



From: The Minister

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Our ref: AQW 26545/17-22
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Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont

Dear Kellie,

AQW 26545/17- 22 – INFORMATION TO BE PLACED IN THE ASSEMBLY LIBRARY

The documents requested in AQW 26545/17-22- have been placed in the Assembly Library and are listed below for information:-

- Annex A - Sports Sustainability Fund – Revised Business Case;
- Annex B – Governing Body Guidance Notes;
- Annex C – Governing Body Blank Application Form;
- Annex D – Affiliated Clubs Entities Guidance Notes; and
- Annex E – Club Blank Application Form.

Yours sincerely

**Deirdre Hargey MLA
Minister for Communities**



Department for
Communities

GENERAL DETAILS

Project Title	COVID-19 Sports Sustainability Fund 2020 – V2
HPRM Reference No.	CO1/20/731347
Project Promoter	Department for Communities on behalf of the NI Executive
Branch/ALB	Sports Branch
Completed By	Cormac Galbraith/Tony Murphy
Authorised By; Grade 3	Moira Doherty
Date Appraisal Approved	21 January 2021 (Revised BC v2)

FUNDING DETAILS

A	DFC Contribution	Up to a maximum of £25m
B	Other Government Bodies¹ Contribution	£0
C	Other Contributions (if any)	£0
	Total Cost of Project (A+B+C)	Up to a maximum of £25m

¹ Refers to the government departments under the control of the Northern Ireland Executive and their NDPBs/ALBs

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Date	HPRM Ref	Reason for Update
V2	2 February 2021	Original Business case CO1/20/621419	To take account of the additional £10M secured on 16 Nov 2021. Revised BC approved 21 Jan 21

Note that this business case should be read in conjunction with the Supplementary note at TRIM ref: CO1/21/27274

CONTENTS

Page No.

Document Control	1
Contents	2
Abbreviations	3
Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction	8
2. Background	8
3. Strategic Content	8
4. Need for Expenditure	15
5. Displacement, Additionality and Viability	23
6. Outcomes/Objectives	31
7. Identification of Options	35
8. Monetary Costs and Benefits	43
9. Risk and Uncertainty	47
10. Non-Monetary Benefits	52
11. Summary and Selection of Preferred Option	55
12. Finance and Viability	57
13. Management, Monitoring and Post-Evaluation	58

APPENDICES

Annex A – Guiding principles and parameters of the scheme	63
Annex B – Communications Plan	67
Annex C – Needs – additional supporting evidence	71
Annex D – Equality Screening	84
Annex E – Rural Proofing	106

ABBREVIATIONS

ALB **Arm’s Length Body**

ACD	Active Communities Division
DfC	Department for Communities
DfE	Department for the Economy
DoF	Department of Finance
NI	Northern Ireland
NICS	Northern Ireland Civil Service
NIGEAE	Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
PDD	Project Definition Document
PPE	Post Project Evaluation
PSU	Professional Services Unit
SNI	Sport Northern Ireland
SRO	Senior Responsible Officer
SSF	Sports Sustainability Fund
VfM	Value for Money
WHO	World Health Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has disrupted daily routines and impacted communities across the world in unprecedented ways.

In early April 2020, reports began to emerge about the pandemic's impact on sports sector income. On the 29 October 2020, during a second period of enhanced restrictions, the NI Executive agreed to provide a fund to support the sports sector, as it faced into extraordinary financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic.

The purpose of this business case is to assess the options available for administering a COVID-19 Sports Sustainability Fund (SSF). This business case has been drafted with assistance from a wide range of colleagues from across a number of branches in DfC, to whom I am very grateful. The business case has been developed at pace with a recognition that the approach to risk needs to take account of the emergency circumstances and urgency of the current situation. In this context, the overarching risk is a potential significant loss of finance to sporting organisations and the ensuing potential significant financial stress which will have a detrimental impact on the benefits they deliver to individuals and communities.

Need for Expenditure

This business case sets out detailed information on the need for expenditure, using information provided by the sports Governing Bodies and sporting entities, sectoral surveys and further detailed analysis by economics and statistical colleagues.

This analysis takes account of the limitations of the data available, concluding that the sector could potentially lose up to £25m from the 12 month period from April 2020 to March 2021. However, it is not expected that income will be entirely lost and many sports have reduced activities and services accordingly. It is therefore concluded that the level of funding required to sustain the sector is in the region of £25m.

Equality, Good Relations and Rural Proofing

An Equality Screening exercise has been carried out which concludes that there is no expectation of an adverse differential impact based on the analysis of the available evidence and the nature of the proposed funding application and assessment process and therefore a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

In considering equality and good relations it was necessary to develop the project at pace and therefore full public consultation has not been possible.

A Rural Needs Assessment was carried out and this has not shown any differential between rural and urban interventions as part of the proposed Sports Sustainability Fund.

Displacement, Additionality and Viability

In considering displacement, this business case considers the availability of other funding to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on sports sector. This approach to considering displacement has been endorsed by the Department's economists.

In considering additionality the business case establishes that sports organisations reserves need to be carefully considered as part of any funding assessment to ensure an equitable approach.

In considering viability, the business case establishes the need to carefully consider whether a sports organisation has the potential to survive in the short term if it does not receive support from the fund.

Project Objectives

The objectives of the project were developed in line with the initial policy framework and in response to the need defined in this business case. They are as follows:

1. To minimise the financial stress on the sports sector due to lost income as a result of COVID-19 lockdown and ongoing restrictions so as to sustain the sector.
2. Enable Governing Bodies and clubs to plan and prepare to increase opportunities for participation in sport, recreation and community use following the end of COVID-19 restrictions.

Scheme Design and Outcomes

The key features of the scheme and its outcomes are as follows:

- Ensure that, as far as possible, the range of clubs and organisations within the sports sector that currently exists here, survives through the current COVID-19 crisis and is there to support participation in sport and physical activity post the pandemic;
- Provide financial relief to sports Governing Bodies and clubs to ensure they remain viable once the current health crisis passes;
- Provide timely financial intervention to prevent the potential closure of sports clubs and organisations that are at risk due to COVID-19 restrictions;

- Ensure that financial interventions complement rather than duplicate other national and regional support packages;
- Ensure that funding is distributed quickly through a transparent and evidence based process that complies with NICS financial management guidance;
- Put cost control measures in place to ensure the scheme's affordability is within its current allocation of £25 million;
- Agree an equitable process for fund allocation where demand for financial support exceeds the available funding; and
- Deliver a Sustainability Fund scheme that targets financial need, defined as net losses as a direct result of COVID-19 and face significant challenges to cover unavoidable costs with sports organisations experiencing significant reductions with income, facing ongoing fixed/operational costs and therefore experiencing cash flow difficulties leading to the imminent threat of closure.

Options Analysis

This business case uses these defined objectives to undertake a comparative analysis of a long list of options available to achieve the desired outcomes, narrowing this to a detailed comparison of two options (and a do nothing/ status quo comparator).

The options revisit the thinking undertaken as part of the initial policy development phase, to test those assumptions, including finding that a flat rate payment scheme is unsuitable, that funding should be targeted at Governing Bodies and sports organisations facing the most severe financial difficulty, and that administration of the scheme through SportNI presents the best delivery option.

The business case considers monetary costs, non-monetary costs and risks before concluding that the most suitable and preferred option is for a targeted scheme delivered by SportNI. Given the overall funding available, the fund should be a fund of last resort for Governing Bodies and sports organisations who have demonstrated that they have taken all reasonable steps to ensure their continued viability including the utilisation of other funding sources and reducing activities to essential services over the immediate term.

It is proposed the scheme is called the Sports Sustainability Fund (SSF) and that it employs a proportionate assessment of need, to determine which organisations have lost income due to the impact of COVID-19 and will face significant challenges in meeting unavoidable costs taking into account net losses until 31/03/2021. A further assessment of impact and activity will be undertaken if necessary to provide a cost control within the available budget.

To ensure a balanced sports sector remains following the crisis, the assessment will consider representation of the wide range and diverse sporting interest, needs and geographical spread of the sector.

After assessment, SportNI will provide an individually personalised award to successful applicants which matches the financial need of each Governing Body and sports organisation.

Detailed criteria and processes agreed with SportNI, incorporate a rolling assessment process to ensure speedy delivery of funding for the sector, cost controls and management and monitoring procedures to provide assurance and robust reporting and performance data. Outline detail of the scheme and guiding principles are included at **Annex A**.

It should be noted that to date the Minister has approved the rollout of various emergency financial relief packages such as the Charities Fund and the Arts, Culture and Heritage scheme. Many facets of the SSF are similar to those schemes that have been delivered at pace. Many of the challenges and guiding principles are mirrored in SSF and are outlined and addressed in this business case.

Management and Monitoring

A budget allocation letter providing approval to spend has been drafted by the Department and will issue to SportNI and the fund will be launched in December 2020. Once the fund has opened for applications, the project team will continue to liaise closely with SportNI to consider emerging information and consider trends and alignment with initial policy assumptions.

Monitoring will continue after the fund closes for applications and all payments have been made, to inform future policy development and contribute to a post project evaluation later in 2021/22.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2019 the World Health Organisation (WHO) published their first Disease Outbreak News on the new virus. However, it was not until 11 March 2020 that the WHO made the assessment that COVID-19 was to be characterized as a pandemic. All sporting organisations at every level, from grassroots to professional operations have faced and will continue to face serious financial challenges as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Funding streams have ceased due to competitions and major events being postponed or cancelled; and there will be a further loss of income from the cancellation of games, coach education, youth camps and other fund raising activities.
- 1.2 Government intervention has been required on an extraordinary scale to prevent economic collapse. In addition, the impact on professional sports clubs and the sports Governing Bodies who depend heavily on fixtures, sponsorship, TV money and other cash-flow to meet costs, including wages, is causing immediate concern. In particular, the sustainability of smaller Governing Bodies and of sport at grassroots levels, is a serious concern with regard to their ability to sustain their clubs during the lockdown periods, so that they are ready to assist with the recovery period post COVID-19.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The COVID-19 pandemic represents one of the biggest challenges which the Northern Ireland (NI) Executive has ever had to respond to. Its full impact on all aspects of society has yet to be quantified but it is already clear that the sports sector has been hit hard. Central and Local Government alone cannot provide all the support required and the Sports Governing Bodies and Sporting Entities have played a leading role in keeping citizens engaged, active and competitive in various sporting disciplines throughout the health pandemic. These organisations have been greatly impacted and many need financial support to ensure survival or as a minimum to ensure their viability.

3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 3.1 In early April 2020, reports began to emerge of significant financial pressures faced by the sports sector, parts of which heavily rely on gate receipts, sponsorship and hospitality etc. to cover their running costs. Correspondence from the sector to the Minister for Communities highlighted the scale of the emerging challenge, including from those that would normally not rely on funding support from central or local government.
- 3.2 Despite the range of restrictions announced by the NI Executive, exercise and physical activity are recognised as necessary and important elements in society's resilience during the lockdown phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sports people have been acknowledged as important ambassadors in helping

public health messaging reach target audiences including younger people. Sport and physical activity will be equally important contributors when we eventually emerge from the lockdown phases and move into a recovery phase, promoting caring, connected and cohesiveness communities. Maintaining resilience and state-of-readiness within the sports sector will be critical to ensuring NI is ready to engage with and support wider community recovery. It must be recognised that social distancing and the various restrictions linked to lockdowns have significantly impacted the ability for the sports sector to deliver on initial 2020/21 plans, many of which have now been abandoned or revised beyond recognition.

- 3.3 The DfC Minister submitted a bid to the Executive setting out proposals for financial assistance of circa £25m to fund a sustainability scheme managed by the Department for Communities (DfC) through SportNI to assist the sector. This bid was focused on relief for those Governing Bodies, clubs and sporting entities that have lost considerable sums due to cancellation of competitions, lost gate receipts etc.
- 3.4 On the 29 October 2020, the NI Executive agreed a £15m fund as part of the October Monitoring Round, to be used to support the sports sector. On 16 November 2020 an additional £10m was secured bringing the total funds available for the scheme to £25m.
- 3.5 Cash flow is always a challenge for organisations, and many may not have the reserves to pay staff, to pay bills and essentially to 'keep the lights on' during this major periods of disruption without financial support. Without intervention from government, many of the key sports governing bodies, clubs and sporting entities that society relies on to deliver sport provision to this sector, may not be able to survive.
- 3.6 With the need to respond to the impacts on sport at pace, there are concerns that good governance may be compromised. The Finance Minister in relation to other schemes has made explicit reference to avoiding double funding. It will be important in particular for those Governing Bodies that represent their sports discipline on either an All-Ireland or UK wide basis that they do not receive grants from UK wide schemes or in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) while also benefiting from financial support from the NI Executive.
- 3.7 This proposed scheme includes a proportionate approach to governance and accountability and processes will be embedded to ensure that the need to ensure proper use of public money is upheld. There is a need however, to get money to clubs and organisations who are at risk of potential closure. Risks will be considered as part of the business case.
- 3.8 This business case considers the issue of supporting those elements of the sports sector impacted by COVID-19 and the options available to achieve

proposed objectives using Executive funding. The business case is for £25m which reflects the total estimated need for the sector as determined following engagement with Governing Bodies by the Department and SportNI.

3.9 **Strategic Aims**

The NI Executive has agreed to introduce a package of measures to mitigate against the worst effects of COVID-19 and to protect key sectors in our society. A Coronavirus Recovery Plan has been published which sets out the approach to decision making and is accessible through the following link <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/news/executive-publishes-coronavirus-recovery-strategy>.

3.10 The Pathways to Recovery included specifically a 5 step plan that includes specific reference to the Sport, Culture and Leisure sector. This underpins the Executive's support for the sports sector, including sports Governing Bodies and sporting entities and the services they provide to their beneficiaries.

3.11 The draft Programme for Government 2016-21 lays out a framework of outcomes which the Executive would work towards. It includes a number of outcomes which are relevant to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on the sports sector and the potential for sport to provide support. The proposed funding programme will link to the draft Programme for Government desired outcomes and indicators as follows:

- ***We enjoy long, healthy, active lives*** – Increased access to and participation in sport and physical activity will be vital during the pandemic and in the recovery period after the pandemic, in order that health and well-being is maintained and improved, both reducing social isolation and providing a means for people to engage with others;
- ***We have a more equal society*** – Support to sports clubs during the COVID-19 pandemic will help ensure that all members of our communities benefit from the ongoing ability of sports clubs to connect with them, including under-represented groups such as those living with disability and those who are economically disadvantaged;
- ***We are an innovative, creative society where people can fulfil their potential*** – Already sports organisations and sports role models are connecting with communities through social media to help with physical and mental wellbeing. Support to local clubs will build on this work and strengthen community engagement during this difficult time;
- ***We care for others and we help those in need*** – sports clubs members have indicated a strong willingness to volunteer in their local communities. Support provided to their clubs during the pandemic will enable ongoing community engagement during the recovery period when facilities can reopen for the public use;

- ***We have a shared society that respects diversity*** – this funding will enable sports clubs to continue to embrace all members of the community;
- ***We are a confident, welcoming, outward-looking society*** – Sports facilities provide vital space for communities to grow and develop individuals and groups;
- ***We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure*** – Ensuring sports clubs are at the heart of their community is an essential component of achieving success. Sport will play a vital role in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- ***We connect people and opportunities through our infrastructure*** – Ensuring sports clubs are at the heart of their community is an essential component of achieving success. Sport will play a vital role in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- ***We give our children and young people the best start in life*** – This funding will help sports organisations maintain their clubs and facilities so they are ready to engage and personally connect with young people and children as soon as it is safe to do so.

3.12 DfC Common Purpose

The Programme Objectives fit clearly within DfC's common purpose, which is '**Supporting People, Building Communities Shaping Places**' and in the context of DfC's role in responding to the emergency. The Minister for Communities has lead policy responsibility for sport on behalf of the Executive.

The SSF links with the strategic objective contained in the draft Business Plan 2019/20.

R1. A more confident people living their lives to the full

3.13 Corporate Plan / Strategic

A new strategy for sport for Northern Ireland from 2020 is currently being developed. However, in the absence of a new Strategy, the previous Sport Matters Strategy remains relevant:

Sport Matters: The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009-19

This strategic document sets out Government's commitment to the development of sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland up to 2019/20, a strategy, it is anticipated, that will provide a lasting and sustainable legacy for future generations.

The Strategy's vision is '*A Culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport*'.

Specifically this Strategy sets out 26 high level targets and key strategic priorities for sport and physical recreation over the 10 year period. These targets are structured to reflect the continued needs of sport and physical recreation as expressed through consultations, and these relate to:

- Participation (11);
- Performance (9); and
- Places (6).

The SSF will help to ensure that the infrastructure and capacity to continue to deliver against the key targets is in place post COVID-19. It will help to ensure that sports clubs and organisations have funds that allow them to meet existing commitments so that they can be ready to recover and continue to support their communities as soon as it is safe to do so.

3.14 **Sport Northern Ireland: Corporate Plan 2015-20**

The current Sport NI Corporate Plan; Sport NI's vision for 2015-20 is:

'Northern Ireland: renowned as a place where people enjoy, engage, and excel in sport.'

This vision is supported by the following mission statement and strategic objectives:

'To lead world class sports development at all levels producing more participants and more winners'

- Sporting Communities: To increase and support the number of people adopting and sustaining a sporting lifestyle;
- Sporting Clubs: To enable more people to develop and reach their sporting goals through a structured environment; and
- Sporting Winners: To help more Northern Ireland athletes win at the highest level.

3.14 The SSF is intended to complement other SportNI / NI Executive interventions to support the sports sector. These include:

- A.** Sports Hardship Fund (small grants) – primarily aimed at sports clubs/community sport
- Over 1,000 applications have been received from grassroots clubs and sporting organisations to the Sports Hardship Fund through three funding calls. Following assessment of eligibility, SNI signposted almost 100 applicants to the larger Department for the Economy Microbusiness Support Scheme, enabling those applicants to access £25,000 grants. SNI has now distributed small grants (£2000) to almost 600 sports clubs

and community sport organisations, totalling almost £1.2m and representing 39 different sports as part of the first two calls;

- B.** Covid Safe Sport packs – primarily benefitting sports clubs/community sport
 - Providing practical support to sports clubs and community sports organisations in response to a need identified by them in the Build Back Better stakeholder survey (May 2020). SNI has undertaken a major procurement exercise (approx. £1m) to distribute equipment packs to sports clubs to assist them in managing a safe re-opening of and return to sports facilities and sports’ participation. More than 1300 sports club & organisations have applied, representing 52 different sports;
- C.** Sporting Clubs/Sporting Winners – primary beneficiaries NGBs (with trickle down impact on clubs/communities)
 - New funding awards totalling £4.3m (National Lottery) to 34 NGBs in 2021-22 confirmed by SNI Board (October 2020); and
- D.** Build Back Better – in development (multiple strands targeting various elements within the sporting sector)
 - Indicative funding allocation of £5m National Lottery funding (includes £1.8m Sporting Clubs above) approved by SNI Board in June 2020.

3.16 **Legislative Powers**

The Youth and Recreation Order 1986 authorises DfC to make grants to the sports sector. See paragraph 11 of the attached order.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1986/2232>

In addition the order sets out the Sports Council (branded as SportNI) for Northern Ireland functions the details of which are outlined in Article 3.

3.17 **Grant Administration Procedures**

DfC is providing authority for SportNI, as an Arms- Length Body of the Department, to develop and administer a grant scheme. The procedures of the scheme will be in line with SportNI grant guidance.

This COVID-19 relief funding is unlike any other type of ‘normal’ government intervention. Its purpose is to deal with the economic consequences of the health pandemic by providing the intervention needed to prevent the sports sector being unduly impacted by the current disruption. The process will be designed to be proportionate, transparent and administratively efficient as possible for all applications made by Governing Bodies, clubs and sports organisations who meet the eligibility criteria.

3.18 **Equality & Good Relations**

DfC is committed to the fulfilment of Section 75 obligations. In the normal course of policy making the public is asked to consider equality as part of the consultation process. The emergency health crisis has meant that processes designed to ensure sound policy making have had to be set aside to facilitate the delivery of timely financial support. Delays could result in sports clubs and organisations not being able to meet unavoidable costs and going into administration.

Given that the time pressures precluded public engagement, screening exercises have taken place in consultation with DfC Equality Unit. The Equality Screening is shown at **Annex D**.

3.19 **Rural Proofing**

While there is no information detailing the total number of sports clubs located in either rural or urban areas, SportNI have collected evidence as part of the Sports Hardship Fund. Data shows that from the 803 sports clubs that were allocated funding to date (as of 6 Nov 20) - 51% were from rural areas with 47% in urban areas and 2% unspecified. It should be noted that the address of the sports club may not necessarily be representative of where that organisation delivers a service as a sports Governing Body will have a headquarters address which could be misleading.

This fund has been designed so that everyone who meets the eligibility criteria can apply and the overall objective of the financial intervention is to ensure a balanced sports sector remains after the crisis ends. This balance not only includes service provision but also the spread of sports across the province, both rural and urban. A Rural Needs Assessment, shown at **Annex E**, was carried out and this has not revealed any differential between rural and urban.

4 NEED FOR EXPENDITURE

4.1 DfC officials along with colleagues in SportNI have engaged directly with the sector to gather estimates and evidence on the extent of the financial hardship being experienced. A wide range of sports Governing Bodies and sporting entities submitted financial loss information to DfC, which helped inform the £25m bid included in a paper to the DfC Minister seeking support for the sector. Further detail of this information is included at **Annex C** as part of the supporting evidence. In addition, the DfC Minister met with senior representatives from a broad range of Governing Bodies and sporting organisations on 19 October and heard at first hand the concerns that they all had for their individual sports. Those concerns focussed on:

- the impact of the initial lockdown;
- the period of easing out of lockdown and regarding activities once again ceasing over the October/November 2020 period due to the transmission rates;
- the serious impact the pandemic has had on participation levels;
- the long term viability of some clubs and sporting organisations; and
- the limited financial support to help the sector in the short to medium term.

4.2 It is clear that the COVID-19 restrictions have had, and continue to have, a serious impact on the sport and leisure sector with major sporting events and competitions being cancelled or taking place with very limited spectator numbers. The level of participation has fallen in many sports which have not recommenced full activities since last March, membership numbers have reduced and income has been severely curtailed. This situation has now been further compounded by the latest, necessary, COVID-19 restrictions which have hit sport and a number of other sectors particularly hard.

4.3 Most Governing Bodies and clubs depend on income generated from coach education, summer schemes, tournaments, membership dues, participant revenue and from ticket sales/gate receipts. These income streams were either considerably reduced or completely lost for a wide range of sports.

4.4 Other income streams including hospitality, merchandising, TV revenue and sponsorship are being impacted due to cancelled events such as the North West 200 and the Elite Ice Hockey League. Limitations on spectator numbers or fixtures taking place with no spectators, cost clubs much needed revenue normally generated through hospitality, merchandising/retail and ticket sales.

4.5 The COVID-19 restrictions have hit all sports at every level from grassroots to professional clubs and high performing athletes. Research by Ernst & Young for the Department for Communities indicated that watching and participating in sport featured in the top 9 things people missed doing during the initial lockdown period. This has had a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of our communities

and on the mental health of so many in society. The Governing Bodies and their clubs have played a key role during the pandemic, providing much needed support at community level to the most vulnerable, by recommencing their activities, training and games to give people an outlet when it was safe to do so.

- 4.6 The evidence shows that playing, watching and supporting sport contributes positively to health, wellbeing and quality of life – particularly important in these challenging times (see *additional supporting evidence from the Continuous Household Survey at Annex C*). Significant events can lift everyone including for example, the Euro 2021 play-off game, the GAA Ulster Championship and Ulster Rugby in the Pro14. These events will give those interested a great lift, but they will cost each of the respective Governing Bodies significant funding in terms of lost revenue. That will be the case regardless of them being played Behind Closed Doors or if a limited number of spectators are permitted.

Financial Impacts

- 4.7 All of the Governing Bodies are facing some level of financial pressure given what they have had to deal with to date and because of the challenges that they must continue to overcome. Clubs and sporting organisations now find themselves facing serious questions about survival following the initial lockdown, the prolonged period of easing out of lockdown, the continued impact of restrictions and the potential for circuit breaks or tightening of the current restrictions. Governing Bodies and clubs are indicating that they are already in a precarious position and may not survive.
- 4.8 The sector has benefited from a number of the COVID-19 relief schemes, in particular the larger clubs with business entities for example social clubs, were able to access the £25k Business Grants and protected staff by accessing the Furlough Scheme which has now been extended to March 2021. While those were welcome, they have run their course for many clubs and organisations, with staff and professional players moving off the scheme as clubs returned to training and play. This period has proven to be extremely difficult for larger organisations as revenue streams are almost non-existent.
- 4.9 At grassroots level the relief has been primarily through the Sports Hardship Fund which has delivered small grants to a large number of sports clubs. The Department and SportNI have been able to reallocate funding and with the £2m allocated in the June Monitoring Round small clubs have been able to sustain their facilities, pay essential bills and provide PPE for participants and volunteers. Latest data on the Sports Hardship Fund can be found in Annex C as further supporting evidence of need.
- 4.10 This support to grassroots sport has been critical to enable them to recommence activities and help communities come out of lockdown. While that investment totals £3m, it will not guarantee that small clubs can sustain themselves during the period

October 2020 to March 2021 as they have had limited opportunities to raise any significant revenue.

