see how we would redefine it. Local government sets its own priorities, which is what it is elected to do. Ninety per cent of sports funding goes through local government, so it is still the main provider of sport and physical activity opportunities.

We are experiencing tough times, but despite that—as I know from getting around a lot of the local authorities in Scotland—there is still a considerable amount of investment in refurbishing facilities and opening up the school estate. There is a real appetite, even in tough times, to improve and renew the sporting infrastructure. My own local authority, Dundee City Council, has spent £30 million in recent times on refurbishing the sporting estate.

There are opportunities—for example, through the new community ownership and management fund, which we will launch soon. We recognise that some local authorities may at some stage wish to divest themselves of some of their infrastructure for a variety of reasons. In such cases, the community will have a view about it one way or the other. If a community wants to take over the running of a facility—whether it is a sports hall or whatever—we want to make that easier.

It surprises me how often having a community take over the running of a facility somehow turns it around. There is a bit of magic there, which we do not fully understand. Perhaps it is because people view a council sports facility differently to one that is run by folk who they know. There are many good examples of sports facilities that have been taken over and managed and run by the community. We want to make that a bit easier, and we have some seedcorn money to help communities to do that.

There is a big challenge around access, which is part of our current financial reality, and I know that the committee has heard evidence about charging for facilities. There are some good examples that should act as trailblazers for other local authorities to follow.

The Highlands and Islands are currently operating the high life programme. The local authorities took a risk and said, "The only way that we think that we can reduce charges is by getting more people to come into the facilities so that everybody pays less." The high life card gives people access to every single facility in the Highlands and it has worked: the number of people coming through the door has massively increased and the council has therefore managed

to reduce the cost. We would like other local authorities to look at that model, because we do not want people to be put off by charges.

One of our stipulations for the hubs is that access to them is affordable. We do not want to open up the school estate and everything else only to find that people have to pay charges that are beyond their means. We have said that joining a hub must be affordable: it must be free, or cost very little. We hope that, in that way, we will make access easier for people.

**The Convener:** I thank the minister for her appearance today, and I thank her colleagues from the Scottish Government.

I give special thanks to my committee colleagues for their patience and participation in what has been a very long session. I thank you all for your co-operation.

*Meeting closed at 13:40.*

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