



22 April 2016

Dear Colleagues,

An update on our strategy and from the sector:

### **Sport England Strategy**

We had a good response to my note from last week which contained a progress update and a likely launch date for the new investment guide of the week of 17 May. Some NGBs and partners have already started to book in an early conversation with their Relationship Manager once the guide is out, so that the conversation about any future partnership can begin early.

We already have some NGBs who are very clear that they want to focus on their talent development work for example, rather than 'chase the money' by promising participation increases that their strategy doesn't support and their track record suggests they won't achieve. This is a good sign - a bespoke approach to each NGB is our aim, and a dialogue about what's realistic and practical for you is the hope. Please get in touch if you haven't already.

### **Talent Development**

The investment guide will cover our talent development objectives and investment principles in full, which we've been working hard on since the consultations. As a preview, we will be focusing on the two principles of 'Progression'; more and better athletes at every level including helping to produce future champions; and 'Inclusion'; equal access to the talent system for all with the required ability. Based on the consultation discussions, I sense that the second of these will present more of a challenge to the status quo, but please note the first isn't a given, as we will be interested in the quality of the athlete experience as well as the production line of champions. The desire for a return on investment from the talent system will be no different from other parts of the sport market so please prepare your talent and performance teams for that challenge!

### **Changes to the Advanced Apprenticeship of Sporting Excellence (AASE)**

We've recently met with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to raise our (and your) deep concerns about the recent rule changes for AASE funding. These concerns have also been passed on to David Evennett at

DCMS (acting Minister in place for Tracey Crouch) who is raising the issue with Nick Boles MP (Minister for Skills and Equality at BIS). The SFA is now reviewing the recent rule change, and will be making a recommendation to Nick Boles shortly. I will update you on the situation as it develops, but the case for sport has been strongly made.

### **High Performing NGB**

Over the past six months, ten NGBs have been guided by independent consultants through the High Performing NGB process. Each NGB has developed a bespoke plan to face the future - both seizing opportunities and tackling tough challenges. Whilst these plans are owned and driven by the NGB itself, where they have been shared we have been able to sensibly align our support for them, which has been well received by both.

We do already have expressions of interest from many to use the programme this year, but if it is something you have not considered or wish to know more then please take a look at the attached document and discuss with your NGB Relationship Manager.

### **Coaching and Workforce Changes**

Following the departure of Justyn Price, we are pleased to announce the arrival on 9th May of our new Head of Coaching. Stuart Armstrong will be joining us on an 18 month secondment from his role as Player Development Manager at the RFU. Stuart's past roles include time spent at sportscoachUK, in the sport of Golf (in and out the NGB) and currently at the RFU, to whom we are extremely grateful.

As some will know, Leanna Jones resigned as our Head of Professional Workforce and has now left the organisation. We had planned some framework development workshops looking at the core components in common job roles across NGBs, but without a Head of Professional Workforce to manage it, I've decided to postpone these. We will contact the named invitees separately and directly about this. The professional workforce strategy remains a significant piece of work this year, especially gathering the insight to support our thinking, but we will come back to it once we have a suitable way of managing it.

In another change in the workforce team, Rachel Waterman our current Head of Volunteering, will be leaving at the end of May to take up an exciting role with the Scouts. Rachel has been a valuable source of information and insight about volunteering, and she leaves us in good shape to plan the delivery of the new approach to volunteering promised by 'Sporting Future'.

These three (simultaneous but unrelated) changes give us the opportunity to rethink the resource requirements to support the prominent role for workforce – paid or unpaid – in the new Sport England strategy, which we will do over the next few months. In the short term if you have any questions on coaching, volunteering or professional workforce this then please contact our Strategic Lead in this area, Stephanie Maurel, directly.

Best wishes

Phil

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