- 4.11 Recent data collected at a UK level by Sported, suggests that more than three out of four sports organisations are not confident that they will exist in six months' time – this has risen from one in four before COVID-19. The reported levels of anxiety are twice as high as those reported by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in 2018. Organisations' biggest concerns are the immediate wellbeing of participants and immediate financial commitments. The Hardship Fund has and will continue to assist small sports clubs and organisations to meet some of the core costs (excluding salaries) associated with the maintenance of facilities, hire costs and continued operation of their sporting activities.
- 4.12 With regard to specific deficiencies, sports clubs and organisations have not been able to open up their facilities for use by the community during the periods of lockdown and restrictions. This has and will impact clubs in terms of generating their usual income from, for example, membership, events, sponsors and activity programmes. This has the potential to negatively impact on what sports can do to maintain their club and sustain their existing facilities and grounds during this period of inactivity. There are risks, for example, that club buildings will not be heated, that playing surfaces including courts, pitches, courses and facilities are not maintained, which will ultimately affect the ability of a sports club to quickly get back up and running when their local communities will need it most. Failure to adequately maintain these facilities could lead to future public health issues e.g. onset of Legionella bacteria within unused water systems; degradation of heating systems; pitches 'going to seed' as a result of lack of maintenance during the active turf growing season.
- 4.13 With 78 sports Governing Bodies representing around 3,000 sports clubs across NI, the sports sector will have a major role to play during the national recovery period to get our communities to socialise again and in terms of both physical and mental health and wellbeing. It is therefore important that sports organisations are in a position to offer communities and individuals sport and physical activities as soon as it is safe to do so.

Comparison with other Jurisdictions

- 4.14 The pandemic has had a similar impact on the sports sector in other jurisdictions, where substantial support packages have been put in place.
- 4.15 On 31 March, Sport England announced a COVID-19 Support package consisting of up to £195 million of funding available to help the sport and physical activity sector through the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. The package, which was a combination of National Lottery and government funding was distributed as follows:

- A £20 million Community Emergency Fund for clubs and community organisations to bid into with grants of between £300 and £10,000 available;
- A £5 million pot for those facing immediate financial difficulty;
- An additional £55 million to support the sector during an ongoing period of restrictions; and
- A £115 million rollover of current funding into 2021/22 to give long term certainty to over 100 well established partners who play a vital role in the delivery of sport and physical activity in England.

4.16 In addition, DCMS are currently working on an additional package of support for the sports sector to address sports who are facing financial stress as they play their games behind closed doors (this does not include the English Premiership/Championships as it starts at National League level). This work is ongoing and a final figure is not available at present. Scotland are continuing to work up a relief package for sport and are awaiting details from DCMS on its latest tranche of funding.

4.17 On 17 September, Sport Wales announced a £14 million funding package for the sport and leisure sector. The '*Sport and Leisure Recovery Fund*' will:

- Support the sector with the ongoing challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and provide longer-term sustainability;
- Provide essential support to sports clubs and organisations, and sporting events who have all faced significant challenges and continue to be severely impacted; and
- Help drive innovation for local authority leisure centres and Leisure Trusts to complement the Hardship Fund from local government.

4.18 On 19 June, the Department for Tourism, Transport and Sport in Dublin announced a support package for the sports sector of €70M consisting of four separate allocations:

- Funding of up to €40 million for the three main field sports organisations – the FAI, the GAA and the IRFU;
- A Resilience Fund of up to €10 million to support the National Governing Bodies of Sport;
- A Sports Club Resilience Fund of up to €15 million to support clubs; and
- A Sports Restart and Renewal Fund of up to €5 million.

Demand

4.19 Sported, a UK based charity organisation which hosts a network of over 2,500 community organisations across the UK, has created 'The Pulse' a survey for community sports groups across the UK to share their views. This will be reported on every week.

- 4.20 Sported has indicated that many sports organisations are constantly at risk of closure due to the fact that they are under-funded, under-resourced and under-supported. More than 40% operate on less than £10k pa, over half are led by volunteers, 30% operate in the most disadvantaged areas in the country: consequently the vast majority do not have the necessary organisational structures and skills in place to generate support from relevant funders.
- 4.21 There is also a growing realisation within the sector and society more generally that the impacts and repercussions of COVID-19 will resonate long after initial restrictions are eased, requiring many sports and clubs to re-imagine and reconfigure how they will deliver sport post-lockdown.
- 4.22 It is important that sports organisations are supported during this difficult time given the vital role they will play in getting NI moving again and raising the mood and well-being of the population. We must ensure that the community based sports organisations and clubs can be there to support their communities and members when the immediate crisis and the lockdown are over and in the longer term.
- 4.23 This proposal is purely to provide support to the sports sector during the COVID-19 restrictions which are impacting significantly on its ability to carry out its normal functions and generate income. Without government funding during this difficult time, it is estimated that 3 out of 4 sports clubs across the UK will not be in existence in 6 months' time. Failure to provide support to sports Governing Bodies and organisations in NI will have a major impact on the speed at which life returns to 'normal' and communities recover from the impact of COVID-19 once the restrictions have been lifted. It will be critical that there are sporting and physical activities available and that the clubs, who are embedded in communities, are there to help people emerge from the traumatic experiences they are experiencing as a result of COVID-19. The UK Government and NI Executive have already committed to supporting other areas of the NI Economy during this time. It is important that sport is not excluded.

Requirement for Financial Support Package

- 4.24 While some Governing Bodies and clubs have had some support through business relief grants, rate relief and the Furlough Schemes to date there has been no major COVID-19 relief package for the sector.
- 4.25 DfC officials and SportNI, have engaged with sports Governing Bodies and other organisations including NIFL, the Belfast Giants and Motorsport etc. to gather evidence of the level of financial losses the organisations estimate they and their clubs have incurred since the lockdown in March and what the potential impact will be of further restrictions. These estimates included the impact of limited spectators or having to play their senior competitions behind closed doors.

- 4.26 The evidence from the larger Governing Bodies includes details of income generated over a number of years from gate receipts and can be evidenced in audited accounts. Other aspects have been based on lost revenue from events, membership, competitor levies, hospitality and merchandising.
- 4.27 For example, at a high level the impact of not having spectators present at an international at the National Football Stadium costs the IFA circa £600k per fixture. Having a limited number of spectators at an international fixture does not make them financially viable unless there is over 30% of the capacity permitted. Playing games with no spectators present will cost the IFA £3m over the next 6 months.
- 4.28 NIFL have produced a report that has been developed by their Taskforce, which was made up of senior figures from the Irish League clubs, NIFL and two independent members not associated with senior football. The report has calculated the impact of playing out the season with no spectators for the Premiership clubs will be £2.1m with a further £300k loss being incurred by the Championship and Senior Intermediate clubs and women's Premiership.
- 4.29 Ulster Rugby as an organisation faces a very difficult situation given that they have significant costs associated with their professional contracts and their financial model relies heavily on the revenue generated from gate receipts, hospitality and merchandising. They have indicated that they face a deficit in the region of £3m for the Interprovincial side alone if spectators, in significant numbers, cannot be permitted to attend their Pro14 fixtures. In addition, the impact on Senior League club games of smaller attendance numbers, no hospitality and reduced sponsorship income has left clubs facing severe financial difficulties.
- 4.30 The GAA is the other major sports Governing Body that has incurred serious financial pressure due to COVID-19 with gate receipts alone estimated to be in the region of £3.5m. The National League fixtures which were suspended in mid-March are being played behind closed doors. The Ulster Club Championship has been cancelled this year and the Ulster Senior Championship which was delayed over the summer is being played behind closed doors (commencing on 31 October). These competitions along with the club county championships are the major sources of revenue for Ulster GAA and the County Boards.
- 4.31 Other sports Governing Bodies have seen membership decline, participation reduce and events cancelled. Sports such as cycling and athletics who generate revenue through mass participation events are facing serious financial issues, where the levies from competitors have been reduced as events have been cancelled and when permitted, the numbers were limited for long periods and will be again. Many clubs, such as gymnastics and swimming clubs, faced increasing

costs as they tried to restart their activities and with further disruption and for some a very short season many events simply have not taken place.

- 4.32 The Motorcycle Road Racing Season was decimated along with most other motorsport disciplines, as was the International Cricket series, with all fixtures cancelled and Ice Hockey didn't finish last year's competitions and have already decided that this year's League will not happen. Indoor sports such as Boxing, other contact sports, Netball and Basketball have all been seriously impacted by the restrictions and have had no opportunity to return to competition and to generate income.
- 4.33 The senior representatives of the sector have highlighted their precarious position in person to the DfC Minister who has committed to seeking sufficient funds to help sustain the Governing Bodies and their clubs. Some sports as highlighted, need significant financial assistance in particular the Ulster GAA, Ulster Rugby and the IFA. These are the sports that are most dependent on the revenue they generate from spectators. Officials have been in regular contact with the most senior officials from these bodies and it is clear that they have serious concerns about their future and the future of their clubs.
- 4.34 Other sports have proportionate financial pressures and will struggle as they do not have the reserves available to them to continue to sustain their organisations and to support their clubs. The restrictions earlier this year impacted club fundraising activities, reduced membership subscriptions and limited the scope for revenue raising activities such as summer camps. The latest restrictions will again result in activities ceasing, Halloween camps being cancelled and other fundraising activities lost.
- 4.35 It is critical that we recognise the devastating impact this virus has had across the sports sector from grassroots clubs through to the high performance teams. The estimated financial deficit that the Governing Bodies and sporting entities face is in the region of £25m should the impact of the pandemic continue into the first quarter of 2021. A support package is essential to support the critical elements needed to ensure survival, to protect jobs, sustain businesses and ensure that our communities have access to quality sporting options when this difficult period comes to an end.
- 4.36 Estimating a total support package, should restrictions continue even intermittently, could see a probable deficit of £25m materialise by the end of March 2021. That level of financial support would reflect both the real losses due to limited or no spectators at events and the potential for continued restrictions resulting in further losses of income through other restricted mainstream activities such as membership, participation fees, cancelled events and competitions, lost sponsorship and fund raising activities.

Disability and Female participation in sport

- 4.37 Increasing female participation in sport and physical activity in NI is a key priority for DfC. One of the key targets within 'Sport Matters': the NI Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009-2019 is to increase female participation rates. While much work has already taken place to address this target, including work by SportNI, local councils, sports Governing Bodies and sports organisations, DfC continues to invest each financial year to fund a range of initiatives aimed at increasing female participation in sport. In recent years SportNI has worked with the Female Sports Forum and a range of organisation's to increase sporting opportunities for women and girls across the province, as part of the Female Sports Forum Strategy called – '*Active, Fit and Sporty*'. Building on the success of such initiatives will be a key element of the new Sports Strategy 2020 currently under development.
- 4.38 In addition, DfC continues to invest in initiatives aimed at increasing participation in sport for persons with a disability. The focus of the investment has been to improve the health and wellbeing of disabled people and people with long term health conditions through increased participation in sport and active recreation opportunities. Funding has also contributed to the development of performance pathways and support programmes' which enable talented athletes with disabilities to achieve higher levels of performance. It will be important for the sports sector to maintain and build on the positive developments for both disability and female sports participation. It remains to be seen if the impact of the pandemic has had an adverse impact on both groups. Further information on disability and female sports participation can found at **Annex C** under supporting evidence.

5 DISPLACEMENT, ADDITIONALITY AND VIABILITY

5.1 Displacement

Displacement refers to the extent to which an activity promoted by government is offset by a reduction in activity elsewhere.

An overview of financial support available to Governing Bodies and clubs impacted by COVID-19, has been prepared by the programme team covering UK wide schemes, NI schemes and other support. This provides a sound basis for assessing displacement. The Programme will build on this overview by assessing the level of overlap between each scheme and the proposed SSF.

5.2 Potential Sources of Financial Support Available to Sporting Organisations Impacted by COVID-19

Sports Governing Bodies, clubs and sporting entities have a responsibility to manage their organisations providing support to their sectors and are required to implement appropriate financial controls that manages risk. They must discharge their duties by regularly assessing and monitoring the overall financial position and by taking steps to ensure that funds can continue to be used for the purposes for which they were generated or awarded.

Where a sport Governing Body, a club or other sporting entity has suffered financial stress as a result of the pandemic, it is reasonable to expect them to explore all funding opportunities to ensure survival. Therefore before applying to the SSF, it is anticipated that all possible measures to mitigate the financial risk will have been exhausted.

The following table illustrates the current available funding which includes:

- Information relating the availability of UK wide support schemes available to sports Governing Bodies and organisations;
- The NI Executive Support Schemes and an assessment of whether these could be available; and
- Other potential sources of support.

Appropriate declarations will demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken to protect the financial health of the sporting organisation including applying for other sources of funding.

COVID-19 Emergency - Potential Sources of Financial Assistance

NI Executive Support Schemes	Delivery	Available to Sports organisations
<p><u>Sports Hardship Fund</u> £2,000 small grants scheme for sports clubs and sporting organisations.</p>	Sport NI	Yes, for sports
<p><u>Small Business Support Grant Schemes</u> £10,000 grants for Rental Properties & Total Net Annual Value of £1,590 or below and for Small Business Rate Relief Scheme and businesses with a Total Net Annual Value of £15,000 and less, who currently benefit from Industrial De-rating.</p>	Department for the Economy (DfE), Land & Property Services (LPS)	No, sports clubs not eligible.
<p><u>Coronavirus: £25,000 Retail, Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Grant</u> The NI Executive is providing a one-off grant of £25,000 to eligible businesses that have a Total Net Annual Value (NAV) of between £15,001 and £51,000 within the retail, hospitality, tourism and leisure sectors, subject to some exclusions.</p>	Department for the Economy (DfE),	Yes, for sports clubs that met the criteria.
<p><u>Small Business Micro Hardship Fund Support Grant Schemes</u> The Hardship fund will be targeted at microbusiness (1-9 employees), including eligible Social Enterprises (SE) who are not charities facing immediate cash flow difficulties and which have been unable to access the £10k and £25k grants.</p>	Department for the Economy (DfE),	Sports clubs may have benefitted from such a scheme.
<p><u>Business Rates Holiday</u> Three-month rates holiday for Northern Ireland non-domestic ratepayers (excluding public sector and utilities).</p>	LPS	Sports clubs may have benefitted from such a scheme.
<p><u>Free School Meals - Direct Payment Scheme</u> Families will receive £2.70 per child per day for each day of term the schools are closed.</p>	DfC	Available for families, not sports organisations
<p><u>Fishing Industry Support Package</u> £1.5m support package for fishing industry £1.5m support package for fishing industry.</p>	DAERA	No, only available for the fishing industry.
<p><u>Supporting People</u> To cover Covid-19 related costs of Service Providers who provide housing support to vulnerable people through the Supporting People Programme.</p>	DFC through the Northern Ireland Housing Executive	No

NI Executive Support Schemes	Delivery	Available to Sports organisations
<p><u>COVID-19 Community Support Programme</u> Small grants distributed by local councils to community groups engaged in the COVID-19 response.</p>	DfC and local councils	Groups delivering sports activity may have benefitted from this scheme
<p><u>COVID-19 Charities Fund</u> This £15.5m fund is to help charities that have lost income due to the impact of Covid-19 and will be unable to meet unavoidable costs until 30/09/20.</p>	DfC and National Lottery Community Fund	No, however charitable organisations delivering sporting activity may have benefitted.
<p><u>Arts Council of NI Organisations Emergency Programme (OEP)</u> Small and medium sized organisations will be able to apply for maximum funding of £25,000 to help them continue creative work, assist with operational costs, where these have been affected as a result of the COVID-19, and to help plan for recovery.</p>	Arts Council of Northern Ireland	No
<p><u>COVID-19 Childcare Support Scheme</u> Emergency Childcare Provision Scheme providing childcare for keyworkers or vulnerable children.</p>	DoH/ DE	No

UK Wide Support Schemes	Funder	Available to Sports organisations
<p><u>Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furlough)</u> 80% per cent of business staff wages, up to £2,500 per employee per month.</p>	HMRC	Yes, for those who employ staff and are able to stop or reduce services
<p><u>Job Support Scheme</u> To support individuals and businesses to deal with the challenges created by coronavirus (COVID-19) during this winter (2020 to 2021), -extension to Furlough</p>	HMRC	Yes, for those who employ staff and are able to stop or reduce services
<p><u>Statutory Sick Pay Rebate</u> Small and medium sized organisations can reclaim Statutory Sick Pay for staff absence due to coronavirus.</p>	HMRC	Yes, for those who employ staff impacted by sick absence due to coronavirus
<p><u>Support for Businesses Paying Tax</u> All businesses and self-employed people in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, may be eligible to receive support</p>	HMRC	Yes, for those registered as companies.

UK Wide Support Schemes	Funder	Available to Sports organisations
with their tax affairs through HMRC's Time To Pay service.		
<p><u>VAT Deferral</u> Deferral of Valued Added Tax (VAT) payments due between 20 March 2020 and 30 June 2020. VAT refunds and re-claims paid as normal.</p>	HMRC	Yes, for those paying VAT.
<p><u>Future Fund</u> Government loans to UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal match funding from private investors.</p>	British Business Bank	Yes, for those registered as companies with available match funding
<p><u>Bounce Back Loan</u> Government-backed loans for UK-based small and medium-sized businesses ranging from between £2,000 and £50,000.</p>	Accredited lenders	Yes, for those registered as companies and in a position to repay.
<p><u>Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme</u> The temporary Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) supports small and medium-sized businesses with access to loans, overdrafts, invoice finance and asset finance of up to £5 million and for up to six years.</p>	British Business Bank	Yes, for those registered as companies and in a position to repay.
<p><u>Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme</u> Provides a government guarantee of 80% to enable banks to make loans of up to £25m to firms with an annual turnover of between £45m and £500m.</p>	British Business Bank	No
<p><u>COVID-19 Corporate Financing Facility</u> The new COVID-19 Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF) means that the Bank of England will buy short-term debt from larger companies.</p>	Bank of England	No
<p><u>Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)</u> Self-employed individuals or members of partnerships can claim a taxable grant worth 80% of your trading profits up to a</p>	HMRC	No. For self-employed.

UK Wide Support Schemes	Funder	Available to Sports organisations
maximum of £2,500 per month for 3 months.		
<u>Deferral of Self- Assessment Payment</u> The Self- Assessment payment on account that is ordinarily due to be paid to HMRC by 31 July 2020 may now be deferred until January 2021.	HMRC	No. For self-employed.

Philanthropic Support	Funder	Available to Sports Organisations
<u>The McCall Social Care Fund</u> Offering 5 grants of £10,000 to organisations working in the community and voluntary sector, who are delivering projects in social care at this time	Community Foundation for NI (CCNI)	No
<u>Coronavirus Community Fund</u> Grants to constituted community organisations working with communities and issues and that are affected by coronavirus.	CFNI	No
<u>Community Cashback Grant</u> Grants of £500 - £2000 for groups responding to coronavirus.	Henderson Group	May include groups supporting or delivering sporting activity
<u>Live Here, Love Here - Small Grants Scheme</u> Grants of £5,000 to £50,000 or larger amounts in extenuating circumstances for work directly related to the pandemic	Standard Life	May include groups supporting or delivering sporting activity
<u>Enkalon Foundation Coronavirus Community Support Fund</u> Small grants for community organisations helping people who are isolated and vulnerable in their local communities.	Enkalon	No
<u>Comic Relief: No Child Goes Hungry – Community Support Programme</u> Grants of up to £2500 for community based food provision responses.	Comic Relief	No
<u>Safety Equipment and Volunteers Fuel Small Grants</u> Grants of £150 each to assist very localised and isolated communities in rural areas throughout Mid Ulster during the COVID-19 pandemic.	Cookstown and Western Shores Area Network (CWSAN)	No

Philanthropic Support	Funder	Available to Sports Organisations
<p><u>The RAFT Fund (Rapid Action by the Fore)</u></p> <p>Emergency grants of up to £5,000 to help small charities and social enterprises respond to the COVID-19 crisis.</p>	The Fore	No
<p><u>Coronavirus Community Fund</u></p> <p>Grants of up to 10K for organisations working with older people, those at risk, vulnerable and children and young people.</p>	CFNI	No
<p><u>Small and Medium Grant Fund</u></p> <p>For organisation supporting the community through COVID-19.</p>	Halifax Foundation NI	No
<p><u>Heritage Emergency Fund</u></p> <p>Grants of £3,000 to £50,000 for heritage organisations responding to COVID-19.</p>	National Lottery Heritage Fund	No
<p><u>Remote Family Engagement Fund</u></p> <p>Grants from £500 - £1,000 for arts organisations and individual practitioners.</p>	Arts and Business NI	No
<p><u>Clothworkers' Emergency Capital Programme</u></p> <p>Small capital grants of up to £5,000 for essential capital items to adapt or increase services in response to the coronavirus pandemic.</p>	Clothworkers	No

Further sources of funding for the sports sector can be found on the NI Sports Forum website:

<http://www.nisf.net/funding/>

5.3 Additionality

The extent to which a proposal is additional is assessed by considering what would have happened in the absence of the intervention. An impact arising from an intervention is additional if it would not have occurred in the absence of the intervention. A project is regarded as fully additional if, without intervention, it would not happen at all.

For the proposed SSF it will be important to ensure that the parameters of the scheme are set to ensure that all non-government funding sources are exhausted and each supported sports organisation receives an appropriate level of support required to sustain the organisation based on evidence of need.

It will be important that processes are in place to ensure that successful applicants demonstrate that they have investigated all non-government funding

sources, they have made efforts to reduce costs and are operating as efficiently as possible. To this end, the application and assessment process will seek to establish:

- The appropriate amount of funding that is needed to sustain an organisation that has accumulated net losses as a direct result of COVID-19 and face significant challenges to cover unavoidable costs up to 31 March 2021.
- The extent to which the sports organisation has put in place credible measures to adapt their services and mitigate the loss of income.
- Other sources of finance that may be available to the organisation to cover the shortfall.

There is a potential tension between additionality and moral hazard in providing a funding scheme to support sporting organisations most at risk of failure. In economics, moral hazard occurs when an organisation engages in a risky activity because it will be protected from the cost of the risk as the cost will be incurred by another organisation.

The existence of reserves and a reserves policy is a sign of prudent financial and resource management and may be indicative of a resilient organisation, such organisations may be better placed to cope with unforeseen shocks and financial concerns. In contrast, organisations that have not adhered to best practice guidance on the holding of reserves or the keeping of a reserves policy are less prepared for unforeseen shocks and reductions in income and as a result may be seen as more at risk and therefore prioritised for support. Sports organisations that have put time and resources into developing reserves and policy surrounding this may feel they are being disadvantaged for their prudent resource management if support is focussed on those sports organisations that have shown less concern for the development of adequate reserves. This could act as a disincentive to build reserves in the future. However this pandemic is a once in a life time occurrence and one that no one had foreseen in terms of the impact, duration or financial consequences.

5.4 **Viability**

A key risk to achieving Value for Money (VfM) is the potential for financial support being provided to sports clubs or organisations which are likely to close anyway. In this context, it will be important to ensure that the funding scheme for the sports sector includes a proportionate assessment of an organisation's viability to ensure that public funds are not wasted on supporting an organisation that is likely to fail even with the support.

Each organisation that applies for grant funding will be subjected to a financial evaluation to ensure that they were viable before the crisis began. By their nature, sports clubs rely on generating income through membership, affiliation fees, gate receipts etc. Many organisations, whilst not the strongest financially, maintain services and above all deliver sports 'services' to individuals, groups and

communities which are irreplaceable without this proposed state investment. The process will examine financial accounts to ensure that grants awarded under this scheme go to organisations that are likely to remain in existence. This fund is limited and the Minister has pledged that money will go to those sports organisations in greatest need including grassroots clubs. The Department remains confident that SportNI have systems and processes in place to competently assess financial viability; having successfully distributed lottery and exchequer funding year on year to the sector.

6 OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES

6.1 Introduction

This is a funding scheme of last resort and its primary focus is to help sports Governing Bodies, clubs and sporting entities that have suffered undue financial hardship and ensure that these organisations are sustainable. It is recognised that because of the scale of the problem faced by the sports sector, that any scheme cannot plug all the gaps and choices that need to be made in respect of how any support should be prioritised and if necessary targeted to maximise the impact and benefits.

6.2 Programme Aims

The programme aims to ensure that the sports sector in NI, representative of the diverse range of sporting interests for all its citizens, and of geographic spread, remains in place after the COVID-19 crisis has passed. The sector will be a key partner of Government in supporting the Covid recovery plans, re-engaging communities, getting people active and helping to address the long term mental effects on individuals, communities and wider society. At the core of the programme is the need to support the different elements of the sports sector to ensure that it remains vibrant which means focusing on:

- Sustaining governing bodies and clubs;
- Building club resilience;
- Maintaining facilities; and
- Protecting jobs.

The COVID-19 Sports Sustainability Fund will support this aim by providing financial support to sports Governing Bodies, clubs and sporting entities who:

- Have lost income and opportunities to generate income due to the restrictions put in place by the Executive to control COVID-19;
- Have continued to provide opportunities to spectate at events (in limited numbers) or through the broadcasting of events which have been played behind closed doors; and
- Have net losses that will lead to financial stress resulting in significant challenges of being able to cover unavoidable costs until 31 March 2021.

