

Welsh Government Response to the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee's Report on the Impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on Sport.

Recommendation 1: The Welsh Government should lobby the UK Government to ensure that the Self-Employed Income Scheme is revised so that no self-employed people in the sport and physical activity sector fall through the gaps.

WG response: Accept.

We continue to engage with the UK Government so that as many self-employed people in Wales have access to the scheme. I am fully aware that many of the sectors within my portfolio will be the last sectors to recover from the crisis and more support will be required over a longer period. The Minister for Finance and Minister for Economy wrote a joint letter to the UK Chancellor in June about the importance of extending the Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employment Income Support Scheme and we continue to make the case for those sectors that have been severely impacted by the crisis.

Financial Implications: None.

Recommendation 2: The Welsh Government should work with local authorities to consider the support available for leisure trusts and be prepared to extend the necessary public support to ensure the survival of leisure trusts and community clubs.

WG response: Accept.

We have engaged with Community Leisure UK, the representative organisation, and with the leisure operators themselves throughout this crisis and that engagement will continue. We are also working closely with key partners such as Welsh Local Government Association to discuss the support that is given to support leisure trusts and community groups. Sport Wales has already committed support to help leisure trusts in Wales. It has also supported the Welsh Local Government Association in providing advice to councils on supporting leisure operators. Despite these efforts, we know the longer-term needs for these parts of the sector are greater than the funding support currently in place and we have been calling on the UK Government to provide additional support.

Financial Implications. No additional financial implications for the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 3: The Welsh Government's recovery plan and financial support for the sector should tackle the widening gap in physical inactivity within and between demographic groups.

WG response: Accept.

Sport Wales takes into consideration those areas that are most in need when providing support. Sport Wales reports that there has been a significant impact on people's activity levels, with those from lower socio-economic groups most severely affected. The Sport Wales strategy had already identified the targeting of resources to support those most affected as a priority. This current period has accelerated that need, not only within the sport sector but across policy portfolios, throughout the continued COVID-19 crisis and in the future. Sport Wales' support to partner organisations has already been focused to ensure that the investments and resources are aimed at having the biggest impact on tackling the inequalities gap.

Financial Implications: No additional financial implications for the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 4: The Welsh Government should lead conversations with representatives from the health and sport sectors to set a long-term, joined-up policy direction for physical activity and public health.

WG response: Accept.

We are already having regular dialogue with key partners such as Public Health Wales, the Welsh Sports Association and Sport Wales to ensure there is a joined up approach when developing future policies involving sport, physical activity and public health. There is already a mechanism for linking health and sport through the Wales Physical Activity Partnership and positive early progress has been made. Initiatives such as the Healthy and Active Fund, and planned activity around families' offers and older adults that were outlined within the Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales Strategy, provide a foundation for this work, although their purpose and delivery may need to be reviewed in light of COVID-19. Physical activity is one of the greatest positive interventions to support the people of Wales to manage their mental and physical health and wellbeing. Increased collaboration across sectors that create more accessible opportunities to be physically active plays an important part of our recovery plan from COVID-19.

Financial Implications: No additional financial implications for the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 5: The Welsh Government should provide details to the Committee of its engagement with the UK Government in relation to a joined up approach to the return of sport.

WG response: Accept.

The Welsh Government has regularly engaged with officials from the UK Government from the outset of the current crisis and continues to do so as the situation changes and our guidance on a return to sport evolves. My officials have a roundtable discussion with the UK Government, the Scottish Government and the

Northern Ireland Executive on a weekly basis. The UK Sports Cabinet also provides opportunity for further engagement.

Financial Implications: No additional financial implications for the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 6: The Welsh Government should issue guidance on mass gatherings for sporting events, which recognises the unsuitability of a broadbrush approach. This guidance should be developed in collaboration with sport governing bodies and facility providers as soon as possible.

WG response: Accept.

The Welsh Government is in the process of developing guidance for the safe, phased return of outdoor events, informed by the latest scientific advice on COVID-19 and our ongoing review of coronavirus regulations in Wales. We have already published guidance for the sector and that work will continue to evolve as the situation develops. Guidance for the return of indoor events will follow in due course. The Welsh Government is working in collaboration with the events industry in Wales which includes venue owners/operators, as well as Sport Wales, the Welsh Sports Association and other stakeholders from across our sport and leisure sectors.

Financial Implications: No additional financial implications for the Welsh Government.