6.3 Scheme Design and Outcomes

The key features of the scheme and its outcomes are as follows:-

- Ensure that, as far as possible, the range of clubs and organisations within the sports sector that currently exists here, survives through the current COVID-19 crisis and is there to support participation in sport and physical activity post the pandemic;
- Provide financial relief to sports Governing Bodies and clubs to ensure they remain viable once the current health crisis passes;

- Provide timely financial intervention to prevent the potential closure of sports clubs and organisations that are at risk due to COVID-19 restrictions;
- Ensure that financial interventions complement rather than duplicate other national and regional support packages;
- Ensure that funding is distributed quickly through a transparent and evidence based process that complies with NICS financial management guidance;
- Put cost control measures in place to ensure the scheme's affordability is within its current allocation of £25 million;
- Agree an equitable process for fund allocation where demand for financial support exceeds the available funding; and
- Deliver a Sustainability Fund scheme that targets financial need, defined as net losses as a direct result of COVID-19 and face significant challenges to cover unavoidable costs with sports organisations experiencing significant reductions with income, facing ongoing fixed/operational costs and therefore experiencing cash flow difficulties leading to the imminent threat of closure.

6.4 Scheme Objectives

#	Objective	Target	Baseline	Activities (what specific activities will be undertaken by your organisation to ensure this objective is achieved).
1.	To minimise the financial stress on the sports sector due to lost income as a result of COVID-19 lockdown and ongoing restrictions so as to sustain the sector.	To provide sports Governing Bodies and entities with sufficient financial support to ensure they remain viable once the pandemic passes.	Financial loss information submitted by a range of sports Governing Bodies and entities	Develop a scheme that will offer grant funding to enable sports Governing Bodies, clubs and sporting entities, taking into account net losses resulting in significant challenges, to meet unavoidable costs during disruption caused as a result of COVID-19 restrictions e.g. Immediate essential costs associated with elite games being played behind closed doors or with reduced spectator numbers and the associated loss of advertising, TV rights, hospitality revenues etc.
2.	Enable Governing Bodies and clubs to plan and prepare to increase opportunities for participation in sport, recreation and community use following the end of Covid restrictions.	To provide Governing Bodies and clubs with funds which will contribute to the development of programmes and capacity building after lockdown.	Club facilities not currently available for community use and events and activities curtailed due to COVID-19 Lockdown restrictions.	Offer financial support to cover Governing Bodies and club affiliation fees, development of programmes to re-build club capacity and programme delivery.

7 IDENTIFICATION OF OPTIONS

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to identify options for the provision of financial support to assist local Governing Bodies and clubs impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. In line with the Northern Ireland Guide to Expenditure Appraisal and Evaluation (NIGEAE), a 'long list' of options was identified and sifted against criteria to form a 'short list' of options for full appraisal.

7.2 Option Identification

In addition to the status quo/do nothing option, the 'long list' of options considers variations in the scope of the support that would be provided and service delivery options. The potential options based on the scope of the scheme are:

- i. **Scope Option 1 - Status Quo/Do Nothing:** do not provide a SSF scheme to assist organisations impacted by the pandemic.
- ii. **Scope Option 2 - Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs Scheme for Governing Bodies and Clubs Facing Financial Hardship:** payment to cover net losses as a direct result of COVID-19 which result in significant challenges to cover unavoidable costs. Governing Bodies and clubs will be required to evidence financial need based on net loss and unavoidable costs, and will demonstrate efforts made to exhaust all other funding sources resulting in financial stress.
- iii. **Scope Option 3 - Survival Scheme:** payment to cover shortfall in funding needed to cover unavoidable costs and permit sports clubs to retain up to three months' worth of reserves where all other funding sources have been exhausted (including reserves in excess of what is needed to cover three months' worth of expenditure).
- iv. **Scope Option 4 - Flat Rate Hardship Payment:** flat rate payment available to all organisations that have lost income and are facing financial hardship as a result of the pandemic.
- v. **Scope Option 5 - Income Replacement Scheme:** payment to replace percentage of donations and/or trading income lost by organisations as a result of the pandemic.
- vi. **Scope Option 6 - Provision of Interest Free Loans to meet Ongoing Revenue Expenditure:** provision of an interest free loan to help organisation cover the cost of ongoing revenue expenditure.

- vii. **Scope Option 7 - Provision of Financial Capability Advice:** provision of financial capability advice to help sports organisations make effective decisions on the use of funds.

In addition to the scope options, the following Service Delivery Options were considered:

- i. **Service Delivery Option 1 – In-house Delivery by DfC:** the scheme would be delivered by DfC.
- ii. **Service Delivery Option 2 - Arm’s Length Body (ALB):** the scheme would be delivered by SportNI.
- iii. **Service Delivery Option 3 - External Provider:** an external provider with knowledge of the sector would be procured to deliver the scheme.

7.3 Criteria for Shortlisting

The following criteria were used to short list options for full appraisal:

- Is the option capable of achieving the objectives of the programme?
- Can the option be delivered within a realistic timeline?
- Is the option affordable?

For options to be shortlisted they must meet all of the criteria.

7.4 Analysis of Options

The table below sets out the ‘long list’ of potential options that were considered along with the rationale for discarding any options from the full appraisal.

Option	Key Issues	Shortlisted (Yes or No)
Scope Option 1 Status Quo/Do Nothing	The securing of £25m from the NI Executive and the DfC Minister’s commitment to provide financial relief for the sector leaves it politically difficult not to develop a SSF. However this will be shortlisted as the baseline option.	YES
Scope Option 2 Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs Scheme for Governing Bodies and Clubs Facing Financial Hardship	This option has merit and would seek to target those sports organisations in greatest need, is likely to be delivered on time and would be affordable largely because of cost controls.	YES

Option	Key Issues	Shortlisted (Yes or No)
Scope Option 3 Survival Scheme.	This scheme would rely on the applicants declaring the minimum amount of financial stimulus that the organisation needs to survive. It would be difficult to quantify cost in advance so rigorous cost controls would be needed to avoid overspend. The scheme would rely on self-assessment, but crucially take account of a specific number of months' reserves.	YES
Scope Option 4 Flat Rate Hardship Payment.	Flat rate would not take account of the differential needs of sports organisations, largely because of size and scale. This option would benefit smaller Governing Bodies and sports organisations and would not achieve its stated aims.	NO
Scope Option 5 Income Replacement Scheme.	An income replacement scheme would help all Governing Bodies and sporting entities. This could only be delivered with significantly more funding than what is available.	NO
Scope Option 6 Provision of Interest Free Loans to Ongoing Revenue Expenditure.	It is unclear whether DfC has the vires to issue interest free repayable loans. There is no appetite or the necessary skills set to undertake this primarily due to the potential complexities with no guarantee of repayment should the sports organisation eventually go into administration.	NO
Scope Option 7 Provision of Financial Capability Advice.	This option is ruled out as a solution in itself. The provision of advice to support financial intervention would be desirable. But advice won't pay the unavoidable costs that need to be met.	NO

7.5 Option 1 - Do Nothing (Baseline Option)

An expectation has been created that the sports sector in NI will receive a similar financial assistance package to other UK and Ireland regions, as outlined in the Need section above. Following an Executive meeting on 29 October 2020, the Executive agreed to allocate £15m and on 16 November 2020 an additional £10m was secured, to support the sports sector. The do nothing option would require the Executive to reverse that decision thereby leaving the sports sector unsupported. Left unsupported, many sports organisations and clubs could cease to exist; indeed even with the £25m intervention there is no guarantee that this funding will secure the future for all sports organisations, but it will make a

significant impact to alleviate financial pressures and demonstrates that government has shown willingness to provide support. Despite the unsuitability of this option, it will be taken forward as the baseline option.

7.6 Option 2 – Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs Scheme for Governing Bodies and Clubs Facing Financial Hardship

There is no doubt the sports sector has been hit hard. Whilst undesirable, many clubs and organisations could pause activities to reduce costs, furlough staff and use reserves until the crisis has passed. However, this would mean that they are not active when most needed and may struggle to re-establish membership/participants and volunteers post COVID-19.

This option is attractive in that it would seek to address financial hardship and not simply award funding to sports organisations because they have lost income. This option seeks to evaluate in a proportionate way the costs which the sports organisations must meet to avoid administration. Simplicity of administration has been a key factor in the set-up of the other government emergency schemes; whilst a flat rate scheme would be the most straightforward to deliver, it would be strongly opposed by the sports sector. This option is clearly defined to provide the grant required to enable the sports organisation to remain afloat. The issue of reserves held by sports organisations can be complex. The scheme will be designed to ensure that reserves are not increased or created as a result of any award made through the fund. A proportionate assessment will be needed to determine the appropriate level of intervention needed to alleviate financial stress.

The unavoidable risk with this option is that funding is unlikely to be sufficient to meet the demand. Most emergency government funding schemes to date have been oversubscribed, and the estimates from the sector would suggest that there is uncertainty that this level of funding can meet all of the needs that exist and some sports clubs may still fail. Awards will be made to those sports organisations that meet the eligibility and assessment criteria supported by evidence of financial stress. This scheme will involve funding being distributed proportionately based on identified need and within the available budget. This option is considered for further evaluation to be the best possible use of the Fund's resources.

7.7 Option 3 - Survival Scheme

This option aims to provide the minimum amount of financial stimulus that the sports organisations need to survive. Payment to cover the shortfall in funding needed to cover unavoidable costs would permit sports organisations to retain up to three months' worth of reserves where all other funding sources have been exhausted (including reserves in excess of what is needed to cover three months' worth of expenditure).

The scheme also requires an assessment of the survival amount needed to ensure the scheme has maximum reach and impact amongst the cohort of sporting organisations effected. The process would deal with applications by strict chronological order and when the fund exhausts, the scheme would close. It would be relatively simple to administer, but wouldn't provide sufficient assurance that money was been allocated fairly to sports organisations most in need. It relies heavily on the honest assessment of sports organisations to accurately declare the minimum survival funding that they need. Extensive follow up checks would be required to validate that accuracy of claims and this would incur significant additional resource.

7.8 Service Delivery Options

The following paragraphs assess the options available to DfC to handle the application and evaluation process including assessment, award and payment to sports organisations applying for grant funding. This process requires careful consideration given the requirement to (a) introduce this funding scheme at pace, (b) ensure a timely proportionate assessment of need, and (c) that money reaches successful applicants as quickly as possible.

DfC has considered a number of options for delivery. In the case of external options the following assumes DfC will provide the framework for the programme to be delivered. Therefore the activities required are the application, assessment including verification of evidence, award/payment process and post project evaluation.

The Table below has identified a number of delivery options:

Option	Key Issues	Shortlisted (Yes or No)
<p>Service Delivery Option 1 - In-House Delivery by DfC</p>	<p>DfC doesn't have a suitably experienced team of staff currently available to deliver the scheme in-house. However, given the size of the DfC and the potential to seek assistance from other Departments it is an option that needs to be further considered. The issue of cost, pace and delivery time are three key areas that need to be examined to determine the viability of this option.</p> <p>Given the urgency of the need consideration would need to be given to the timeframe associated to assemble people with the relevant experience, train and prepare them to assess, evaluate and score applications within agreed criteria.</p>	<p>YES</p>

Option	Key Issues	Shortlisted (Yes or No)
	<p>This option would require the re-deployment of staff from other areas that potentially require the expertise to administer other COVID-19 related funding schemes. The cost is also an important factor and the impact on work that will not be done while staff are redeployed on this work.</p> <p>Scheme eligibility, guidance, criteria, application form, scoring matrix and assessment guidance would all have to be developed by DfC, and systems and processes, including online applications, developed to allow the Department to deliver funding to the sector. DfC does not have a readymade application and grant giving system with the capacity and flexibility that grant giving bodies such as ALBs' have in place.</p>	
<p>Service Delivery Option 2 – ALB Delivery – SportNI</p>	<p>Using an existing ALB which has a track record of distributing funding to Governing Bodies, clubs and the wider sports sector via existing processes and systems is a potential credible delivery approach. SportNI are highly experienced in this sector with decades of grant giving/management in assessing, evaluating and scoring applicants against agreed criteria. SportNI's knowledge of the sector is unrivalled and this will be essential to ensure that funding is delivered at pace across the sporting sector and achieves the desired impact of this Programme.</p>	YES
<p>Service Delivery Option 3 - External Provider</p>	<p>This option would require Central Procurement Division to work with the DfC to develop the technical requirements in order to go out to the marketplace. As the value would be over £30k, it would require an EU wide procurement and optimistically is likely to take a minimum of three months. As the funding must be distributed and expended by 31 March 2021 this option has been ruled out as impossible, impractical, disproportionate and politically unpalatable as the Minister has pledged that emergency funding would reach organisations as soon as possible. This option would mean that the sector would potentially collapse while DfC undertakes a</p>	NO

Option	Key Issues	Shortlisted (Yes or No)
	procurement exercise. In addition, an external provider would not match the efficiency from using an existing ALB and the experienced staff who have a track record of delivering grant funding to the sector.	

7.9 Shortlisted Delivery Options

- In-House Delivery - DfC
- ALB Delivery – SportNI

7.10 Option 1 – In-House Delivery

Description

DfC, via its Active Communities Division (ACD), could provide an in-house delivery option for the administration of the SSF. DfC is empowered to award grant funding to sports organisations impacted by COVID-19 through the Youth and Recreation Order 1986.

Under this option the delivery of the programme would be undertaken by staff mainly drawn from the Sports and TBUC Uniting Communities Branches. Funding would be administered in line with the DfC existing grant administration guidance, be fully compliant with Managing Public Money NI and make payments through the established process i.e. Account NI.

Timescales

ACD would complete set up and launch of the programme within four weeks of the DfC approval with awards made four-six weeks after the first applications received. There would be a four week window for applications following launch and it is expected all funds would be committed within 12-16 weeks. These timeframes would all be subject to the ability of DfC to stand up a team at such short notice, design the scheme and ensure systems are in place to meet the tight timescale for delivery.

Costs

Previous estimates of the cost of DfC administering grant funding have been between 2 and 3%. This is already within the DfC baseline.

Risks

This option would require a cessation of certain elements of ACDs business as usual. This would impact both the ongoing activities and the Ministerial priorities in both Sports and TBUC Uniting Communities business areas. Whilst some of the officials in both branches would have some experience in grant

administration, it is clear a lack of specific experience and resources to deal with a large volume of applications would exist. The type of assessment and decision making experience required would be limited to a few staff members.

There may also be a timing issues as although the team could potentially be assembled promptly they would need to develop grant programme processes and a Management Information System that would be fit for purpose while getting the programme ready to launch. A commensurate version of the DfC GAG would also need to be drafted and agreed to enable quick turnaround from application to payment for successful applicants. Decisions may not be perceived as independent as the Minister's officials will be directly involved in decision making. It should also be noted that SportNI as an established ALB of DfC with responsibility for the development of sport in NI has responsibility for the distribution of funding across the sector. An expectation exists that the SSF would naturally involve SportNI playing a key role, working alongside DfC, to provide critical emergency COVID-19 funds to the sports sector. Any decision not to give approval to SportNI to administer the fund would likely lead to a range of negative reactions by elected representative, the sporting community and others as to the reasoning for not utilising such a resource in a time of crisis.

Benefits

DfC would retain full control of the scheme, the processes and be able to respond quickly to any issues as they emerge. Regardless of the delivery route it is inevitable that the Minister will receive regular queries relating to the allocation of the funding. Given this it could be advantageous if all information relating to the scheme is held directly by DfC. Should the team become overwhelmed with the volume of applications there is the potential that additional staff could be drafted in from elsewhere in DfC.

7.11 Option 2 – SportNI

Description

SportNI, a dedicated grant making body, would deliver the COVID-19 SSF on behalf of DfC. SportNI are an ALB of the Department and can distribute third party funding in line with the following principles:

- Funding should align with its strategic framework and ways of working;
- No overall impact on the delivery of other funding programmes; and
- Key staff in SportNI can be redirected internally to deliver the Fund.

Funding will be assessed and administered by existing grants teams in line with SportNI's procedures which can be tailored to meet the needs of the current situation. In addition, SportNI have already taken responsibility for the Sports Hardship Fund and the PPE Packages which have both involved distributing relief to the sector.

SportNI has been working alongside DfC Officials during the assessment of need process involving contact with the sector to help quantify the level of financial assistance required and continue to engage with DfC officials to explore options for design and delivery.

Timescales

SportNI would complete set up and launch of the programme within four weeks of the DfC approval with awards made four-SIX weeks after the first applications received. There would be a four week window for applications following launch and it is expected all funds would be committed within 12-16 weeks.

Costs

There would be no deductions from the actual fund associated with its delivery; if additional resources are required by SportNI they will be met by easements within existing baselines.

Risks

There is a reputational risk of appointing a third party to administer the fund should they be unable to deliver. Furthermore should anything go wrong with the scheme DfC will be reliant on SportNI being able to react and rectify the situation.

Benefits

Whilst being an ALB of DfC, SportNI are considered an independent body free from political influence which has over the years distributed both lottery and exchequer funding in significant amounts to the sports sector. They are a grant making body with vast experience of launching and delivering funds with large volumes of applications. They have experience of operating funds where demand exceeds budget and controlling the flow of awards made over a period of time to ensure those applicant most in need receive an awarded whilst ensuring a suitable geographical spread. SportNI has experience of dealing with the sector, understands the sector and the financial pressures that the organisations face as well as being aware of the geographical spread and the community aspects of sport in NI.

Using SportNI will enable ACD staff to carry on their business as usual, with both Sports and TBUC branches providing support for the SSF development including management of the anticipated increased volumes of correspondence, communications, PR and if necessary seeking to secure additional funds for the scheme etc.

8 MONETARY COSTS AND BENEFITS

8.1 Introduction

The table below sets out the costs of the 3 Options.

REVENUE COSTS	Option 1 Do Not Fund	Option 2 Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs Scheme	Option 3 Survival Scheme
Programme Funding	£0.00	£25m	£25m
Total Costs	£0.00	£25m	£25m

8.2 Assumptions Underpinning Costs

8.3 The assessment of need made a number of assumptions regarding the total support that the Governing Bodies and sports organisations require. Whilst DfC does not have sight of the financial shortfall details of all Governing Bodies, indications would suggest the majority of sports organisations have suffered losses. If borne out, 78 sports Governing Bodies (plus associated clubs) and a smaller number of sporting entities could be eligible for support to mitigate the net losses as a direct result of COVID-19 which resulted in significant challenges to cover unavoidable costs from when the effects of the pandemic were felt most; from April 2020 and potentially up to March 2021 with the ongoing impacts of restrictions imposed across NI. The estimated loss over the 12 months to March 2021 could be circa £25m.

8.4 It is reasonable to assume that not every Governing Body or sports entity will apply to the scheme as some may be eligible for other government funding schemes such as the small business grants scheme, and others may simply choose not to apply due to the level of activity or their financial status; however assuming a 75% application rate, anticipated demand may be in the range 75 to 100 organisations.

8.5 In addition to the mainstream Governing Bodies, and based on data from the Sport NI Club Survey in January 2020, there are approximately 3,000 sports clubs in NI.

8.6 Under the current Executive Plan, and assuming a best case scenario, we could see a modified full return to sport during the period January to March 2021. However it is assumed that a full recovery is unlikely and a significant degree of losses would continue up to March 2021. With this in mind consideration will need to be made to how funds are released to applicants based an appropriate percentage in the event that restrictions are lifted and income generating avenues are once again opened up to sports organisations.

- 8.7 However, even if those assumptions are correct, it remains difficult to assess the direct relationship between loss of income and the ability of a sports organisation to avoid financial stress. An additional variable will be the level of reserves held by the sports organisation and how much of these it is reasonable to take into account in determining grant funding award amounts.
- 8.8 The £25m funding allocated by the Executive takes cognisance of the many uncertainties around this emergency fund. The fund will initially have to be capped at the maximum affordable level of £25m.
- 8.9 While this business case currently assumes that DfC support costs and SportNI delivery costs are included in the baseline of both organisations, it remains important to reference any differential between options 2 and 3.
- 8.10 The latter option would require a greater effort to validate claims and provide retrospective assurance regarding value for money. Under option 2 based on the fact that detailed financial evidencing of need would be required to support the application it would be deemed reasonable to vouch 5% circa 150 claims (Base on the 3,000 sporting clubs figure). Option 3 is expected to incur greater support costs than Option 2 as increased post payment validation checks needed would likely be in the region of 10% to 15% of claims selected to confirm veracity of declarations.

8.11 **Summary and Selection of Preferred Option**

8.12 **Option 1 – Do not fund (Baseline Option)**

This is the do nothing options and there are no associated direct costs.

Non-monetary costs and benefits (Section 10) associated with Option 1:
None

8.13 **Option 2 – Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs Scheme for Governing Bodies and Clubs Facing Financial Hardship:**

This option will be delivered within the current budget allocated by the Executive of £25m. The objective is to ensure that it is allocated to those Governing Bodies and sports organisations most in need.

Non-Monetary Costs and Benefits (Section 10) associated with Option 2: This scored the highest rating at 80% as there are likely to be greater non-monetary benefits accruing from this option.

This option is considered to be the best possible use of the resources available, to support and prioritise needs within the sector and for the wider benefit of Governing Bodies, sporting clubs and sporting entities.

8.14 **Option 3 - Survival Scheme**

As with Option 2, this scheme would cost the same to deliver with the budget allocated by the Executive at £25m. There are potential issues around whether appropriate levels of assurance could be provided to the Accounting Officer and by default whether it would represent value for money. However given the unique set of circumstances created by COVID-19, there may be an appetite to live with increased risk associated with limited one-off funding and retrospective action taken where this was later found to be wrongly claimed. To build in mitigating action against the level of risk based on this approach follow up action to confirm the veracity of claims could potentially be resource intensive.

Non-Monetary Costs and Benefits (Section 10) associated with **Option 3**: This option scored 48% and while there would be some non-monetary benefits, these are likely to be less than option 2.

Please describe in more detail the preferred option and why it has been selected:

Preferred option – Option 2

This option is considered to be the best possible use of the resources available, to support and prioritise needs within the sector and for the wider benefit of grass roots sporting organisations. This scheme has clear aims to prevent the imminent collapse of Governing Bodies and sports clubs.

This option meets the Minister's priority which is the provision of critical financial support for sports organisations in greatest need.

Grants would be awarded through SportNI based on demonstration of need; this will contribute to providing assurance that the scheme will deliver value for money.

In concluding that SportNI are the organisation best placed to administer the funding consideration has been given to their level of expertise, their knowledge of the sports sector and their experience of developing and delivering funding programmes. In addition SportNI have been engaging regularly with Governing Bodies, clubs and sporting organisations over the course of the pandemic and are familiar with the challenges that the sector face.

SportNI have successfully delivered the first two funding cycles of the COVID-19 Sports Hardship Fund and are currently assessing the applications from grassroots clubs to the third cycle. This has to date allocated over £1m in

financial support and has proven to be a smooth and well managed process for the distribution of funding to a large number of clubs and organisations.

This option is capable of achieving the objectives set for the SSF.

9 RISK AND UNCERTAINTY

9.1 Introduction

The COVID-19 SSF is required as an emergency intervention to support the sports sector and those organisations at risk of imminent closure. The scheme has had to be developed at pace; normal measures to mitigate risk and uncertainty around managing public money have had to be balanced against this unprecedented emergency.

9.2 NIGEAE Principles

The NIGEAE sets out the general principles to be applied by approving authorities when approving capital projects and other expenditures. Only when needs, objectives, options, costs, benefits, risks, funding, affordability and other relevant factors have been thoroughly investigated according to the relevant appraisal methodology can approving authorities be assured that a particular proposal is likely to represent VfM and satisfy accountability requirements. In view of the urgency of the situation and the short window of opportunity, issues which would normally advance in sequence are needing to progress in parallel.

9.3 Assessing Risk

The following table details possible risks associated with each option, indicating the probability of occurrence and the likely impact of each of the risks. (Level of risk is **low** = 1, **medium** = 2, **high** = 3). The residual risk applicable for each option is stated i.e. the risk remaining after mitigation action.

		Option 1 Do Not Fund £0 Costs	Option 2 Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs	Option 3 Survival Scheme
Risk 1	Description	Failure to deliver a scheme within committed timescale		
	Likelihood	3	1	1
	Impact	3	3	3
	Management strategy to address risk	No scheme would result in significant political fallout in view of the fact that funding was made available by NI Executive specifically for the sports sector. Other regions of the UK and Ireland have introduced similar schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The appointment of SportNI will provide credibility regarding delivery. - Managing expectations though messaging and communications strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The appointment of SportNI will provide credibility regarding delivery. - Managing expectations though messaging and communications strategy.
	Residual Risk	9	3	3

		Option 1 Do Not Fund £0 Costs	Option 2 Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs	Option 3 Survival Scheme
Risk 2	Description	The COVID-19 SSF poorly received within the Sector		
	Likelihood	3	1	2
	Impact	3	3	3
	Management strategy to address risk	No scheme, so no need to mitigate this risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The appointment of SportNI will provide credibility regarding delivery. - Managing expectations though messaging and communications strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The appointment of SportNI will provide credibility regarding delivery. - Managing expectations though messaging and communications strategy. - Survival fund would receive less support within the sector
	Residual Risk	9	3	6

		Option 1 Do Not Fund £0 Costs	Option 2 Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs	Option 3 Survival Scheme
Risk 3	Description	Clubs apply for and receive Covid-19 emergency funds from other public funding sources in addition to SSF resulting in double funding.		
	Likelihood	3	1	1
	Impact	3	2	2
	Management strategy to address risk	No scheme, so no need to mitigate this risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application process includes a financial declaration - Eligible applicants will be required to provide supporting financial information to help verify their claims - Random sampling and vouching to confirm status of other potential funding sources to be undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application process includes a financial declaration - Eligible applicants will be required to provide supporting financial information to help verify their claims - Random sampling and vouching to confirm status of other potential funding sources to be undertaken.
	Residual Risk	9	2	2

		Option 1 Do Not Fund £0 Costs	Option 2 Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs	Option 3 Survival Scheme
Risk 4	Description	Over inflated claims by Sports Organisations		
	Likelihood	3	1	3
	Impact	3	2	3
	Management strategy to address risk	No scheme, so no need to mitigate this risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proportionate assessment by SportNI to determine income/expenditure. - Examination of 3 year's accounts. - Examination of net losses and unavoidable costs. - In-depth knowledge of the Sector with experienced assessors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post payment checks to determine veracity of declarations. - Possible future sanction to apply for SportNI funds. - Threat of prosecution and court appearance. - Publicise the repercussions of inaccurate declarations.
	Residual Risk	9	2	9

		Option 1 Do Not Fund £0 Costs	Option 2 Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs	Option 3 Survival Scheme
Risk 5	Description	Committed Expenditure exceeds the authorised limit of £25m		
	Likelihood	3	1	1
	Impact	3	1	1
	Management strategy to address risk	No scheme, so no need to mitigate this risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allocation to SportNI for £25m. - - SportNI will consider a phased payment process with only a percentage of the loss paid in the event of over subscription 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allocation to SportNI for £25m. - SportNI will consider a phased payment process with only a percentage of the loss paid in the event of oversubscription
	Residual Risk	9	1	1

		Option 1 Do Not Fund £0 Costs	Option 2 Nett Loss and Unavoidable Costs	Option 3 Survival Scheme
Risk 6	Description	Demand for the fund is undersubscribed with unused surplus		
	Likelihood	3	1	1
	Impact	3	2	2
	Management strategy to address risk	No scheme, so no need to mitigate this risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 week window application window to generate more applications - Minister can remind sports organisations of available funding that they should claim. - SportNI to demonstrate strategic leadership to be sectoral influencers. - Options to provide funds to grassroots clubs to maximise full use of the funding available. - Examine where policy changes are needed to allow more applicants to get access to the scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 week window application window to generate more applications - Minister can remind sports organisations of available funding that they should claim. - SportNI to demonstrate strategic leadership to be sectoral influencers. - Options to provide funds to grassroots clubs to maximise full use of the funding available. - Examine where policy changes are needed to allow more applicants to get access to the scheme
	Residual Risk	9	2	2

10 NON-MONETARY BENEFITS

10.1 Costs and Benefits arising from the options which are difficult to capture in monetary terms should be included in this analysis. This assessment could include various social, communal, educational, environmental, and health impacts attributed to each of the options.

Benefit / Cost criterion	Weight	Explanation of Weight
Contribute to addressing the need for support to sports organisations that suffered financial losses during lockdowns and periods of restriction.	30%	This will be crucial in ensuring that sports can remain viable and sustainable during the lockdown period. It is vital that society has continued access to sporting services and provision which does not rely on or be readily provided by the state.
Makes significant contribution to making lives better by contributing to the health and wellbeing of society.	30%	The overall impacts of COVID-19 and associated restrictions and lockdowns have yet to be quantified. Sport will play a key role in the health and wellbeing recovery of society both during and accelerated after the pandemic passes.
Enables sports organisations to plan for increasing participation and physical activity across NI for the benefit of local communities.	20%	With organisations able to meet core costs to keep their sector viable it will allow them to plan programmes and physical activity opportunities to commence as soon restrictions are lifted.
To contribute towards improved community relations and cohesion between clubs and communities.	20%	With clubs able to focus on the community support effort during the COVID-19-19 pandemic, they will be able to strengthen their role and raise their profile within their community. This has the potential to attract new members and participants to their sport in the aftermath of the pandemic.
	100%	

Non-monetary Benefit	Weight	OPTION 1 Baseline		OPTION 2 Unavoidable Costs		OPTION 3 Survival Scheme	
		Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
Contribute to addressing the need for support to sports organisations that suffered financial losses during lockdowns and periods of restriction.	30%	0/10	0	8/10	24	5/10	15
Makes significant contribution to making lives better by contributing to the health and wellbeing of society.	30%	0/10	0	8/10	24	5/10	15
Enables sports organisations to plan for increasing participation and physical activity across NI for the benefit of local communities.	20%	0/10	0	8/10	16	4/10	8
To contribute towards improved community relations and cohesion between clubs and communities.	20%	0/10	0	8/10	16	4/10	8
Total Non-monetary score	100%		0		80		48
Ranking			3		1		2

10.2 Non-monetary Benefit Overall Score

The non-monetary benefits are crucial to the overall aims of the SSF which is to ensure that a viable sports sector remains to deliver essential sporting provision and services to society. Option 2 targets net losses and the unavoidable costs of sports organisations and directs funding to those Governing Bodies and clubs in most need. The non-monetary benefits that this option will deliver have therefore been assessed and have achieved a higher score. Option 3 could deliver non-monetary benefits but the fact that the assessment of need for survival funding would be determined by the self-declaration of sporting organisations introduced greater degrees of risk and doubt that this option would be capable of delivering value for money and achieving the fund's objectives.

11 SUMMARY AND SELECTION OF PREFERRED OPTION

11.1 The table below provides a summary of how each option ranks in terms of costs, benefits and risks.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
	Baseline	Net Loss and Unavoidable Costs	Survival Scheme
Total Cost (Section 8)	£0.00	£25m	£25m
Total Cost to the DfC	£0.00	£25m	£25m
Overall Risk Level (Section 9)	54	13	23
Non-monetary Benefits Ranking (Section 10)	3	1	2

Preferred option

Option 2

11.2 Please describe in more detail the preferred option and why it has been selected:

Option 2: The cost of the preferred option will be a maximum of £25m addressing net losses and unavoidable costs of sports Governing Bodies, clubs and organisations most in need of financial assistance until the end of March 2021 taking into account losses incurred from 1 April 2020. This option seeks to ensure that a viable sporting sector remains intact to deliver essential sporting provision and services to the sector and wider society. This option provides the highest non-monetary scores and reflects the need to maintain sports Governing Bodies, clubs and organisations that play a part in the lives of so many people across our communities.

This scheme has been developed at pace and while DfC officials and SportNI have engaged with senior officials in the main Governing Bodies some uncertainty remains including a deficit in available data about the breakdown of sectoral income and loss with gaps in information relating to the overall impact on services during the pandemic. The scheme itself will have to take account of bodies and organisations that represent their sporting sector but are not a recognised governing body listed by SportNI. Clearly the pandemic has created an emergency in the overall sector and it is vital that this scheme addresses the needs of the entire sporting community across NI. It is therefore proposed that the Fund will be carefully monitored as it rolls out, with data collection and analysis undertaken in real time as applications are received and assessed. If the analysis is shown to be not in line with the initial policy development assumptions and modelling of needs, the policy framework may need to be adapted.

To allow sufficient flexibility, proposals will be explored to release a first payment based on a percentage of the estimated loss with further payment if appropriate to take account of any easing of the lockdowns and restrictions in the January to March 2021 period. In addition if the scheme is undersubscribed or if additional funds become available through the scheme options can be considered to redirect additional funds to the Sports Hardship programme which will seek to alleviate the financial stress on grassroots clubs. If emerging data requires a policy change, proposals will be managed subject to the usual processes and approvals.

The proposal is based on the assumption that SportNI will ultimately deliver the full £25m fund.

The SSF is considered to be a viable and measured response to a unique situation that could not have been planned for in advance by the sector. Applicants will be asked to submit declarations of their current status and complete a financial loss assessment with confirmation being sought from the applicant including that:

- a. the funding is not available through other COVID-19 emergency funds;
- b. the funding has not been secured elsewhere at the time of application;
- c. funding will only be used for the purpose for which it is given;
- d. they can evidence governing body or sporting entity status representing their sporting discipline;
- e. a fraud declaration form is completed (National Fraud Initiative);
- f. the applicant has understood and accepted the terms and conditions of award; and
- g. a GDPR declaration is agreed.

In addition, taking account of the fact only a percentage of the initial loss may be paid, if making requests for further payments of grant through the programme, organisations will be asked to submit evidence that the previous grant has been fully expended against eligible costs.

12 FINANCE AND VIABILITY

12.1 Finance

All funding should be stated whether it has been confirmed or merely applied for.

Funding Sources	Preferred Option	Funding Secured? If not, at what stage are negotiations at?
1.DFC	£25m	£25m
2.Own (confirmed/applied) *	£0.00	£0.00
3.Other – Specify (confirmed/applied) *	£0.00	£0.00
Total Funding	£25m	£25m

**If funding has not been confirmed then please provide details of the current status of the funding application.*

13 MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND POST EVALUATION

13.1 Project Management structure

This project has been established in response to an emergency situation and is operating at pace to enable the sports sector to respond to the crisis and alleviate the financial stresses caused as a result of ongoing lockdowns and restrictions.

The Deputy Secretary of the Engaged Communities Group, Moira Doherty, is the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO), who is accountable to the DfC Permanent Secretary for delivery of the Project. The SRO will advise and report to Minister and the Communities Committee directly as required. The SRO is ultimately accountable for the successful delivery of the Project with responsibility for ensuring that the Project meets its objectives and realises the expected benefits.

Kathryn Hill will act as Project Director, with Tony Murphy as Project Manager. They will work with the SRO and are supported by a Project Team to ensure the successful implementation of the Project.

The scheme itself will be administered and managed by Sport NI. John News from SportNI has been appointed SRO for development of the scheme.

This project will provide a grant to a third party and is not in itself a procurement process. However, any procurement associated with the implementation and delivery of the grant by the grant recipient will be subject to procurement procedures as per Sport NI Standard Terms and Conditions of Award or any procurement policy that the grant recipient has and as agreed with Sport NI.

Overall programme sponsorship rests with the Departments Active Communities Division. Programme delivery will be undertaken by SportNI, acting on behalf of the Department.

SportNI will establish a Project Board to lead implementation, assessment including supporting evidence, payment/award and post project evaluation.

13.2 Programme Controls

In order to ensure that there are formal governance and management arrangements in place a number of programme controls will be implemented in partnership with SportNI as indicated below:

- **A Programme Definition Document (PDD):** this document formally marks the launch of the Programme from November 2020 and shows that the Programme has a sound basis to commence implementation and this will act as a baseline against which progress can be measured;

- **A Milestone / Project Plan:** showing all key products, milestones and dependencies. This plan is used to review and track progress;
- **Risks and Issues:** identifying risks and issues and their analysis, countermeasures and status. The logs are subject to regular reviews and updates and will continue to be maintained until Programme closure;
- **Decision Log:** used to record all key decisions made throughout the lifetime of the Programme;
- **Highlight Reports:** these outline achievements and progress in the current reporting period and a forward look. They also facilitate review of the Project risks and any interdependencies;
- **Benefits Management:** the DfC Corporate Benefits Management Strategy (BMS), will be used to identify and structure benefits, plan benefits realisation; track benefits and evaluate.
- **Programme Evaluation Review:** this will form part of the project closure activities and will comprise the Lessons Learned Report and the End Programme Report;
- **Post Programme Evaluation:** this review which will be produced by a suitable body, identified by the Project Director near Programme end, at an agreed date after Programme closure to assess the extent to which the Programme has met its objectives.

13.3 Protecting Personal Data and Managing Information Risk

The Project and any associated clerical processes will comply with the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Data Protection Policies. Per guidance all the information held and managed by the Project will attract a “Restricted” marking as any compromise of any information or material could impede the effective development or operation of Government policies.

Data Protection Impact Assessments and Data Sharing Agreements will be undertaken per the NICS Data Protection Impact Assessment Policy. The DfC Data Protection Officer, IT Security Officer and Accreditor will be consulted as Project stakeholders.

13.4 Management of messaging and communications.

The project will focus on communications and public relations and will work closely with the DfC Press Office to ensure that external messaging is consistent, clear and

timely, this will be underpinned by ongoing development of lines to take and frequently asked questions.

The Project will work closely with the Communications team on any branding and online content requirements.

A high level Communications/PR plan is attached at **Annex B**. It provides an outline of how communications and messaging will be managed throughout the pre-launch, launch and post launch stages of the programme.

13.5 **Monitoring**

The purpose of monitoring will be to ensure that funding is used effectively and is accounted for appropriately. SportNI will work collaboratively to ensure that this funding delivers its desired outcomes.

Ongoing collaboration throughout the dispersal of funding will be key with contacts both at strategic and operational level. The former will examine the overall implementation of the policy intention while the latter will ensure that where issues need to be clarified, support is available.

SportNI is responsible for delivering the £25m in grant aid in accordance with agreed policy direction and guidance. SportNI will exercise responsibility to validate the accuracy of funding by applying a risk based approach to post payment verification. Systems and processes will be established with SportNI and grant recipients to ensure the collection of relevant data which will be utilised to complete an appropriate post project evaluation.

13.6 **Cost Controls**

Cost controls will be exercised through the letter of offer and implementation of the project by SportNI. Although there is minimal risk of this occurring, responsibility for ensuring the fund operates within its financial limits is managed by SportNI.

13.7 **Post Project Evaluation (PPE)**

The SSF aims to help successful sports Governing Bodies, clubs and organisations with nett losses and unavoidable COVID-19 related costs up to 31 March 2021, costs that they are unable to meet taking account of losses incurred since 1 April 2020. The fund should therefore have been distributed and the money drawn down in a timely way, before the end of 31 March 2021.

13.8 **Who is responsible for the PPE**

SportNI will be responsible for carrying out the PPE. In accordance with best practice, this should be completed six months after the end of the project funding

period which ends on 31 March 2021. However, given the nature of the emergency funding and the need to report to the Minister on the outcome, it is anticipated that this will be completed shortly after all of the payment, reporting and post project payment validation work has been finalised.

13.9 What factors are to be evaluated?

The outcomes achieved as articulated by the Outcomes Framework Report Card, along with the longer term policy work that may be needed to better support the sports sector.

What procedures will be put in place for disseminating any lessons learnt?

Any lessons learned in bringing forward this COVID-19 emergency funding package will be disseminated within the wider DfC it is anticipated that these lessons could be taken into account through future policy development.

13.10 Declaration

I am satisfied that all factors of all feasible options have been considered in this appraisal, and that the recommended option is the optimum.

I ~~recommend/do not recommend~~* this project for assistance at a level of:

DfC funding of	£25m
Towards the Total Central Government Expenditure* of	£25m
Towards the Total NI Public Expenditure Costs of	£25m
And the Total project Costs of	£25m

* Total Central Government Expenditure must exclude VAT where it is recoverable. CPD, DSO and LPS charges should be considered in the total costs of an appraisal but should not be included towards the calculation of Central Government Expenditure when considering whether the DfC Delegated Limit has been exceeded.

13.11 Indicative Level of Approval

Economic Appraisals need to be approved internally based on the **Total Central Government Expenditure**. As per the approval levels set out in the DfC Delegated Authority and Approval Arrangements, the minimum grade required to approve this project is **Deputy Secretary**.

13.12 Internal Referral to Economics Branch

Revenue appraisals with **Total Central Government Expenditure in excess of £500k** need to be referred to Economics Branch for Quality Assurance.

Does this appraisal need to be referred to Economics Branch? **Yes / No (Delete as appropriate)**

13.13 Referral to DoF

Does this appraisal need to be forwarded to DOF? **Yes / No (Delete as appropriate)**

Signed:	
Print Name:	
Grade:	
Date:	November 2020

I ~~support~~ ~~do not support~~ this project for assistance at a level of:

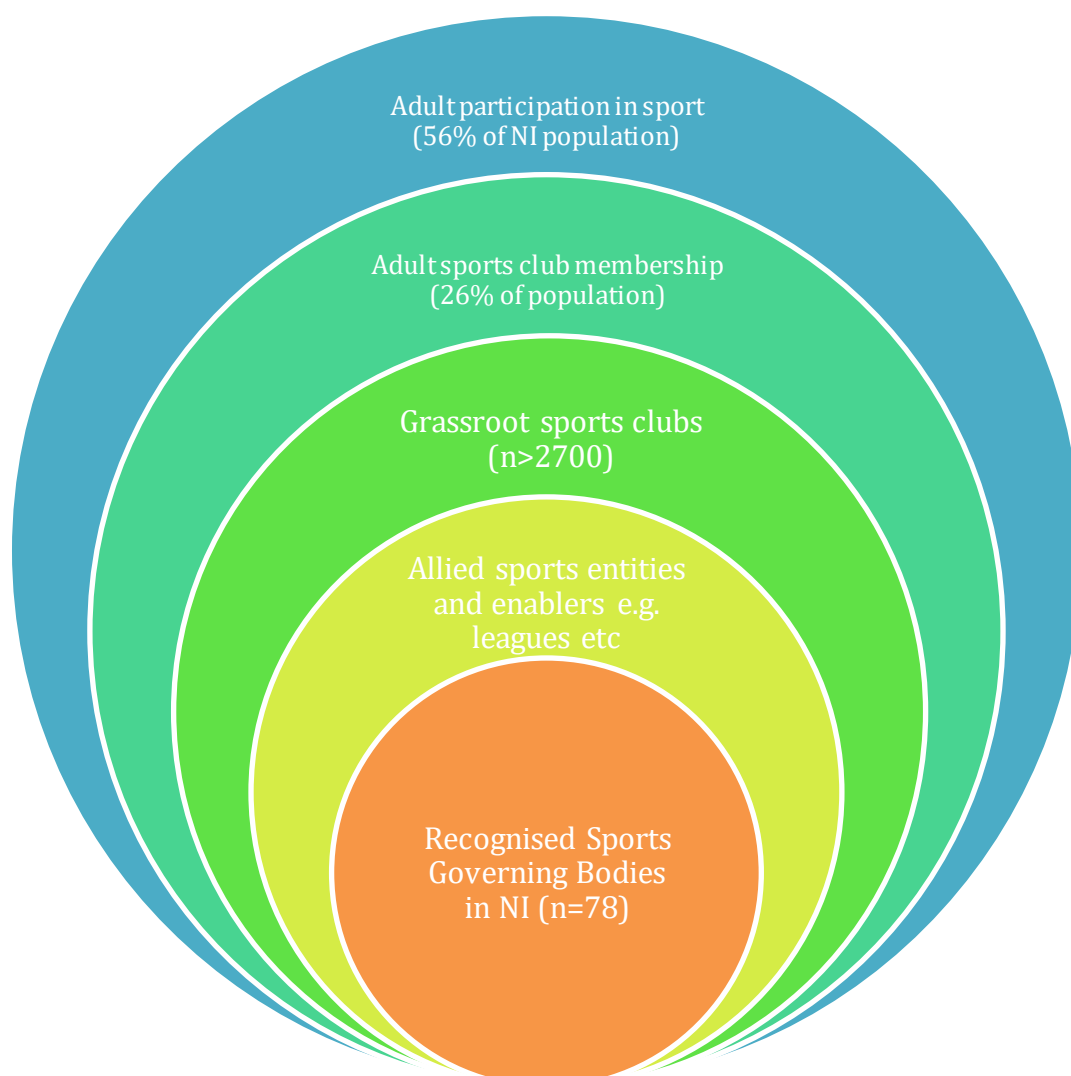
DfC funding of	£25m
Towards the Total Central Government Expenditure* of	£25m
Towards the Total NI Public Expenditure Costs of	£25m
And the Total project Costs of	£25m

SPORTS SUSTAINABILITY FUND

Guiding principles and parameters of the scheme

Having secured NI Executive funding for the Sports Sustainability Fund (hereafter 'the Scheme'), the key aim of the Scheme is to help stabilise and sustain National Governing Bodies of sports (and the associated/affiliated elements of the sports' system e.g. sub-regional/Provincial leagues and the network of grassroots sports clubs) in Northern Ireland enabling them to withstand the worst impacts of COVID-19.

Modelling the sports sector in Northern Ireland



The Scheme will align with, and complement, other pre-existing strategic public sector interventions (e.g. DfC-SNI Sports Hardship Fund). The Scheme is intended to provide support to both recognised governing bodies of sport and grassroots sports clubs. The Scheme has been developed to take account of the overarching aim providing financial support to:

- **Sports Governing Bodies (SGBs)** - Sports Sustainability Fund - recognised SGBs bidding on their own behalf and coordinating bids from their affiliated clubs and associated sports entities.
- **Grass root sports clubs** – Sports Hardship Fund - additional support to smaller grassroots clubs in the event of additional identified need. The Sports Hardship Fund currently enables eligible grassroots sports clubs and community sport organisations to apply for up to £3000 funding to offset financial hardship arising from unavoidable costs and/or increased costs associated with COVID-19.

Guiding Principles of the scheme

1. Investment in recognised governing bodies, their affiliated sports clubs and the communities they serve
2. Investment underpinned by equality and inclusion
3. Proportionate allocation of funds so that the breadth and diversity of the whole sports sector can be supported
4. Funding distributed by Sport NI through recognised governing bodies of sport
5. One (consolidated) application per sport (reflective of single recognised governing body per sport)
6. Applications (submissions) reflective of needs of governing body, constituent clubs (and other entities e.g. sub-regional/county structures) and membership
7. Recognition that support to sports clubs (e.g. affiliation/membership fees) provides a 'supply chain' benefit to governing bodies (and helps to sustain the governing body)
8. Development and application of an allocation methodology to inform sports' investment and enable increased transparency
9. Allocation methodology based on main drivers of financial need (not intended to be exhaustive nor prescriptive at this stage and included here to demonstrate the multifaceted nature of COVID-19 impacts on various sports in NI:
 - a. Club membership (capitation) fees
 - b. Club affiliation income
 - c. Event income (participants)
 - d. Gate receipts (spectators)
10. Recognition that 9(d) may only apply to a small number of sports – albeit with a considerable impact on those sports
11. Financial need assessment to take account of other income and funding sources available to the sport (e.g. international governing body support, other UK/NI COVID-19 public support measures, new income streams (eg digital streaming services), unrestricted reserves).

Key milestones

- Confirmation of funding allocation (NI Executive)
- Confirmation of approved business case (DfC)
- Development and approval of a transparent, fair, equitable and efficient funding allocation model

- Preparation of programme documentation and process maps (SNI)
- Launch (SNI/DfC)
- Applications submitted
- Award approvals
- Payments commence

Scheme design/implementation will include:

1. All applicants to the Scheme will be required to complete a financial need assessment template
2. All programme applicants required to include an authorised self-declaration (two authorised signatories) to mitigate risk of fraud; such declarations will also be required for each element of a consolidated application on behalf of one or more affiliated club/sport entity;
3. Given the prevailing context of COVID-19, and the acute financial hardship faced by parts of the sports system, Scheme processes will be designed to operate as efficiently as possible to ensure rapid processing and payment of awards – this may increase the risk of error and fraud (<https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/publications/covid-19-fraud-risks-niao-august-2020>)
4. Applicants must sign up to the agreed programme principles (equality, inclusion, diversity etc.)
5. Funded applicants required to publicise/acknowledge via their website/social media details of all funding received through the Sports Sustainability Fund (in interests of transparency/disclosure)
6. SNI to publish full list of funded projects on its website (details of all awards will also be uploaded to the Government Funding Database)
7. SNI to develop a programme dashboard (similar to Sports Hardship Fund) to ensure transparency, accountability and tracking of Scheme implementation and impact.

What is a Recognised Sport Governing Body?

Sport governing bodies are an essential element of sport. A National Governing Body (NGB) is an organisation that governs and administers a sport on a national basis, whether that is for the whole of the United Kingdom (i.e. England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales), for Great Britain (i.e. England, Scotland and Wales) or for one of the Home Countries individually. An NGB operating in Northern Ireland may operate on an All-Ireland or Ulster Provincial basis. Traditionally NGBs are viewed as the custodians and guardians of their sport.

An NGB would be expected to deliver the following functions within its area of jurisdiction:

- Control and regulate the environment of its sport.
- Administer the practice and participation of its sport.
- Develop its sport.

- Influence both its members and organisations of which it is a member (for example, international bodies).

To be able to deliver the functions, a Recognised NGB is likely to undertake the following activities:

- Prepare and implement a vision and strategic plan for its sport and determine how it will be implemented nationally, regionally and locally.
- Promote its sport.
- Manage the rules and regulations of its sport, including anti-doping, safeguarding/child protection and equality.
- Implement a governance framework for its sport.
- Administer officials of its sport.
- Establish and maintain links with the UK/Ireland and the international governing body / federation.
- Encourage and grow participation.
- Develop coaches, athletes, officials and participants.
- Organise and host competitions.

The most up to date list of recognised sports governing bodies and sports can found on the link below:

<http://www.sportni.net/sportni/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/List-of-UK-Ireland-Recognised-NGBs-and-Sport-List-November-2020.pdf>

What is a Sporting Entity defined under this scheme?

While detailed composition of every sport is likely to display slightly different characteristics, most possess easily recognisable component parts of which the most obvious is 'clubs'.

Sports Clubs are...

The Lifblood of Sport... there are >2600 sports clubs across Northern Ireland driven by over 37,000 volunteers.

The Grassroots of Sport... creating club-based opportunities to inspire lifelong sports participation with >130,000 members

The Foundation of Sport... providing quality environments to develop potential future sporting talent.

For many, sport is synonymous with competition – against oneself, against others, individually or as part of a team. While some governing bodies organise competitions and events directly, others also depend on associated structures within and affiliated to the sport e.g. local, sub-regional and provincial leagues. In many instances these structures are linked into and 'nourish' national and international athlete development and progression and competition. The Scheme recognises the importance of stabilising and sustaining these aspects of the sporting system.

High Level Communications & PR plan

This is a high level plan, it cites the use of Sport NI for administration of the grant; this is for demonstration purposes and the plan can be amended to take account of the agreed way forward.

DfC Sports Branch and SportNI will liaison on Communications and will work with DfC Press and Comms Teams as required throughout.

Press Office contacts: Gareth Bannon and Lindsay Fergus

Stage	Activity	Estimated Timing	Communication Channels	Responsible Owner
Pre-Launch	Project initiation Lines to take	Complete	Internal Comms Private Office	DfC Press Office
	Funding allocation	Complete	Press Releases DfC Social Media Announcements Press Queries	DfC Press Office
	Media Handling	Complete	Press Releases DfC Social Media Announcements Press Queries	DfC Press Office

	Preparation of website content and required branding.	Nov 2020	Preparation phase	Sports Branch in liaison with Comms team and SportNI.
	Development of application materials including application forms, guidance materials, letters of award.	Nov/Dec 2020	Preparation phase	SportNI lead in liaison with DfC as required. Materials carrying the DfC logo need sign off by CEU
	Public Affairs activity as required – handling queries from politicians, stakeholders etc.	Ongoing	Correspondence cases	Sports Branch & Project Team
Launch Phase	Launch- Lead and deliver media and stakeholder launch of Fund	Dec 2020	Ministerial Press Release Social Media Announcement / Video Use of Lines To Take to answer media queries. SportNI liaise with DfC on media enquiries	DfC Press Office (lead) Sport N.I. (feed in as required)
	Programme open and applicant support- Lead and deliver supporting comms activity	Dec 2020	Content and branding agreed and uploaded on Sport N.I.'s website, DfC website, NI Direct Website, DfC COVID-19 Update page FAQs uploaded onto relevant websites. Inform DfC Committee in advance and provide information to MLAs.	DfC Press Office /CEU Sport N.I. (
	Internal news story	Dec 2020	Internal news story on the intranet	Repurpose Press Release and share across all DfC Staff

	Award approvals	Jan / Feb 2020	DfC / SportNI to publicise awards of funding. Ongoing promotion of programme (as required). Updates to Departmental Sport N.I.'s websites as required Sport N.I. will provide information on grants awarded to an agreed timetable if needed. This will be useful for Freedom Of Information request. It should be made clear to recipients of awards that they are to acknowledge the support of the Department in any publicity they are doing about the award	DfC Press Office to lead in liaison with Sport N.I. as required SportNI
	Payments	Jan / Feb 2020	Use of most up to date LTT to handle media enquiries. Ongoing promotion of programme (as required). Sport N.I. will provide information on grants awarded to an agreed timetable if needed. This will be useful for Freedom Of Information request.	DfC Press Office to lead in liaison with Sport N.I. as required
	Public Affairs activity as required – handling queries from politicians, stakeholders etc.	From launch onwards.	Correspondence cases	Project Team
Post-launch Phase	Post launch media handling good and bad press.	From Dec 2020 onwards	Use of most up to date LTT to handle media enquiries. Ongoing promotion of programme (as required). Sport N.I. will provide information on grants awarded to an agreed timetable if needed. This will be useful for Freedom Of Information request.	DfC Press Office to lead Sport N.I. (feed in as required)

	Post launch Communications	Dec 2020 Onwards	Updates to Departmental websites / SportNI website as required. SportNI will provide information on grants awarded to an agreed timetable if needed.	Sports Branch in liaison with DfC Comms team. SportNI to feed in where required.
	Post launch Public Affairs activity as required – handling queries from politicians, stakeholders etc.	Dec 2020 Onwards	Correspondence Cases	Project Team.
	FOIs	Dec 2020 onwards	Sport NI will provide information on grants awarded to an agreed timetable if needed.	Project Team in liaison with Sport NI as required.

NEEDS SECTION – Supporting Evidence

Economic contribution

Sport makes a significant contribution to the NI economy

- NI Sport GVA £298m (Gross Value Added)
- NI Number of Sport Businesses 1,100
- NI Number of people employed in Sport 11,000 (1% of all jobs in NI)

Participation and benefits of sports

Sport plays a key role in the lives of many individuals, clubs and sports governing bodies. The following sections are taken from the “*Experience of sport by young people in Northern Ireland*” and “*Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland*” reports which were published by DfC in October 2020. These sections help quantify the importance and benefits of sport in the lives of young people and adults focusing on outcomes such as sport as a means of having fun, building confidence and meeting new friends.

Clearly the absence of financial assistance to support the sector will have a detrimental effect on the key role sport plays in contributing to the positive health and well-being of individuals, groups and communities. In addition, sporting achievements at local, national and international level instils a sense of appreciation and pride in communities and wider society.

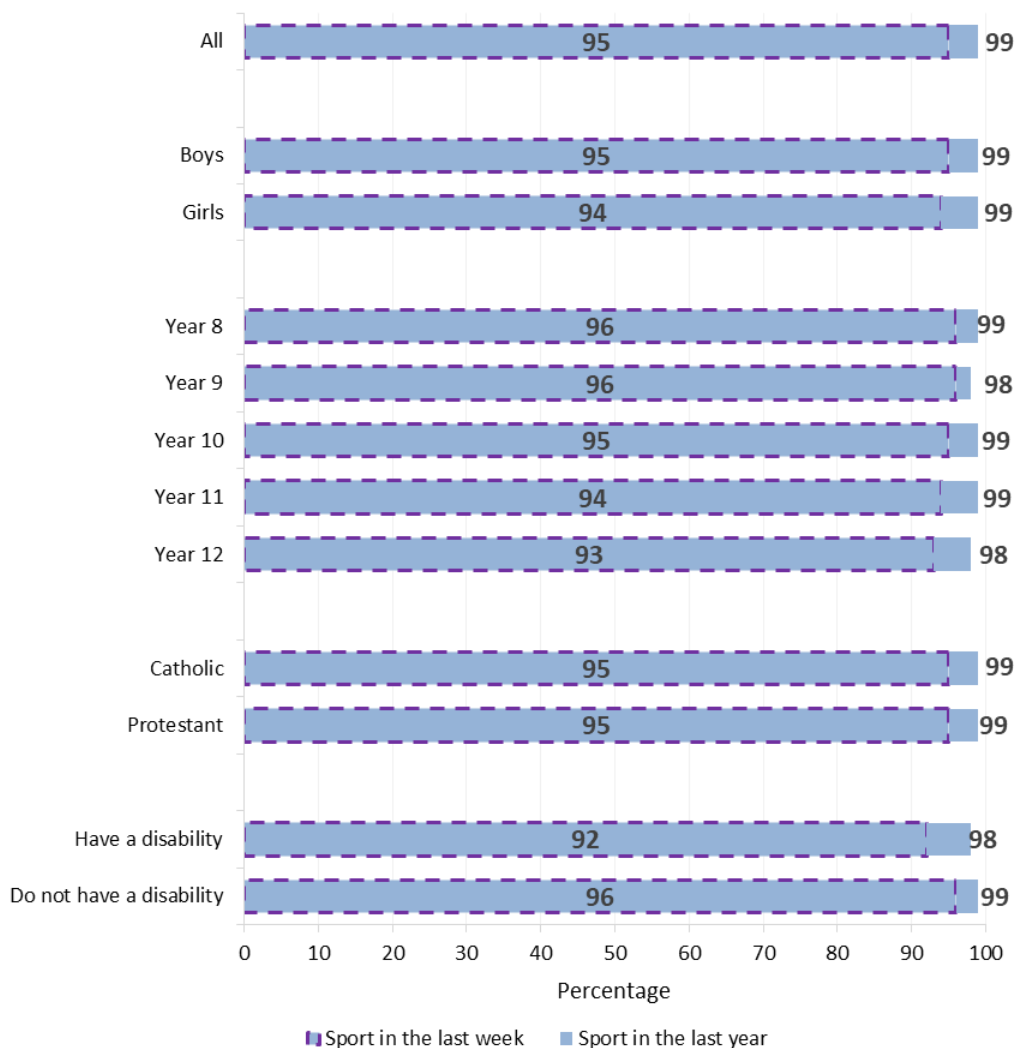
The data on spectating at sporting events outlines the importance people place on just being able to watch sport; this is further supported by research by EY into what society missed most when in lockdown – playing and watching sport both featured in the top 9. With the majority of sports events either cancelled or elite sport being played behind closed doors or with limited spectators, this will clearly have an impact not just on the financial side for clubs and governing bodies but also on the mental wellbeing of those who enjoy being part of the event experience.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Participation in sport or physical activity

In 2019, almost all young people in Northern Ireland (99%) had taken part in sport or physical activity within the year prior to the survey, while 95% had taken part in the previous week.

Participation figures for both time frames, the last year and the last week, were similar for boys and girls as well as for young people from the Catholic and Protestant communities. Young people who have a disability were less likely to have participated in sport within the last year (98%) or within the last week (92%) compared to those who do not have a disability (99% in the last year and 96% in the last week).



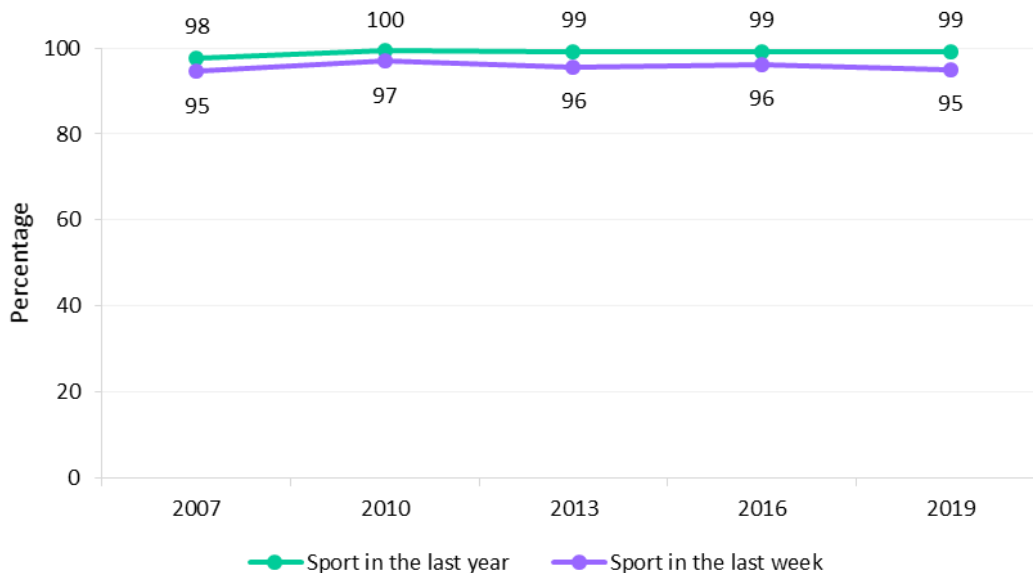
As stated almost all young people in Northern Ireland had participated in sport in the course of the last year. This proportion has remained consistent from 2013 onwards following a slight decrease from 100% in 2010 to 99% in 2013.

The trend for the proportion of young people who had participated in sport in the last week is very similar to that for participation in the last year.

Analysis by gender shows that there were no changes in the proportions of both boys and girls who participated in sport in the last year from 2013 to 2019, following a decrease from 100% participation of both boys and girls in 2010.

The proportion of boys who had participated in sport in the last week has slightly decreased from a peak of 98% in 2010 to 95% in 2019. Participation rates of girls within the last week had remained consistent over the trend period until a decrease from 2016 to 2019.

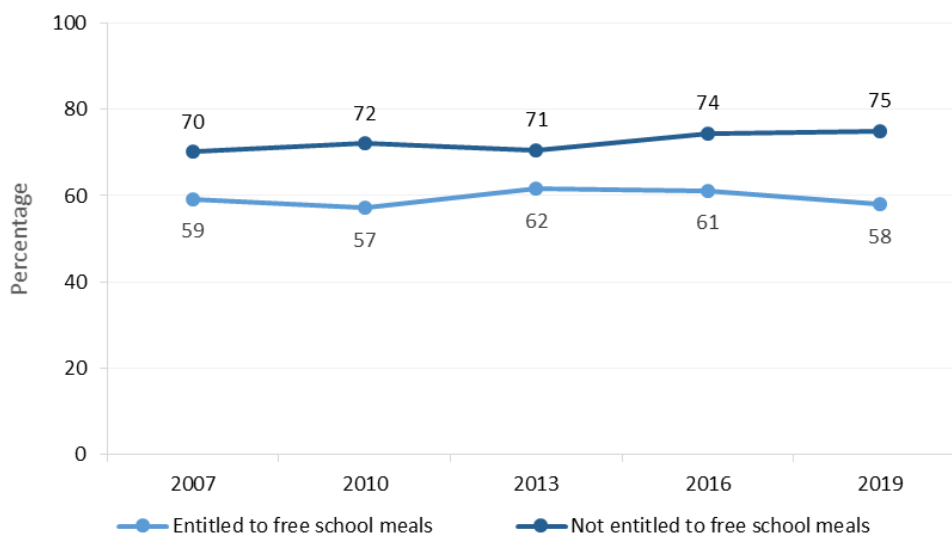
While young people entitled to free school meals were generally less likely to participate in sport than those not entitled to free school meals, the longer term trends for both groups show little change in the sport participation rate in the last year from 2013. There has been a decrease in sport participation rates in the last week for both those who are entitled to free school meals and those who are not entitled from 2016 to 2019.



Sports club membership – young people

Analysis of the longer term trend shows that sports club membership has remained fairly consistent at around seven out of every ten young people with no obvious upward or downward trend overall.

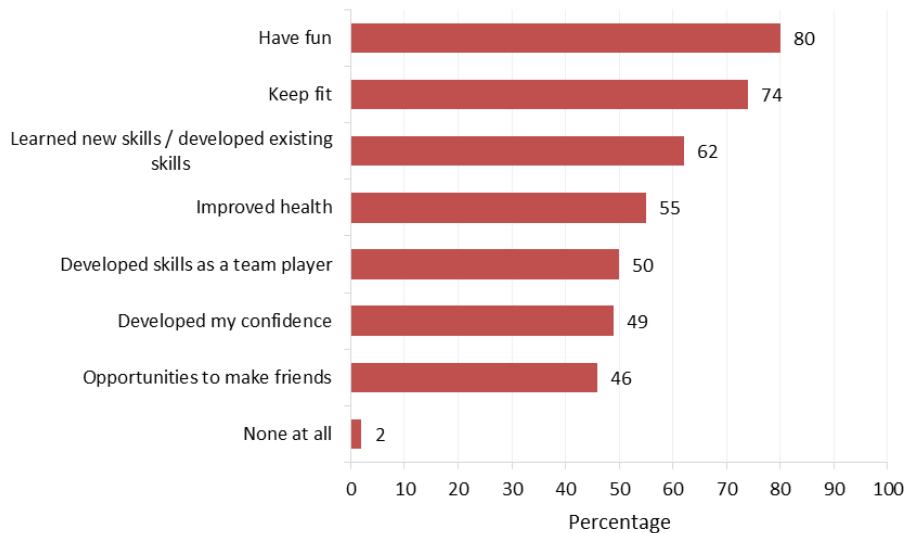
Young people entitled to free school meals were generally less likely to be a member of a sports team or club than those not entitled to free school meals. The longer term trends for free school meal entitlement showed that the membership rates for those who were entitled have remained consistent throughout the trend period, however those not entitled have shown a slight increase from the start of the trend period from 70% in 2007 to 75% in 2019.



Benefits of sport or physical activity

The top 5 most frequently cited benefits of having participated in sport or physical activity were “have fun” (80%), “keep fit” (74%), “learned new skills / developed existing skills” (62%), “improved health” (55%) and “developed skills as a team player” (50%).

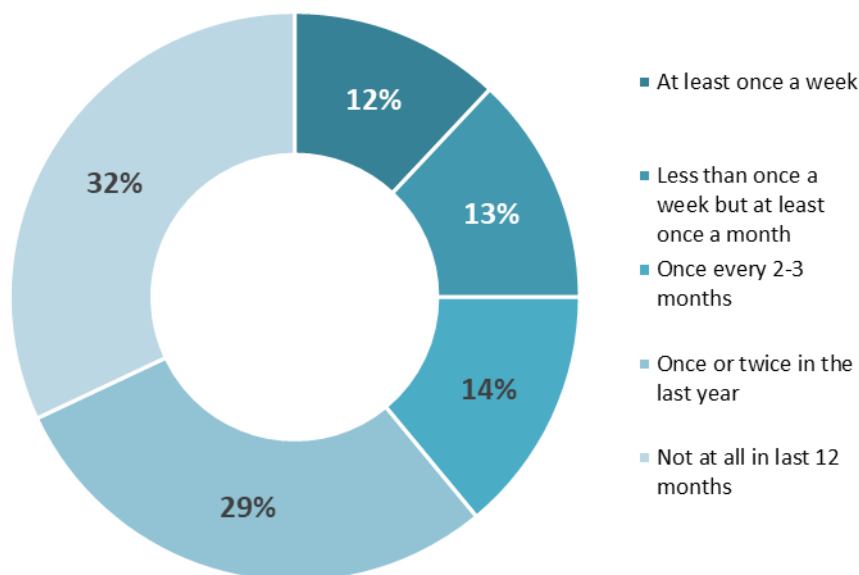
There were differences between the proportions of boys and girls citing various responses. Boys were more likely than girls to state keeping fit (77%), improved health (60%) and developed skills as a team player or developed confidence (both 52%) as benefits that they experienced from participating in sports or physical activities.



Attendance at live sports events

Just over two thirds of young people (68%) had attended a live sports event in the previous year as a spectator. A quarter (25%) had done so at least once a month and 12% at least once a week. Boys (72%) were more likely to have attended a live sports event in the previous year in order to spectate than girls (63%). Likewise, boys were more likely to have attended at least once a month (29%) compared to girls (20%), and boys were more likely to have attended at least once a week than girls (14% and 9% respectively).

Young people who were entitled to free school meals were more likely to have not attended a sports event at all as a spectator within the previous year (41%) than young people who were not entitled to free school meals (29%).

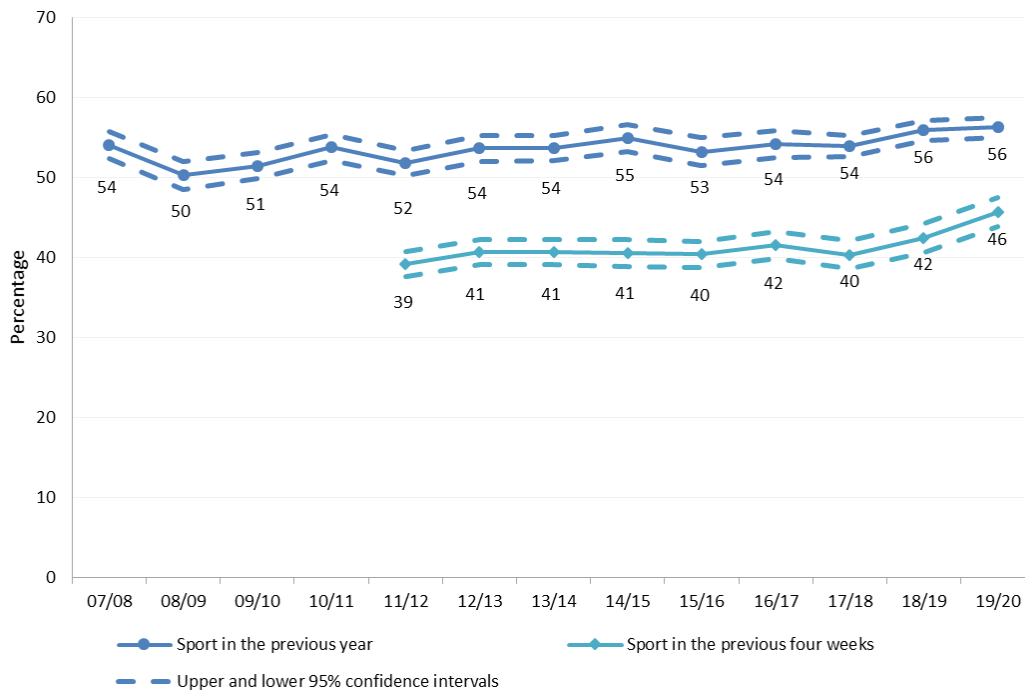


Sport trends for Adults

Sport participation

More than half of adults (56%) participated in sport at least once within the last year, similar to the proportion in 2018/19 (56%). The sport participation rate has remained fairly stable over the previous nine years, following an initial decline between 2007/08 and 2008/09.

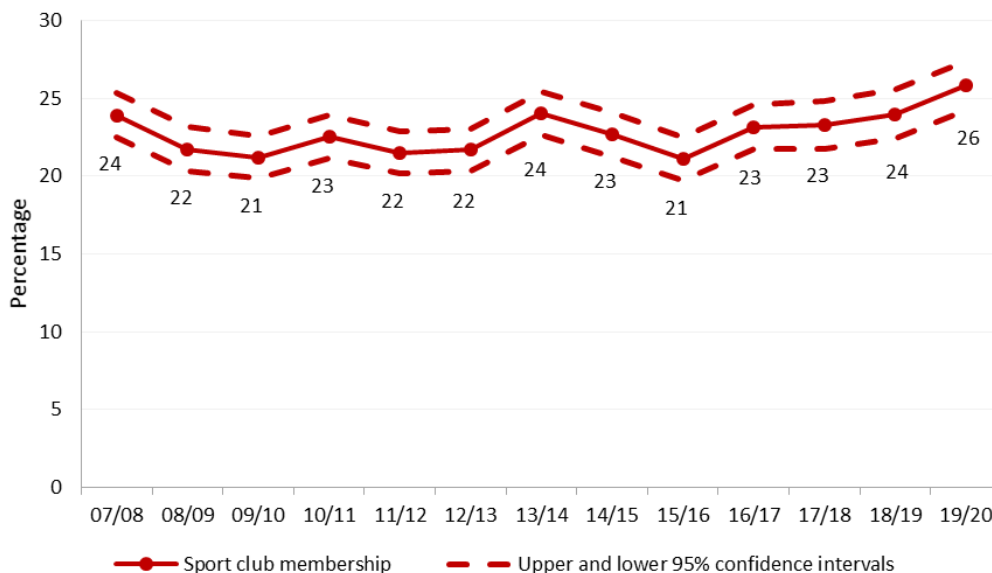
Since first recorded in the 2011/12 Continuous Household Survey (CHS), around four out of every ten adults have taken part in sport at least once within the previous four weeks. The proportion in 2019/20 has seen an increase on this trend with 46% participating in sport over the last four weeks, the highest proportion of participation recorded over the trend period.



Sport club membership - adults

Just over one quarter (26%) of adults were a member of a sports club or organisation within the previous year. This proportion is unchanged when compared with the 2018/19 figure (24%), although is an increase on the longer term trend.

Since 2007/08 sports club membership has remained fairly consistent between a fifth and a quarter of the adult population.



Disability and sport participation

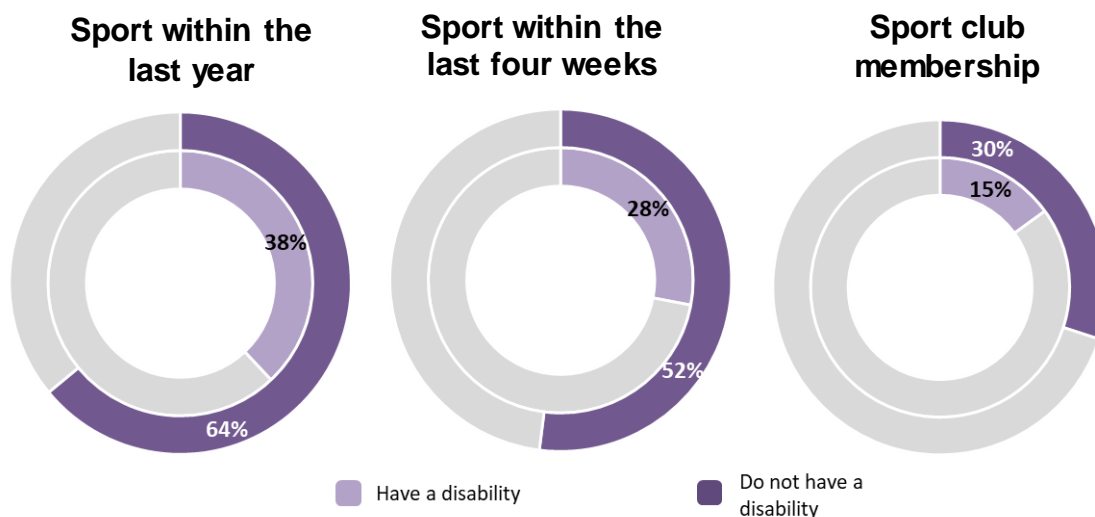
Those who have a disability less likely to participate in sport

Those aged 16 and over who have a disability were less likely to have taken part in sport at least once within the last year (38%) compared with those who do not have a disability (64%).

A similar disparity was found when participation rates over the last four weeks were considered, where over a quarter of those with a disability (28%) were found to have taken part in sport compared to over half of adults who do not have a disability (52%).

Fifteen per cent of adults with a disability were members of a sports club, a lower proportion than the 30% of those who do not have a disability.

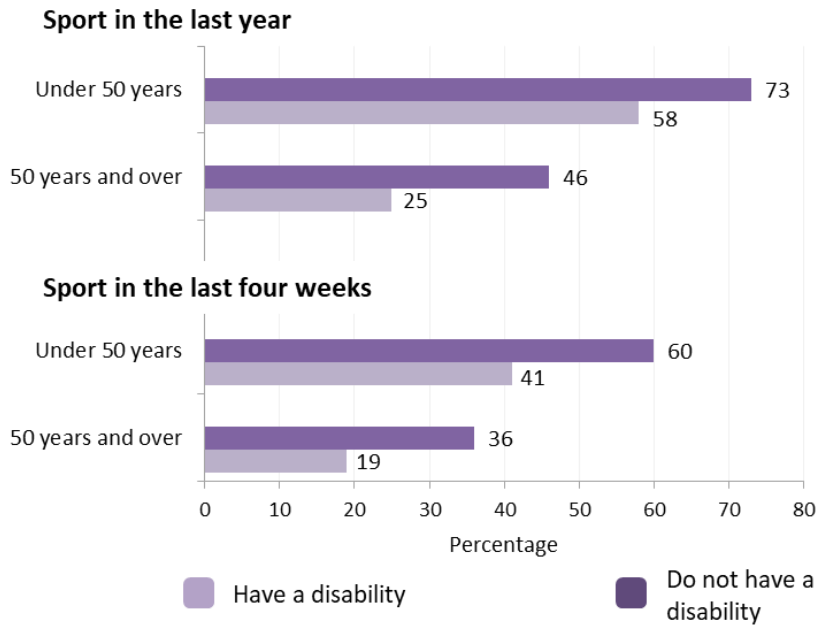
Rates of participation in sport for adults who have a disability have remained fairly consistent at around a third of adults since 2011/12 (32%), aside from a slight decrease to 26% in 2012/13.



Disability and age

Disability and age are closely related. On balance, the older we become the more likely we are to have a disability. Results have also shown that age and sport participation are negatively correlated, as we get older, the less likely we are to participate in sport.

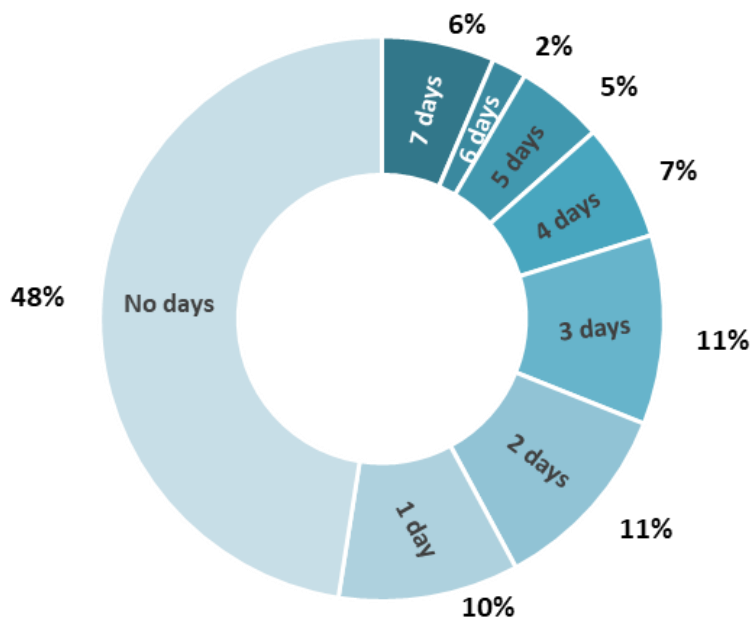
Considering age and disability, analysis was conducted on broad age groups under 50 years and 50 years and over. The results show that both younger and older adults who have a disability were less likely to participate in sport within the previous year than those who do not have a disability. This suggests that irrespective of age, disability negatively affects the likelihood of adults participating in sport, although there is a bigger differential among older adults. When participation rates over the last four weeks were considered, the results were similar.



Regular participation in sport

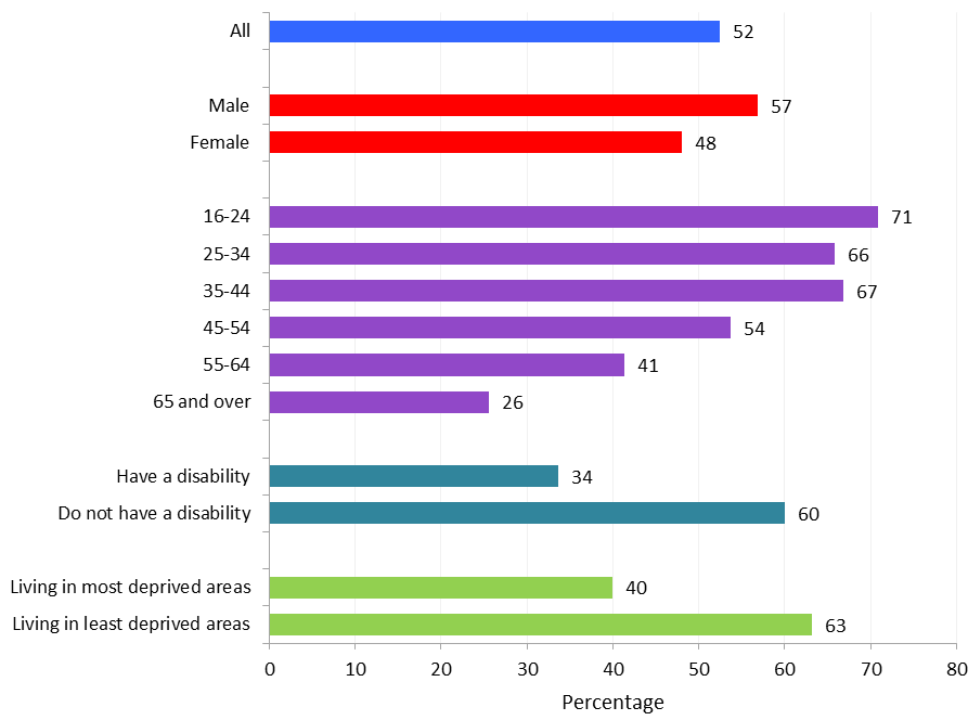
Adults in Northern Ireland were asked how many days per week do they normally take part in sport. Whilst over half of all adults (56%) had participated in sport at least once within the previous year, 52% normally participated in sport at least one day per week, with a fifth (20%) normally participating on 4 or more days per week.

The proportion who had participated in sport at least one day per week, in 2019/20 (52%) is similar to the proportion in 2018/19 (51%).



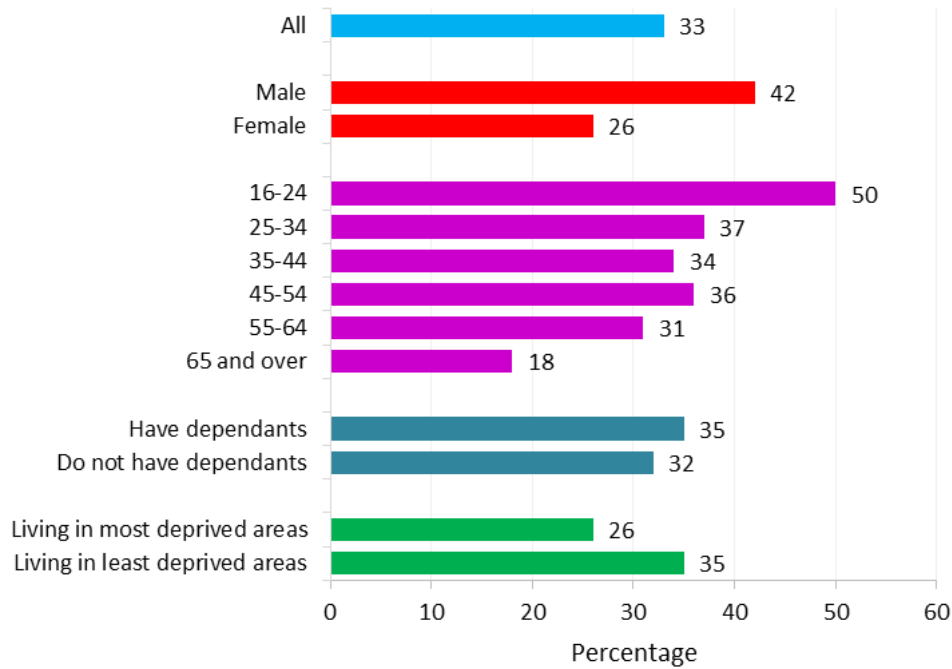
There are similar differences by gender, age, disability and deprivation as for

other indicators of sport participation. Those normally participating on one or more days per week was lower for women, older adults, adults with a disability and adults living in the most deprived areas.



Attendance at live sports events

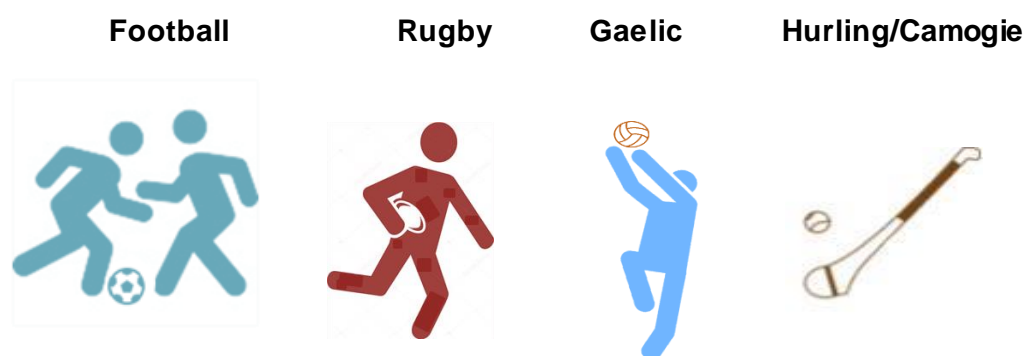
One third of all adults (33%) had attended a live organised sporting event as a spectator within the last year. Males (42%) were more likely to have attended a live organised sporting event than females (26%). Analysis by age shows that as age increases the proportion of adults who spectate at a live sporting event generally decreases particularly from age 55 onwards. Analysis by disability and deprivation shows lower levels of attendance among adults with a disability and those living in the most deprived areas.



Popular live sports events

Adults who indicated that they had attended a live sporting event, at any level, in Northern Ireland as a spectator were then asked which sports they had watched as live events. The most popular sports were 'Football' (34%), 'Rugby' (25%), 'Gaelic' (25%), followed by 'Hurling/Camogie' (9%), 'Motorsports' (7%), and 'Golf' (7%).

When analysed by gender the most popular sports watched live were:



Sports Governing Bodies and Sporting Entities **Financial Loss information**

The following information was submitted to DfC by Governing Bodies and sporting entities which helped quantify the amount of funding relief sought from the NI Executive to assist the sector. Taking account of the estimated unavailable data from the other smaller governing bodies and the potential necessity for reopening the Sports Hardship Fund for smaller grant funding awards to grassroots clubs the total amount of funds bid for was £25m.

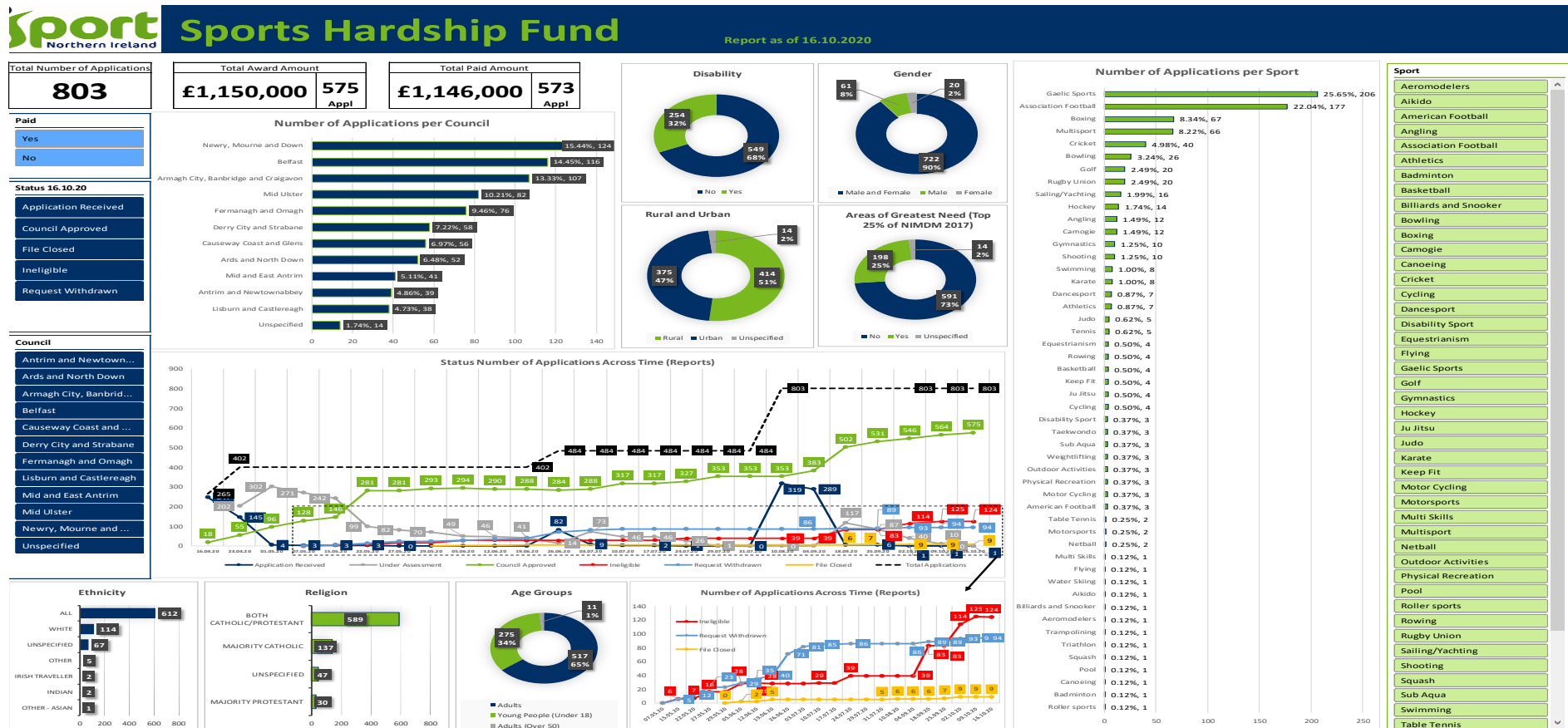
SPORTS SECTOR COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPACT		
GOVERNING BODY	OVERALL LOSS	GATE RECEIPT
Cricket	1,312,337	0
Netball NI	14,025	8,950
Ice Hockey	1,200,000	0
GAA	3,414,467	2,799,607
Ladies Gaelic Football	25,000	0
Ulster Hockey	30,000	30,000
IFA	4,000,000	3,000,000
NIFL	3,566,752	2,438,654
Motorsport	200,000	0
Ulster Rugby	5,970,000	3,274,000
Total	19,732,581	£11,551,211

No gate receipt info was available for Cricket, Ice hockey, LGF & Motorsport

Sports Hardship Fund

The COVID-19 Restrictions have had a massive impact on sports organisations across the north. All sporting activity ceased except for the daily exercise allowed by the Public Health Regulations. This meant that organisations could not generate income, for example, through membership dues, training/coaching sessions, organised events etc. As result the Department and Sport NI launched the Sports Hardship Fund which with a fund of £1.245m, over 620 small clubs will receive a grant of £2,000 to assist them with essential maintenance costs on their facilities.

Latest data on the numbers of applications received and funding allocated to date is outlined below:



Section 75 Screening Form

13.13..1.1 Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

13.13..1.2 Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Covid-19 Sports Sustainability Fund

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

New

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

A financial assistance package is being developed for the sports sector with the aim of establishing a scheme to be administered by SportNI called the "Covid-19 Sports Sustainability Fund 2020". This is required as a result of the ongoing significant disruption caused as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A major relief programme is needed to be put in place quickly to prevent the closure of sports clubs and organisations and the loss of key services.

The Covid-19 Sport Sustainability Fund is focused on relief for Governing Bodies, mainly operating at elite sport level, and sporting entities that have lost considerable sums due to cancellation of competitions, lost gate receipts etc. Grants received will support the Governing Bodies, which will also have the ability to disperse the funds to their member organisations.

The Covid-19 Sports Sustainability Fund Objectives are:

- Ensure that, as far as possible, the range of sports clubs and organisations within the sports sector that currently exists, are sustained

through the current Covid-19 crisis and are still in operation to support participation in sport and physical activity post the pandemic.

- To provide financial relief to sports Governing Bodies and associated clubs to ensure they remain viable once the current Covid-19 pandemic;
- To ensure the timely financial intervention to help prevent the potential closure of sports clubs and organisations that are at risk due to the Covid-19 pandemic;
- That financial interventions mitigate the negative impacts on the sports sector and ongoing delivery of key sporting provision;
- To ensure the Sustainability Fund targets financial need, defined as unavoidable expenditure to sports organisations experiencing significant reductions with income, facing ongoing fixed/operational costs and therefore experiencing cash flow difficulties leading to the imminent threat of closure;
- As a fund of last resort, ensure that financial interventions complement rather than duplicate other national and regional support packages;
- Given the critical nature of financial loss to the sport sector ensure the need for financial support to reach bank accounts in a timely way with the process and administration remaining robust as simple as possible;
- Cost controls are agreed to ensure the scheme's affordability within its current constraint of £25 million; and
- Agree a transparent process of prioritisation where demand for financial support exceeds the available funding.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

Yes

If Yes, explain how.

As all sports clubs across NI will be negatively impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions, all Section 75 groups are expected to benefit from this Fund. These organisations include:

- National Governing Body of Sport (based in NI);
- Constituted local sports clubs affiliated to a Governing Body of Sport recognised by Sport NI;
- Community & Voluntary sector organisations that deliver or enable sport and/or physical recreation; and
- Small sport related charitable trusts that do not qualify for financial help elsewhere.

The fund is focused on relief for Governing Bodies, mainly operating at elite level, and sporting entities that have lost considerable finance due to cancellation of competitions, lost gate receipts etc.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The Covid-19 Sport Sustainability Fund Policy has been developed by the Department for Communities in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions which have been put in place.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Sustainability Fund will be funded by the Department for Communities and SportNI. The Fund will then be managed and administered by Sport NI on behalf of DfC.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they

- financial
- legislative
- other, please specify - At the time of development, implementation, we are unsure how long the Covid-19 restrictions will be in place. The current funding allocation may not be sufficient to meet the aims of the Fund and further bids for funding may be required. The position will be kept under review during the lifetime of the fund.

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

- staff
- service users
- other public sector organisations
- voluntary/community/trade unions
- other, please specify - Sports Clubs/sports organisations

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

What are they and who owns them?

NI Executive - New Decade, New Approach 2020; draft Programme for Government

Sport Northern Ireland - Corporate Plan 2015-20

Department of Health – Making Life Better 2012–2023 Framework

Disability Sector – Active Living No Limits Action Plan

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for **each** of the Section 75 categories.

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
General information relating to all Section 75 groups	<p>This programme aims to support governing bodies and sporting entities that have lost considerable finance due to cancellation of competitions, lost gate receipts etc. A full list of the current recognised governing bodies can be found at the below link:</p> <p>http://www.sportni.net/sportni/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/List-of-UK-Recognised-NGBs-and-Sport-List-September-2020-converted.pdf</p> <p>These organisations support the full range of Section 75 Categories. DfC officials have engaged directly with the sector to gather evidence on the extent of the financial hardship being experienced. In addition the DfC Minister met with over 70 senior representatives from a broad range of</p>

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
	<p>Governing Bodies and sporting organisations on 19 October and heard at first hand the concerns that they all had for their individual sports. Those concerns focussed on activities once again ceasing over the October/November 2020 period due to the transmission rates, the serious impact the pandemic has had on participation levels, the long term viability of some clubs and sporting organisations and the limited financial support to help the sector in the short to medium term.</p> <p>Sharp falls in gate receipts and other income streams including hospitality, merchandising, TV revenue and sponsorship are being impacted due to cancelled events such as the North West 200 and the Ice Hockey League. Limitations on spectator numbers or fixtures taking place with no spectators cost clubs much needed revenue normally generated through hospitality, merchandising/retail and ticket sales e.g. the IFA have indicated that an international fixture without spectators costs the association circa £600k.</p> <p>At grassroots level the Sports Hardship Fund has supported smaller clubs in sustaining their facilities, paying essential bills during lockdown and also reducing costs by providing PPE for participants and volunteers but it does not provide support for Governing Bodies or larger clubs.</p> <p>Recent data collected, at a UK level by Sported, suggests that more than three out of four sports organisations are not confident that they will exist in six months' time – this has risen from one in four before Covid-19</p> <p>Sport NI has estimated that there are currently in the region of 3,600 sports clubs across Northern Ireland. It is</p>

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
	<p>anticipated that up to 50% of these clubs either own or lease their own premises and sports grounds.</p> <p>Generic evidence to inform this policy includes the most recent NI Statistics & Research Agency Continuous Household Survey (CHS) (October 2019). Relevant findings showed that during 18/19: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56% of all adults had participated in sport at least once within the last year, an increase of 2% since 2017/18; • 24% of adults were members of a sports club or organisation within the previous year, an increase of 1% of the 2017/18 figure; and • 87% of children participated in sport outside of school, compared to 84% in 2017/18.
Religious belief	<p>We do not have information available to provide a breakdown of the religious beliefs of those participating in sport however 'sport for all' is geared to ensure that everyone is encouraged to participate it is clear that S75 group will be represented.</p>
Political opinion	<p>We do not have information available to provide a breakdown of the political opinions of those participating in sport however 'sport for all' is geared to ensure that everyone is encouraged to participate it is clear that S75 group will be represented.</p>
Racial group	<p>We do not have information available to provide a breakdown of the racial groups participating in sport however 'sport for all' is geared to ensure that everyone is</p>

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
	encouraged to participate it is clear that S75 group will be represented.
Age	The CHS report referenced above also recorded that 59% of adults aged between 16 and 24 years had taken part in sport and 24% of adults aged 65 years and over.
Marital status	There is no evidence around the marital status of the participants involved with each Governing Body however 'sport for all' is geared to ensure that everyone is encouraged to participate it is clear that S75 group will be represented.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence around the sexual orientation of the participants involved with each Governing Body however 'sport for all' is geared to ensure that everyone is encouraged to participate it is clear that S75 group will be represented.
Men and women generally	The CHS report shows that Males (61%) were more likely to have participated in sport within the last year compared to females (51%).
Disability	The CHS survey found that 14% of adults with a disability were members of a sports club, a lower proportion than the 27% of those who do not have a disability.
Dependants	There is no evidence around the participants involved with each Governing Body and their dependants however 'sport for all' is geared to ensure that everyone is encouraged to participate it is clear that S75 group will be represented.

Note to reader - If you are aware of and would like the Department to take into account any further evidence or information relevant to this policy, please send this to sports@communities-ni.gov.uk.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details for **each** of the Section 75 categories

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
<p>Generic Need</p>	<p>While some Governing Bodies and clubs have had some financial support through business relief grants, rate relief and the Furlough Schemes to date there has been no major COVID-19 relief package for the sector.</p> <p>DfC officials and SportNI, have engaged with sports Governing Bodies and NIFL to gather evidence of the level of financial losses the organisations estimate they and their clubs have incurred since the lockdown in March and what the potential impact will be of further restrictions. This estimate includes the impact of limited spectators or having to play their senior competitions behind closed doors.</p> <p>The evidence from the larger Governing Bodies includes details of income generated over a number of years from gate receipts and can be evidenced in audited accounts. Other aspects have been based on lost revenue from events, membership, competitor levies, hospitality and merchandising.</p> <p>For example, at a high level the impact of not having spectators present at an international at the National Football</p>

	<p>Stadium costs the IFA circa £600k per fixture. Having a limited number of spectators at an international fixture does not make them financially viable unless there is over 30% of the capacity permitted. Playing games with no spectators present will cost the IFA £3m over the next 6 months.</p> <p>NIFL have produced a report that has been developed by their Taskforce, which was made up of senior figures from the Irish League clubs, NIFL and two independent members not associated with senior football. The report has calculated the impact of playing with no spectators for the Premiership clubs will be £2.1m with a further £300k lose being incurred by the Championship and Senior Intermediate clubs and women's Premiership.</p> <p>Ulster Rugby as an organisation faces a very difficult situation given that they have significant costs associated with their professional contracts and their financial model relies heavily on the revenue generated from gate receipts, hospitality and merchandising. They have indicated that they face a deficit in the region of £3m for the Interprovincial side alone if spectators, in significant numbers, cannot be permitted to attend their Pro14 fixtures. In addition the impact on senior League club games of smaller attendance numbers, no hospitality and reduced sponsorship income has left clubs facing financial difficulties.</p> <p>The GAA is the other major sports Governing Body that has incurred serious financial pressure due to COVID-19 with gate receipts alone estimated to be in the region of £3.5m. The National League</p>
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fixtures which were suspended in mid-March are being played behind closed doors. The Ulster Club Championship has been cancelled this year and the Ulster Senior Championship which was delayed over the summer is due to commence on 31 October. These competitions along with the club county championships are the major sources of revenue for Ulster GAA and the County Boards.

Other sports Governing Bodies have seen membership decline, participation reduce and events cancelled. Sports such as cycling and athletics who generate revenue through mass participation events are facing serious financial issues as the levies from competitors have been reduced as numbers were limited for long periods and will be again. Many clubs, such as gymnastics and swimming clubs, faced increasing costs as they tried to restart their activities and with further disruption and for some a very short season many events simply have not taken place.

The Motorcycle Road Racing Season was decimated along with most other motorsport disciplines, as was the International Cricket series, with all fixtures cancelled, horse racing remains behind closed doors which means the courses are losing revenue and Ice Hockey didn't finish last year's competitions and have already decided that this year's League will not happen. Indoor sports such as Boxing, other contact sports, Netball and Basketball have all been seriously impacted by the restrictions and have had no opportunity to return to competition and to generate income.

The senior representatives of the sector have highlighted their precarious position in

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
	<p>person to the DfC Minister who has committed to seeking sufficient funds to help to sustain the Governing Bodies and their clubs. Some sports as highlighted need significant financial assistance in particular the GAA, Ulster Rugby and the IFA. These are the sports that are most dependent on the revenue they generate from spectators. Having been in regular contact with the most senior officials from these bodies it is clear that they have serious concerns about their future and the future of their clubs.</p> <p>Other sports have proportionate financial pressures and will struggle as they do not have the reserves available to them to continue to sustain their organisations and to support their clubs. The restrictions earlier this year impacted club fund raising activities, reduced membership subscriptions and limited the scope for summer camps. The latest restrictions will again result in activities ceasing, Halloween camps being cancelled and other fund raising activities lost.</p>
Religious belief	<p>Governing Bodies support a range of cross community programmes that would not be sustained without the support of this fund.</p> <p>We do not have sufficient information available on differential financial impacts across the Governing Bodies which may be affecting organisations' ability to cater to the specific needs, experiences and priorities of S.75 groups.</p> <p>However there is no evidence to suggest that people of religious belief have different needs, experiences and priorities in relation to this programme.</p>

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Political opinion	<p>We do not have sufficient information available on differential financial impacts across the Governing Bodies which may be affecting organisations' ability to cater to the specific needs, experiences and priorities of S.75 groups.</p> <p>However there is no evidence to suggest that people of different political opinion have different needs, experiences and priorities in relation to this programme.</p>
Racial group	<p>We do not have sufficient information available on differential financial impacts across the Governing Bodies which may be affecting organisations' ability to cater to the specific needs, experiences and priorities of S.75 groups</p> <p>However there is no evidence to suggest that people of different racial groups have different needs, experiences and priorities in relation to this programme.</p>
Age	<p>Governing Bodies require support to continue running their existing programmes and initiatives aimed at all age groups such as the IFA with their 'Walking Football' programme for men and women over 50, the GAA and Ulster Rugby both have numerous youth projects that would all be affected should funding not be made available. The broad range of sport represented by the various Governing Bodies impact people of all ages.</p> <p>Although we do not have sufficient information available on differential financial impacts across the Governing Bodies which may be affecting organisations' ability to cater to the specific needs, experiences and priorities of S.75 groups</p>

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
Marital status	<p>We do not have sufficient information available on differential financial impacts across the Governing Bodies which may be affecting organisations' ability to cater to the specific needs, experiences and priorities of S.75 groups although it is clear if these organisations aren't supported any current initiatives that are in place will cease.</p> <p>However, there is no evidence to suggest that people of different marital status have different needs, experiences and priorities in relation to this programme.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>There is no evidence to suggest that people of different sexual orientation have different needs, experiences and priorities in relation to this programme.</p>
Men and women generally	<p>Governing Bodies require support to ensure their range of programmes and initiatives aimed at both men and women remain in place. Those sports that are predominantly aimed at woman e.g. Netball NI need support to continue their work.</p> <p>We do not have sufficient information available on differential financial impacts across the Governing Bodies which may be affecting organisations' ability to cater to the specific needs, experiences and priorities of S.75 groups</p>
Disability	<p>Governing Bodies require support to continue running their existing programmes and initiatives aimed at those people with disabilities such as the IFA with their 'Disability Football' programme, the GAA's 'Disability GAA' and Ulster Rugby's 'Disability Rugby'.</p> <p>We do not have sufficient information available on differential financial impacts</p>

Section 75 category	Details of needs/experiences/priorities
	<p>across the Governing Bodies which may be affecting organisations' ability to cater to the specific needs, experiences and priorities of S.75 groups although it is clear if these organisations aren't supported any current initiatives that are in place will cease.</p>
Dependants	<p>We do not have sufficient information available on differential financial impacts across the Governing Bodies which may be affecting organisations' ability to cater to the specific needs, experiences and priorities of S.75 groups</p> <p>There is no evidence to suggest that people with dependants have different needs, experiences and priorities in relation to this programme.</p>

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none

Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Religious belief	We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different religious beliefs. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None
Political opinion	We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people with different political opinions. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None
Racial group	We do expect there to be any adverse impact on people from different racial/ethnic groups. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None
Age	We do expect there to be any adverse impact on people of different ages. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None
Marital status	We do expect there to be any adverse impact on people depending on their marital status. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None
Sexual orientation	We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people depending on their sexual orientation. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None

Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Men and women generally	We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on men and women generally. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None
Disability	We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on people with disabilities. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None
Dependants	We do not expect there to be any adverse impact on those with dependents. Any impacts of this policy should be positive.	None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Section 75 category	If Yes, provide details	If No, provide reasons
All categories		This programme will help support the key sports governing bodies, entities and sports clubs to remain viable throughout and beyond the current pandemic. This is a fund of last resort and as such is only there to help organisations maintain their current levels of delivery. There is no opportunity for enhancements however the organisations will still be able to provide opportunities for females, those with disabilities, older people and those from areas of greatest need. This funding will help organisations to survive and continue to offer opportunities across all Section 75 categories.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none

Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact minor/major/none
Religious belief	Sport brings people together and the ability of sports clubs to survive through the Covid-19 restrictions will contribute to the sustainability of future participation opportunities which can be offered to all Section 75 categories, including people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial groups.	None
Political opinion	Sport brings people together and the ability of sports clubs to survive through the Covid-19 restrictions will contribute to the sustainability of future participation opportunities which can be offered to all Section 75 categories, including people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial groups.	None
Racial group	Sport brings people together and the ability of sports clubs to survive through the Covid-19 restrictions will contribute to the sustainability of future participation opportunities which can be offered to all Section 75 categories, including people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial groups.	None

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Good relations category	If Yes , provide details	If No , provide reasons
Religious belief		Due to the level of grant offered, we are not asking applicants to demonstrate opportunities around these good relations issues. Funding will aim to support and sustain current programmes.
Political opinion		Due to the level of grant offered, we are not asking applicants to demonstrate opportunities around these good relations issues. Funding will aim to support and sustain current programmes.
Racial group		Due to the level of grant offered, we are not asking applicants to demonstrate opportunities around these good relations issues. Funding will aim to support and sustain current programmes.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

This fund will support organisations who work across all Section 75 categories; including those with multiple identities.

Part 3. Screening decision

In light of your answers to the previous questions, do you feel that the policy should: (please underline one)

1. **Not be subject to an EQIA**
2. **Not be subject to an EQIA (with mitigating measures /alternative policies)**
3. **Be subject to an EQIA**

If 1 or 2 (i.e. not be subject to an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons why:

This programme will have an equal positive impact across the sports sector, which all Section 75 groups can benefit from.

If 3. (i.e. to conduct an EQIA), please provide details of the reasons:

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impacts arising from the policy which may lead you to conduct an EQIA, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

You should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, then you should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

The programme will be reviewed on a monthly basis. This will allow for any changes that maybe required to ensure that there is no negative impact on any Section 75 category.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by:	Position/Job Title	Date
Barry Leighton	DP, T:BUC Project Manager	06/11/20
Approved by:	Tony Murphy	12/11/20

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Department for Communities

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

- A Sustainability Fund for Sport – to be called the “Covid-19 Sports Sustainability Fund”- a major relief programme focused on Governing Bodies, clubs and sporting entities that have lost considerable sums due to cancellation of competitions, lost gate receipts etc.

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

The Covid 19 Sports Sustainability Fund

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The Covid-19 Sports Sustainability Fund Objectives are:

- Ensure the sports sector representative of the diverse range of sporting interests for all its citizens, and of geographic spread, remains in place after the COVID-19 crisis has passed;
- To provide financial relief to sports Governing Bodies and clubs to ensure they remain viable once the current health crisis passes;
- To ensure the timely financial intervention to prevent the closure of at risk sports clubs and organisations;
- That financial interventions mitigate the impacts on the sports sector and ongoing delivery of key sporting provision;
- To ensure the fund targets financial need, defined as unavoidable expenditure to sports organisations experiencing significant reductions with income, facing ongoing fixed/operational costs and therefore experiencing cash flow difficulties leading to the imminent threat of closure;
- As a fund of last resort, ensure that financial interventions complement rather than duplicate other national and regional support packages;
- Given the critical nature of financial loss to the sport sector ensure the need for money to reach bank accounts in a timely way with the process and administration remaining as simple as possible;
- That appropriate DfC legal approvals are in place along with appropriate processes and checks to mitigate the risk of fraud and/or misuse;
- Cost controls are agreed to ensure the scheme's affordability within its current constraint of a £25 million;
- Agree a transparent process of prioritisation where demand for financial support exceeds the available funding.

1E What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/A

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/A

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/A

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

Sports clubs and organisations are not able to open up their facilities for use by the community during the period of lockdown. This will impact clubs in terms of generating their usual income from, for example, membership, events, sponsors and activity programmes. This has the potential to negatively impact on what sports can do to maintain their club and sustain their existing facilities and grounds during this period of inactivity.

As all sports clubs across NI will be impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions, both rural and urban areas are expected to benefit from this Fund. The fund is focused on relief for Governing Bodies, clubs and sporting entities that have lost considerable sums due to cancellation of competitions, lost gate receipts etc.

It will also ensure clubs are sustained through the COVID lockdown period so they can quickly reinstate community engagement, activities and competitions when it is appropriate to do so. These organisations include:

- National Governing Body of Sport (based in NI);
- Constituted local sports clubs affiliated to a Governing Body of Sport recognised by Sport NI; and
- Sporting Entities i.e. other sporting & physical activity entities or non-recognised sports/GBs.

This fund is to provide support to the sports sector during the Covid-19 restrictions which are impacting significantly on its ability to carry out its normal functions and generate income. Without government funding during this difficult time, it is estimated that 3 out of 4 sports clubs across the UK will not be in existence in 6 months' time. Failure to provide support to sports governing bodies and organisations in NI will have a major impact on the speed at which life returns to 'normal' and communities recover from the impact of COVID-19 once the restrictions have been lifted. It will be critical that there are sporting and physical activities available and that the clubs, who are embedded in communities, are there to help people emerge from the traumatic experiences they are experiencing as a result of COVID-19. The Strategic context for the Fund is the Sport Matters strategy which includes targets to increase participation in sport and physical activity across all communities

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

N/A

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses

Rural Tourism

Rural Housing

Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas

Education or Training in Rural Areas

Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas

Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas

Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas

Poverty in Rural Areas

Deprivation in Rural Areas

Rural Crime or Community Safety

Rural Development

Agri-Environment

Other (Please state)

Access to sporting facilities.

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

N/A

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

From detail provided via the Sport NI Club Survey from March 2020, Sport NI has estimated that there are currently in the region of 3,600 sports clubs across Northern Ireland. It is anticipated that up to 50% of these clubs either own or lease their own premises and sports grounds.

Generic evidence to inform this policy includes the most recent NI Statistics & Research Agency Continuous Household Survey (CHS) (October 2019). Relevant findings showed that during 18/19: -

- 56% of all adults had participated in sport at least once within the last year, an increase of 2% since 2017/18;
- 24% of adults were members of a sports club or organisation within the previous year, an increase of 1% of the 2017/18 figure; and
- 87% of children participated in sport outside of school, compared to 84% in 2017/18.

The NI Sport and Physical Activity Survey 2010 (SAPAS) noted under Key Performance Indicator (KPI) 2 that although 70% of participants stated they had facilities for all of their sports within 20 minutes proximity, facilities closer to home/work is the most important factor that would encourage people to participate more. When considering barriers to participation, access issues were relevant for a third of those surveyed, with 32% mentioning the difficulty in getting to places where they can participate.

This highlights that it is important that sports clubs across NI, in both rural and urban settings, are supported during the period of Covid-19 restrictions.

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

The Sport Matters Target -PL25 states by 2019 to ensure that 90% of the population have quality accredited multi sports facilities that have the capacity to meet demand within 20 minutes travel time. Councils and their sports facility plans were referenced to identify the social needs.

DAERA has confirmed that research continues to show that many significant issues continue to face rural communities. Pressures as a result of the economic climate are often exacerbated in rural areas resulting in increasing numbers of rural people finding themselves in positions of poverty and exclusion. These challenges are compounded with many needs and issues hidden as a result of isolation in the rural setting (i.e. multiple barriers / deprivation). Ageing infrastructure, poor facilities, older equipment and constrained financial resources often means that rural community and voluntary organizations are not in a position to provide rural dwellers with the standard of service provided by better equipped urban centres.

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

N/A

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Northern Ireland covers an area of some 1.35m hectares and its population stands at just over 1.8 million which represents just 3% of the UK total population. At least 80% of the NI land mass is rural.

More than 670,000 people, (around 35%) of the total population reside in rural areas, on the basis of DAERA's preferred definition of rural areas i.e. the 'settlement patterns' definition whereby those settlements defined as small towns and above (i.e. a population above 5,000) would be classified as urban and those settlements with populations below 5,000 would be classified as rural.

Employment rates in the rural population are slightly higher than for those living in towns and cities but rural workplace earnings are lower. While poverty and social isolation exist in both urban areas and rural areas it is recognised that those living in rural areas often experience poverty and social isolation differently due to issues relating to geographical isolation, lower population density and the dispersed nature of many rural settlements. Living in a rural area can also exacerbate the effects of poverty and social isolation for certain groups. For example additional costs of living in a rural area such as higher fuel or transport costs can have a greater impact on people on low incomes while some groups such as young people or people with disabilities may experience greater difficulties accessing transport services in rural areas than in urban settings.

A link has been established between loneliness in elderly people and population density in rural areas. Isolation was ranked third in the list of key disadvantages for older people in rural areas of NI. A number of aspects of rural living may contribute to social isolation, not only for the elderly but also for the disabled, those in poor health or surviving on low income, those who are most geographically remote, and those without access to private means of transport. With reduced opportunity for face to face contact, some rural dwellers may feel little incentive to leave their homes, and this may have implications for health and physical fitness. They may also have less facility for contact through social media – older people may be less familiar with technology, access to broadband may be limited and those on low incomes may be disadvantaged by costs.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes No If the response is **NO GO TO Section 5C.**

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

Due to the nature of the Covid-19 restrictions the proposed project will have a direct positive impact on the needs identified in section 4A.

Sports clubs in rural areas play a significant role in their local communities. This has already been strongly demonstrated during the Covid-19 restrictions with local sports clubs playing a critical volunteering role in supporting vulnerable people during periods of isolation with delivery of food, medicines etc.

If the response to Section 5A was YES GO TO Section 6A.



5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

N/A

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Cormac Galbraith
Position/Grade:	G7
Division/Branch	TBUC Uniting Communities Branch
Signature:	
Date:	
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Tony Murphy
Position/Grade:	G7
Division/Branch:	Active Communities Division, Sports Branch
Signature:	
Date:	

Governing Body Guidance Notes

Sports Sustainability Fund





Contents

Page

1. Strategic context	3
2. Purpose of the investment	4
3. What organisations are eligible to apply?	5
4. Roles and responsibilities of the governing body	7
5. What is the application process?	8
6. What assistance is available to applicants?	9
7. Assessment	10
8. Other useful information	11
Appendix A - Governing body spreadsheet (example)	13



1. Strategic Context

1.1 COVID-19 Context

The COVID-19 pandemic represents one of the biggest challenges which the Northern Ireland Executive has ever had to respond to. Its full impact on all aspects of society has yet to be quantified but it is already clear that the sector has been hit hard. Central and Local Government alone cannot provide all the support required and the governing bodies of sport and sporting entities have played a leading role in keeping citizens engaged, active and competitive in various sporting disciplines throughout the health pandemic.

The Northern Ireland Executive has agreed to introduce a package of measures to mitigate against the worst effects of COVID-19 and to protect key sectors in our society. A Coronavirus Recovery Plan has been published which sets out the approach to decision making and is accessible through the following link <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/news/executive-publishes-coronavirusrecovery-strategy>.

The Sports Sustainability Fund is intended to complement other interventions designed to support the sports sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. These include:

1. Sports Hardship Fund – primarily aimed at sports clubs/community sport;
2. COVID Safe Sport packs – primarily benefitting sports clubs/community sport;
3. Sporting Clubs/Sporting Winners – primary beneficiaries are governing bodies; and
4. Build Back Better – currently under development (multiple strands targeting various elements within the sporting sector).

1.2 About Sport Northern Ireland

A new strategy for sport for Northern Ireland for beyond 2020 is currently being developed. However, the previous Sport Matters Strategy remains relevant:

Sport Matters: The Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009-19

This strategic document sets out Government's commitment to the development of sport and physical recreation in Northern Ireland up to 2019-20. A strategy, it is anticipated, that will provide a lasting and sustainable legacy for future generations.

The Strategy's vision is 'A Culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport'.



Sport Northern Ireland: Corporate Plan 2015-20

Sport NI's vision for 2015-20 is:

'Northern Ireland: renowned as a place where people enjoy, engage, and excel in sport.'

This vision is supported by the following mission statement and strategic objectives:

'To lead world class sports development at all levels producing more participants and more winners'

- Sporting Communities: To increase and support the number of people adopting and sustaining a sporting lifestyle;
- Sporting Clubs: To enable more people to develop and reach their sporting goals through a structured environment; and
- Sporting Winners: To help more Northern Ireland athletes win at the highest level.

The Sports Sustainability Fund will help to ensure that the infrastructure and capacity to continue to deliver against the key targets are in place post COVID19. It will help to ensure that sports clubs and organisations have funds that allow them to meet existing commitments so that they can be ready to recover and continue to support their communities as soon as it is safe to do so.

2. Purpose of the Investment

Sport NI recognises the sports sector is operating within an incredibly challenging environment and appreciate the impact on our sporting partners has been immeasurable. As every part of our community adjusts to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know sport and physical recreation organisations are facing unprecedented challenges in the short term.

The purpose of this COVID-19 relief funding is to deal with the economic consequences of the health pandemic, providing the intervention needed to prevent the sports sector being unduly impacted by the current disruption.

In partnership with the Department for Communities (DfC), the **Sports Sustainability Fund** aims to deliver funding to those Recognised¹ governing

¹ Recognised by Sport NI - meaning that the governing body is named on the UK Recognition list, per the UK Recognition policy as implemented by the UK Sports Councils.

bodies of sports and their affiliated clubs and sporting organisations experiencing financial hardship.

Applications to the fund must provide evidence of financial 'need' due to COVID19 (the difference between the current period's surplus/deficit from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 and the average surplus/deficit from the previous years).

The objectives of this investment programme is to secure and distribute financial support to help stabilise and sustain sports' core governing bodies of sport, their affiliated clubs and sporting organisations, enabling them to withstand the worst impacts of COVID-19.

3. What organisations are eligible to apply?

The Sports Sustainability Fund will only accept applications from a Recognised governing body of sport.

Clubs should apply through their governing body. Sport NI will NOT accept applications directly from clubs.

If you are not a Recognised governing body and have not submitted a preapplication for Recognition before the 4 December 2020, you will not be eligible to apply for this fund.²

Sport NI will only assess applications from organisations that demonstrate financial need as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.1 Governing Body Eligibility Criteria

Sport NI will accept applications as per the following conditions:

- Governing bodies with jurisdiction only for Northern Ireland can apply for both themselves and their affiliated entities based in Northern Ireland;
- ✓ Governing bodies with jurisdiction for Northern Ireland (as well as Ireland or Great Britain) can apply on behalf of both themselves and their affiliated entities based in Northern Ireland.

² Where a Recognition pre-application has been submitted to Sport NI, or any of the other Home Countries Sports Councils, for consideration before this programme commenced, only governing bodies that have completed the Recognition process successfully before it closes (i.e. become Recognised) will be considered as eligible to receive funding through this programme.



Sport NI recognises that the income and expenditure of the governing body will include amounts related to the Northern Ireland clubs and affiliates, but this may not be separately identified in its accounts. In this instance, the governing body accounts information should be used. The governing body should provide membership figures for Northern Ireland and the governing body as a whole, which will then be used to apportion the 'need' identified.

- Where a Northern Ireland club is affiliated to a Great Britain -based governing body, which does not have jurisdiction for Northern Ireland, the club should apply to that governing body to submit on its behalf. The governing body is not eligible to apply for its own costs and may only submit an application on behalf of those clubs based in Northern Ireland; and
- A club submitting an application to a governing body should only be submitting one application to one governing body. This is relevant where a national governing body and a branch are both Recognised, or where a federation is Recognised as well as its individual governing bodies. This is also likely to be relevant to some clubs who may consider themselves to be 'multisport' e.g. a club that 'hosts' both a rugby and cricket club.

Deliberate multiple applications by one club through more than one governing body may constitute attempted fraud.

3.2 Affiliated Clubs and Entities

It is the responsibility of each Recognised governing body to collate and submit applications on behalf of their affiliated clubs and sporting organisations.

Please refer to the 'Affiliated Club and Entities Guidance Notes' for more information relating to what is required to be submitted by affiliated clubs and sporting organisations.

The 'Affiliated Club and Entities Guidance Notes' document can be located on Sport NI's website here - www.sportni.net/funding/our-fundingprogrammes/SportsSustainabilityFund

4. Roles and responsibilities of the governing body

Sport NI requires Recognised governing bodies to undertake the following responsibilities and duties, namely:

1. To submit all requested information and documents in the format provided by Sport NI only;
2. Commitment to implement and advance the Sports Sustainability Fund principles of transparency, inclusion, diversity and equality of opportunity;
3. Identify a designated point of contact for the Sports Sustainability Fund;
4. Support affiliated clubs and entities to complete the application process;
5. Coordinate and submit a 'whole sport' application to Sport NI;
6. Provide assurances in respect of the specific governing body application and 'sense check'/challenge applications received from affiliated clubs and entities;
7. Governing bodies should only submit fully completed applications (including requested attachments) for their affiliated clubs and entities;
8. Governing bodies must retain all associated documentation provided by their affiliated clubs and entities, submitting to Sport NI upon request;
9. Ensure that the authorised office bearers/post-holders of the organisation sign and submit applications before the deadline;
10. Sport NI will make any offers of award to the governing bodies, including a detailed breakdown of awards for each club and entity. These amounts must be paid on by the governing bodies to each club and entity in full and without undue delay; and
11. To ensure transparency of the programme, Sport NI expects each governing body to publicise details of awards offered. This includes a detailed breakdown per affiliated club or entity.



5. What is the application process?

Applications must be completed online through Sport NI's Internet Grants Applications Manager (IGAM) portal.

Links to the IGAM portal can be accessed through Sport NI's website here – www.sportni.net/funding/our-funding-programmes/SportsSustainabilityFund

Governing bodies must complete the excel spreadsheet providing all information regarding current and historic income and expenditure.

At each section of the excel spreadsheet there are further guidance notes that can be accessed by clicking on the cells marked with a red tag in the corner of each marked cell. The excel spreadsheet is available on the Sport NI website here www.sportni.net/funding/our-funding-programmes/SportsSustainabilityFund

Applications will not be accepted in any other format.

5.1 What information must be submitted?

Governing bodies must submit the following documentation online to complete the application process:

- Application Form (Microsoft Excel spreadsheet);
- Approved³ annual accounts for the last 3 financial years e.g. 2017, 2018 and 2019;
- Approved³ management accounts for the period 1st April – 31st December 2020;
- Approved³ projected figures for 1st January – 31st March 2021; and
- Copy of a bank statement dated within the last 3 months.

- *For all-Ireland/GB bodies without separately identifiable NI figures ONLY, the governing body should provide membership figures for Northern Ireland and the governing body as a whole, which will then be used to apportion the 'need' identified.*

5.2 Closing Date for the Submission of Applications

Applications must be submitted through Sport NI's IGAM portal by the following deadline:

Submission of:	Closing Date:
Application and Requested Documentation	3pm on Monday 11 January 2021



³ 'Approved' meaning having gone through the 'normal' process of producing accounts for the organisation. For some larger organisations, this will involve audited or certified accounts being approved by committee and then accepted by the members at the AGM.

For smaller organisations, accounts may simply be prepared by the Treasurer and approved by the members. As long as each organisation's own way of approving accounts has been followed then this is acceptable.

For the management accounts, 'approval' would be expected to be at a management committee level (or equivalent) as a minimum.

6. What assistance is available to applicants?

6.1 Sports Sustainability Fund Team

If you require any clarification regarding the information provided in these Guidance Notes or advice/guidance concerning the questions within the Application you can contact on sportssustainabilityfund@sportni.net

6.2 Governing Body Workshops

Sport NI will be hosting the following governing body workshops to answer any questions on the application process:

Venue	Date & Time
Online Platform Login details to be confirmed	Wednesday 9 December 2020 Time to be confirmed
Online Platform Login details to be confirmed	Wednesday 6 January 2021 Time to be confirmed

6.3 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Sport NI will record all relevant clarifications sought by potential applicants using an FAQ webpage. The webpage can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

The FAQ webpage will be updated when clarifications are requested.



7. Assessment

Sport NI will consider the financial need identified in the eligible applications received, in line with the programme budget available. Applications submitted to the Sports Sustainability Fund will not be scored or prioritised by organisation or sport.

Sport NI reserves the right to prioritise the budget lines and/or financial periods outlined in the application form in order to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of public funds.

The analysis of income and expenditure requested on the application form will enable Sport NI to consider the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sport NI will endeavour to provide a proportion of the need identified to as many eligible organisations as possible.

Sport NI intends to provide transparency throughout the programme. Any amounts applied for by a governing body on behalf of both itself and its affiliated clubs and entities, as well as all amounts awarded, will be publicly available.



8. Other Useful Information

If you contact us for any reason you become one of our 'customers'. This Customer Charter is a guide to the level of service you can expect.

8.1 Customer Service Standards

Sport NI's customer services charter is currently under review by Sport NI's Board. The new customer service charter will be placed on our website when available and will apply to this programme.

8.2 Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with the service you have received from SNI you may make a complaint.

The following is the three step process if you wish to make a complaint;

Step One: Telephone/e-mail/write to the person concerned. All complaints will be acknowledged within five working days and a full explanation will be given within a further ten working days.

Step Two: If you are not satisfied with the response you can write to the Chief Executive. You will receive an acknowledgement within five working days and your complaint will be reviewed and a written response sent to you within a further 15 working days.

Step Three: Should you still be unhappy, you can follow the review procedure as listed in Section 10.3.

8.3 Further Redress

If you feel that we have not dealt your complaint in a satisfactory manner, you can contact the Commissioner for Complaints (Ombudsman). The Ombudsman is totally independent of Sport NI and can be contacted at the following address:

The Ombudsman
Freepost Belfast
BT1 6RR
Tel: 0800 343 424 (freephone)
028 9023 4912

The Ombudsman will normally expect you to have raised the complaint with us before referring to him.



8.4 The Standard We Expect of Applicants

- Sport NI requires applicants to provide whatever information may be necessary to safeguard public funds, and to carry out random validation checks. You should take care to ensure, therefore, that the details you provide are correct.
- Any misleading statements (whether deliberate or accidental) given at any stage may render the Application invalid, and you may be liable to return any money already paid out.
- The above information submitted will be held by Sport NI in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. All government departments share information on projects to enable them to prevent fraudulent applications and to co-ordinate the processing of complementary applications. Information provided by the applicant may be made available to other departments or agencies for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime.
- Any direct or indirect approach by an applicant, its officers, servants, contractors, personal or professional representatives or advisors made to members of Sport NI, its Committees or officers which, in the view of Sport NI or their advisors constitutes an attempt in any way to influence the outcome of an Application will, at the absolute discretion of the Council, render the Application **ineligible for further consideration**.

8.5 Freedom of Information

Any data gathered by Sport NI in relation to this programme will be held in accordance with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Applicants should note that in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, information regarding both successful and unsuccessful applications may be made available to the public via the World Wide Web and a variety of publications and is disclosable under Freedom of Information (FOI) or Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) requests.



Appendix A - Governing body spreadsheet

Governing Body Name: Name Governing Body					
PART 1 This year - 9 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 £		PART 2 Previous 3 years (from accounts)		PART 3	
Income (Revenue, Turnover) -match day income 10 -memberships 10 -competitions and events 5 -hospitality 0 -sponsorship 3 -Covid-related grants 3 -normal revenue grants 3 -other income generating activities 5 45		Income (Revenue, Turnover) -match day income 110 125 100 95.75 -memberships 30 30 30 30.0 -competitions and events 40 30 40 33.5 -hospitality 15 25 15 11.25 -sponsorship 5 20 5 10.0 -Covid related grants 0 0 0 0.0 -normal revenue grants 5 0 0 1.25 -other income generating activities 30 30 30 30.75 250 260 245 190		Basic difference identified 2 Other confirmed assistance 0 Request for assistance - Current 2	
Expenditure (Cost of Sales and Admin. Expenses) -wages & salaries 10 -match day costs 7 -competitions and events costs 3 -hospitality costs 0 -grants 3 -all other operating costs 10 33		Expenditure -wages & salaries 80 80 60 66.5 -match day costs 80 30 80 62.5 -competitions and events costs 35 30 35 32.5 -hospitality costs 10 25 10 17.5 -grants 1 1 1 1.0 -all other operating costs 40 35 45 40.0 226 211 231 172			
Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period 12		Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period 24 29 14 18			
PART 3 (Optional) PROJECTIONS - 9 months from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 £		PART 3 (Optional)		PART 4	
Income (Revenue, Turnover) -match day income 3 -memberships 3 -competitions and events 2 -hospitality 0 -sponsorship 3 -Covid-related grants 3 -normal revenue grants 3 -other income generating activities 2 17		Projected difference identified 2 Other confirmed assistance 0 Request for assistance - Projected 2		9 months accounts for 31 December 2020 (used for Part 1) Yes 2017 accounts (used for Part 2) Yes 2018 accounts (used for Part 2) Yes 2019 accounts (used for Part 2) Yes Optional (only required if Part 4 completed): 3 months projections to 31 March 2021 (used for Part 4) N/A Form complete COMPLETE	
Expenditure (Cost of Sales and Admin. Expenses) -wages & salaries 4 -match day costs 3 -competitions and events costs 2 -hospitality costs 0 -grants 1 -all other operating costs 0 9		PART 7 - Approval			
Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period 8		1. We certify that we have read and understood the guidelines and criteria applicable to application for funding and agree to comply in full. 2. We certify, on behalf of the applicant, that all the information provided in this application, and all information given in any documentation submitted in support of the application is truthful and accurate, having taken all reasonable steps to ensure this. 3. We hereby further certify that we have made full and complete disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to the application or its subject matter whether supportive of the application or otherwise. We undertake to inform Sport NI fully and immediately in writing of any material amendments or changes in the circumstances of the applicant or any part of the subject matter of the application which may in any way affect the application whensoever and howsoever arising. 4. We hereby undertake that from the date of any award, no-one will be denied access to the project in respect of which an award has been paid whether in full or in part, on the grounds of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, gender, disability, and persons with dependants without just reasonable and proper cause. Authorised officer (owner/joint holder 1): <input type="text"/> First name Date: <input type="text"/> Date Authorised officer (owner/joint holder 2): <input type="text"/> First name Date: <input type="text"/> Date			

Explanatory notes:

The spreadsheet has been created in order to compare the 9 month period from 1 April 2020 – 31 December 2020 (the period of COVID-19) with what a 'normal' 9 month period for your organisation looks like, and to identify financial need based on this. It is only considering 'Operating' or 'Trading' income and expenditure. The figures required for entry should come from the organisation's income and expenditure account (also referred to as a profit and loss account).

Each cell has a comment attached to it to provide further clarification on what is required to be entered. Scroll over the cells on the online version to see this.

Some cells have been set up to automatically calculate a figure, using the other figures that have been entered. These cells do not allow you to enter figures into them.



Governing body name should be entered in the appropriate cell at the top of the spreadsheet.

PART 1 – This year’s figures. Specifically the 9 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020. These should be taken from the organisation’s approved management accounts for the period.

PART 2 – The previous three years’ figures. If last year’s accounts included any significant overlap into the period being asked for in Part 1 (1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020) then please use the last full set of accounts before this. This section is calculating what a ‘normal’ year looked like for an organisation so it is important that the significant effects of COVID-19 are not included here. The ‘9 month Average’ column in this section calculates the average figures, based on the historic accounts information entered. The figures in this column cannot be amended.

PART 3 – This calculates the ‘need’ due to COVID-19 (the difference between the current period’s surplus/deficit from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 and the average surplus/deficit from the previous years. Any additional funding confirmed but not yet received should be entered in the ‘Other confirmed assistance’ cell. The ‘Request for assistance – Current’ cell is the amount of ‘need’. If this figure is negative then no ‘need’ has been demonstrated and no application should be submitted for this period.

PART 4 – This financial year’s projected figures. Specifically the 3 months from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021. These should be taken from the organisation’s approved management accounts projections for the period. This section is optional, as some organisations may not be in a position to evidence this.

PART 5 – This calculates the ‘need’ due to COVID-19 (the difference between the projected period’s surplus/deficit from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 and the average surplus/deficit from the previous years. Any additional funding confirmed for this period should be entered in the ‘Other confirmed assistance’ cell. The ‘Request for assistance – Projected’ cell is the amount of ‘need’. If this figure is negative then no ‘need’ has been demonstrated and no application should be submitted for this period.

PART 6 – Evidence of figures. Documentation to evidence the figures entered should be available and forwarded with your application. The boxes beside each piece of information should be selected as ‘Yes’/‘No’ as applicable. For the information requested at Part 1 and Part 2, if the boxes are not selected as ‘Yes’ then the application will show as ‘INCOMPLETE’ and should not be submitted until all required information is available. For the information requested at Part 4, if the box is not selected as ‘Yes’ or ‘N/a’ then the application will show as ‘INCOMPLETE’ and should not be submitted until all required information is available. Note that, should no information be submitted for Part 4, then ‘N/a’ should be selected here, enabling the application to be considered ‘COMPLETE’.

PART 7 – Two authorised officer bearers/post holders should enter their names and date here, as a ‘signature’ that the application conforms with the conditions of the programme listed.

Compiling the information required from affiliated clubs and entities

Clubs and entities will also complete a similar spreadsheet and forward these to the governing body.

The governing body should review these spreadsheets for eligibility and completeness (including provision of requested additional information, e.g. accounts) and attach spreadsheets that it deems appropriate.

These club figures should be totalled into the ‘Total Clubs’ tab linking the cells from the individual spreadsheets.

The total ‘need’ figures from all the clubs and entities and that of the governing body (if eligible) should be totalled into the ‘Total Sport’ tab of the spreadsheet.

The four figures from this spreadsheet are what the governing body will use to enter on to the IGAM system.

	Current £	Request for
Name Governing Body		-
Total Clubs		-
TOTAL		-

assistance

Projected
£

-

-

-

Governing Body Name:

Name Governing Body

PART 1

This year - 9 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020

	£
Income (Revenue, Turnover)	
- match day income	-
- memberships	-
- competitions and events	-
- hospitality	-
- sponsorship	-
- Covid-related grants	-
- 'normal' revenue grants	-
- other income generating activities	-
	<hr/>
	-
Expenditure (Cost of Sales and Admin. Expenses)	
- wages & salaries	-
- match day costs	-
- competitions and events costs	-
- hospitality costs	-
- grants	-
- all other operating costs	-
	<hr/>
	-
Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period	<hr/> <hr/>

PART 4 (Optional)

PROJECTIONS - 3 months from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021

	£
Income (Revenue, Turnover)	
- match day income	-
- memberships	-
- competitions and events	-
- hospitality	-
- sponsorship	-
- Covid-related grants	-
- 'normal' revenue grants	-
- other income generating activities	-
	<hr/>
	-
Expenditure (Cost of Sales and Admin. Expenses)	
- wages & salaries	-
- match day costs	-

- competitions and events costs	-
- hospitality costs	-
- grants	-
- all other operating costs	-
	<hr/>
	-
Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period	<hr/>
	<hr/>
	-



- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.

PART 2

Previous 3 years (from accounts)	2017	2018	2019
	£	£	£
Income (Revenue, Turnover)			
- match day income	-	-	-
- memberships	-	-	-
- competitions and events	-	-	-
- hospitality	-	-	-
- sponsorship	-	-	-
- Covid-related grants	-	-	-
- 'normal' revenue grants	-	-	-
- other income generating activities	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Expenditure			
- wages & salaries	-	-	-
- match day costs	-	-	-
- competitions and events costs	-	-	-
- hospitality costs	-	-	-
- grants	-	-	-
- all other operating costs	-	-	-
	-	-	-
Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period	-	-	-

PART 5 (Optional)

Projected difference identified	-
Other confirmed assistance	-
Request for assistance - Projected	-

PART 6

Attached:

9 months accounts to 31 December 2020 (*used for Part 1*)2017 accounts (*used for Part 2*)2018 accounts (*used for Part 2*)2019 accounts (*used for Part 2*)

Optional (*only required if Part 4 completed*):
3 months projections to 31 March 2021 (*used for Part 4*)

Form complete

COMP

PART 7 - Approvals

We certify that we have read and understood the guidelines and criteria applicable to application for funding a
We certify, on behalf of the applicant, that all the information provided in this application, and all information g
taken all reasonable steps to ensure this.

We hereby further certify that we have made full and complete disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to th
to inform Sport NI fully and immediately in writing of any material amendments or changes in the circumstance
application whensoever and howsoever arising.

We hereby undertake that from the date of any award, no-one will be denied access to the project in respect o
opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, gender, disability, and persons with dependants

Authorised officer bearer/post holder 1:

Print name

Authorised officer bearer/post holder 2:

Print name

Yes

DELETE

and agree to comply in full.

given in any documentation submitted in support of the application is truthful and accurate , having

the application or its subject matter whether supportive of the application or otherwise. We undertake
as of the applicant or any part of the subject matter of the application which may in any way affect the

of which an award has been paid whether in full or in part, on the grounds of religious belief, political
without just reasonable and proper cause.

Date:

Date

Date:

Date

Club

Post code

TOTAL

Request for assistance

Current
£

Projected
£

-	-
---	---

Affiliated Clubs & Entities Guidance Notes

Sports Sustainability Fund





APPLICANTS SHOULD APPLY THROUGH THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNING BODY AND NOT DIRECTLY TO SPORT NI

1. What is the purpose of this fund?

The purpose of this COVID-19 relief funding is to deal with the economic consequences of the health pandemic, providing the intervention needed to prevent the sports sector being unduly impacted by the current disruption.

Applications to the fund must provide evidence of financial 'need' due to COVID-19 (the difference between the current period's surplus/deficit from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 and the average surplus/deficit from the previous years).

2. Who is eligible to apply?

Governing bodies Recognised¹ by Sport NI will submit applications on behalf of their affiliated clubs and entities.

Any club based in Northern Ireland and currently affiliated to a governing body recognised by Sport NI is eligible to submit a completed application to their governing body.

3. What do eligible clubs need to submit to their governing body?

Eligible clubs must submit the following documentation to their governing body to support the application process:

- Application Form (Microsoft Excel spreadsheet);
- Approved² annual accounts for the last 3 financial years e.g. 2017, 2018 and 2019;
- Approved² management accounts for the period 1 April – 31 December 2020;
- Approved² projected figures for 1 January – 31 March 2021

¹ Recognised by Sport NI - meaning that the governing body is named on the Recognition list, per the UK Recognition policy as implemented by the UK Sports Councils - <http://www.sportni.net/sportni/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/List-of-UK-Ireland-Recognised-NGBs-and-Sport-List-November-2020.pdf>

² 'Approved' meaning having gone through the 'normal' process of producing accounts for the organisation. For some larger organisations, this will involve audited or certified accounts being approved by committee and then accepted by the members at the AGM.

For smaller organisations, accounts may simply be prepared by the Treasurer and approved by the members. As long as each organisation's own way of approving accounts has been followed then this is acceptable.

For the management accounts, 'approval' would be expected to be at a management committee level (or equivalent) as a minimum.



Sport NI intends to provide transparency throughout the programme. Any amounts applied for by a governing body on behalf of both itself and its affiliated clubs and entities, as well as all amounts awarded, will be publicly available.

4. What are the deadlines?

The closing date for applications to be submitted by the governing body to Sport NI is:

Submission of:	Closing Date:
Application and Requested Documentation	3pm on Monday 11 January 2021

The deadline for clubs and entities to submit the documentation requested in Question 3 will be communicated by the relevant governing body in due course. Affiliated clubs and entities should contact their governing body for specific information.



Example of completed spreadsheet for clubs and entities

Club Name: Name Club		Club's post code: Post code																																																																																																
PART 1 This year - 9 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 £		PART 2 Previous 3 years (from accounts)																																																																																																
Income (Revenue, Turnover) - match day income 10 - memberships 10 - competitions and events 5 - hospitality 0 - sponsorship 5 - Covid-related grants 5 - 'normal' revenue grants 5 - other income generating activities 5 45		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2017 £</th> <th>2018 £</th> <th>2019 £</th> <th>9 month Average £</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Income (Revenue, Turnover)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- match day income</td> <td>110</td> <td>125</td> <td>100</td> <td>83.75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- memberships</td> <td>50</td> <td>50</td> <td>50</td> <td>37.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- competitions and events</td> <td>40</td> <td>30</td> <td>40</td> <td>27.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- hospitality</td> <td>15</td> <td>15</td> <td>15</td> <td>11.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- sponsorship</td> <td>5</td> <td>10</td> <td>5</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- Covid-related grants</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- 'normal' revenue grants</td> <td>5</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>1.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- other income generating activities</td> <td>30</td> <td>30</td> <td>35</td> <td>23.75</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>255</td> <td>260</td> <td>245</td> <td>190</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenditure</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>- wages & salaries</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> <td>60</td> <td>45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- match day costs</td> <td>80</td> <td>90</td> <td>80</td> <td>62.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- competitions and events costs</td> <td>35</td> <td>30</td> <td>35</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- hospitality costs</td> <td>10</td> <td>15</td> <td>10</td> <td>8.75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>- all other operating costs</td> <td>40</td> <td>35</td> <td>45</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>225</td> <td>230</td> <td>230</td> <td>171.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period</td> <td>30</td> <td>30</td> <td>15</td> <td>18.75</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			2017 £	2018 £	2019 £	9 month Average £	Income (Revenue, Turnover)					- match day income	110	125	100	83.75	- memberships	50	50	50	37.5	- competitions and events	40	30	40	27.5	- hospitality	15	15	15	11.25	- sponsorship	5	10	5	5	- Covid-related grants	0	0	0	0	- 'normal' revenue grants	5	0	0	1.25	- other income generating activities	30	30	35	23.75		255	260	245	190	Expenditure					- wages & salaries	60	60	60	45	- match day costs	80	90	80	62.5	- competitions and events costs	35	30	35	25	- hospitality costs	10	15	10	8.75	- all other operating costs	40	35	45	30		225	230	230	171.25	Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period	30	30	15	18.75
	2017 £	2018 £	2019 £	9 month Average £																																																																																														
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Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period	30	30	15	18.75																																																																																														
PART 3 Basic difference identified 3.75 Other confirmed assistance 0 Request for assistance - Current 3.75																																																																																																		
PART 4 (Optional) PROJECTIONS - 3 months from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 £		PART 5 (Optional) Projected difference identified 2.25 Other confirmed assistance 0 Request for assistance - Projected 2.25																																																																																																
Income (Revenue, Turnover) - match day income 3 - memberships 3 - competitions and events 2 - hospitality 0 - sponsorship 1 - Covid-related grants 1 - 'normal' revenue grants 1 - other income generating activities 2 13		PART 6 Attached: 9 months accounts to 31 December 2020 (used for Part 1) Yes 2017 accounts (used for Part 2) Yes 2018 accounts (used for Part 2) Yes 2019 accounts (used for Part 2) Yes Optional (only required if Part 4 completed): 3 months projections to 31 March 2021 (used for Part 4) N/A Form complete COMPLETE																																																																																																
Expenditure (Cost of Sales and Admin. Expenses) - wages & salaries 4 - match day costs 2 - competitions and events costs 2 - hospitality costs 0 - grants 1 - all other operating costs 0 9		PART 7 - Approvals i. We certify that we have read and understood the guidelines and criteria applicable to application for funding and agree to comply in full. ii. We certify, on behalf of the applicant, that all the information provided in this application, and all information given in any documentation submitted in support of the application is truthful and accurate, having taken all reasonable steps to ensure this. iii. We hereby further certify that we have made full and complete disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to the application or its subject matter whether supportive of the application or otherwise. We undertake to inform Sport NI fully and immediately in writing of any material amendments or changes in the circumstances of the applicant or any part of the subject matter of the application which may in any way affect the application whensoever and howsoever arising. iv. We hereby undertake that from the date of any award, no-one will be denied access to the project in respect of which an award has been paid whether in full or in part, on the grounds of religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, gender, disability, and persons with dependants without just reasonable and proper cause. Authorised officer bearer/post holder 1: <input type="text"/> Print name <input type="text"/> Date: <input type="text"/> Date: <input type="text"/> Authorised officer bearer/post holder 2: <input type="text"/> Print name <input type="text"/> Date: <input type="text"/> Date: <input type="text"/>																																																																																																
Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period 4																																																																																																		

Explanatory notes:

The spreadsheet has been created in order to compare the 9 month period from 1 April 2020 – 31 December 2020 (the period of COVID-19) with what a 'normal' 9 month period for your organisation looks like, and to identify financial need based on this. It is only considering 'Operating' or 'Trading' income and expenditure. The figures required for entry should come from the organisation's income and expenditure account (also referred to as a profit and loss account).

Each cell has a comment attached to it to provide further clarification on what is required to be entered. Scroll over the cells on the online version to see this.

Some cells have been set up to automatically calculate a figure, using the other figures that have been entered. These cells do not allow you to enter figures into them.

Club/Entity name and postcode should be entered in the appropriate cell at the top of the spreadsheet.



PART 1 – This year’s figures. Specifically the 9 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020. These should be taken from the organisation’s approved management accounts for the period.

PART 2 – The previous three years’ figures. If last year’s accounts included any significant overlap into the period being asked for in Part 1 (1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020) then please use the last full set of accounts before this. This section is calculating what a ‘normal’ year looked like for an organisation so it is important that the significant effects of COVID-19 are not included here. The ‘9 month Average’ column in this section calculates the average figures, based on the historic accounts information entered. The figures in this column cannot be amended.

PART 3 – This calculates the ‘need’ due to COVID-19 (the difference between the current period’s surplus/deficit from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020 and the average surplus/deficit from the previous years. Any additional funding confirmed but not yet received should be entered in the ‘Other confirmed assistance’ cell. The ‘Request for assistance – Current’ cell is the amount of ‘need’. If this figure is negative then no ‘need’ has been demonstrated and no application should be submitted for this period.

PART 4 – This financial year’s projected figures. Specifically the 3 months from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021. These should be taken from the organisation’s approved management accounts projections for the period. This section is optional, as some organisations may not be in a position to evidence this.

PART 5 – This calculates the ‘need’ due to COVID-19 (the difference between the projected period’s surplus/deficit from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 and the average surplus/deficit from the previous years. Any additional funding confirmed for this period should be entered in the ‘Other confirmed assistance’ cell. The ‘Request for assistance – Projected’ cell is the amount of ‘need’. If this figure is negative then no ‘need’ has been demonstrated and no application should be submitted for this period.

PART 6 – Evidence of figures. Documentation to evidence the figures entered should be available and forwarded with your application. The boxes beside each piece of information should be selected as ‘Yes’/‘No’ as applicable. For the information requested at Part 1 and Part 2, if the boxes are not selected as ‘Yes’ then the application will show as ‘INCOMPLETE’ and should not be submitted until all required information is available. For the information requested at Part 4, if the box is not selected as ‘Yes’ or ‘N/a’ then the application will show as ‘INCOMPLETE’ and should not be submitted until all required information is available. Note that, should no information be submitted for Part 4, then ‘N/a’ should be selected here, enabling the application to be considered ‘COMPLETE’.

PART 7 – Two authorised officer bearers/post holders should enter their names and date here, as a ‘signature’ that the application conforms with the conditions of the programme listed.

Club Name:

Name Club

PART 1

This year - 9 months from 1 April 2020 to 31 December 2020

£

Income (Revenue, Turnover)

- match day income	-
- memberships	-
- competitions and events	-
- hospitality	-
- sponsorship	-
- Covid-related grants	-
- 'normal' revenue grants	-
- other income generating activities	-
	<hr/>

Expenditure (Cost of Sales and Admin. Expenses)

- wages & salaries	-
- match day costs	-
- competitions and events costs	-
- hospitality costs	-
- all other operating costs	-
	<hr/>

Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period

PART 4 (Optional)

PROJECTIONS - 3 months from 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021

£

Income (Revenue, Turnover)

- match day income	-
- memberships	-
- competitions and events	-
- hospitality	-
- sponsorship	-
- Covid-related grants	-
- 'normal' revenue grants	-
- other income generating activities	-
	<hr/>

Expenditure (Cost of Sales and Admin. Expenses)

- wages & salaries	-
- match day costs	-

- competitions and events costs	-
- hospitality costs	-
- grants	-
- all other operating costs	-
	<hr/>
	-
Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period	<hr/>
	-
	<hr/> <hr/>



- i.
- ii.
- iii.
- iv.

Club's post code:

Post code

PART 2

Previous 3 years (from accounts)	2017	2018
	£	£
Income (Revenue, Turnover)		
- match day income	-	-
- memberships	-	-
- competitions and events	-	-
- hospitality	-	-
- sponsorship	-	-
- Covid-related grants	-	-
- 'normal' revenue grants	-	-
- other income generating activities	-	-
	-	-
Expenditure		
- wages & salaries	-	-
- match day costs	-	-
- competitions and events costs	-	-
- hospitality costs	-	-
- all other operating costs	-	-
	-	-
Trading or Operating Surplus/(Deficit) for period	-	-

PART 5 (Optional)

Projected difference identified

Other confirmed assistance

Request for assistance - Projected

PART 6

Attached:

9 months accounts to 31 December 2020 *(used for Part 1)*

2017 accounts *(used for Part 2)*

2018 accounts *(used for Part 2)*

2019 accounts *(used for Part 2)*

Optional (*only required if Part 4 completed*):
3 months projections to 31 March 2021 (*used for Part 4*)

Form complete

PART 7 - Approvals

We certify that we have read and understood the guidelines and criteria applicable to application for funding;

We certify, on behalf of the applicant, that all the information provided in this application, and all information

We hereby further certify that we have made full and complete disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to
immediately in writing of any material amendments or changes in the circumstances of the applicant or any

We hereby undertake that from the date of any award, no-one will be denied access to the project in respect
or sexual orientation, gender, disability, and persons with dependants without just reasonable and proper cause

Authorised officer bearer/post holder 1:

Print name

Authorised officer bearer/post holder 2:

Print name

Yes
COMPLETE

g and agree to comply in full.

on given in any documentation submitted in support of the application is truthful and accurate, having

o the application or its subject matter whether supportive of the application or otherwise. We undert
part of the subject matter of the application which may in any way affect the application whensoever

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ause.

Date:

Date:

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ance	-
- Current	-

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r and howsoever arising.

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