



**Précis and action points from the Scottish Student Sport Executive Council
 Meeting held on Friday 18th November 2022
 Conference Room, 64 Oakfield Avenue, Glasgow G12 8LR
 Or via Zoom
 Meeting 10:00 – 14:00**

Present

Chris Sellar (CS)
 Katherine Corbett (KC)
 Heather Gault (HG)
 Dan Potter (DP)
 Ewan Galbraith (EG)
 Eamonn Laird (EL)
 Ciaran O’Brien (CO)

In attendance

Pete Burgon (PB)
 Stew Fowlie (SF)
 Vince Mayne (VM)
 Sarah Birrell (SB)
 Eilidh Paterson (EP)
 Anna Wallace (AW)

Apologies

Totty Sinclair Roads (TSR)
 Cathy Gallagher (CG)
 Ian Gaunt (IG)
 Jonny Pearson (JP)
 Robin McGregor (RM)

1. Welcome, intro and scene setting

[Actions](#)

PB opened the meeting, thanking everyone for their attendance – still great to be in person.

2. Homologation

Apologies were received from TSR, JP, IG, RM and CG. VM, SB and AW joining via Zoom.

No conflicts of interest were noted.

The minutes from the previous meeting in September 2022 were accepted as a true and accurate reflection.

All actions have been completed

3. Context

Top level updates around the table

UWS – Lectures are still being held virtually, which is impacting footfall in gym attendance. At the moment at 70% compared to 2019. Teams are thriving with some receiving more support than others due to knowledge gap, cautiously optimistic for the remainder of the season and beyond.

Dundee – Gym membership has returned to slightly beyond 2019 levels. International recruitment is at a noticeable drop, which the Uni is working to encourage and increase. Knowledge gap is apparent and students are in need of ongoing encouragement and support.

Edinburgh – 90% of gym membership compared to 2019 numbers and also down further on group exercise. Club sport is thriving especially indoors and awaiting some more members from snowsports and recreational activity to further boost total. Sport for international students has been gaining momentum and has regular interest. Edinburgh Winter run sold out with 500 staff and students signing up.

Glasgow – Gym membership is up but campus numbers are also well up, to the extent that a cap has now been set to 2026. Amber is now in post in while Jamie is on secondment. GUSA have been up-skilled with Ask Angela resources after some safety concerns.

Heriot Watt – Membership numbers are down on 2019 alongside campus numbers but expecting a good January intake. Teams are doing well and engaged. Recreational leagues are running well alongside the club, mixed rec sport open to all students hoping numbers will rise. Walking group introduced alongside the SA with a focus on social activity. Discussions taking place about automatic membership for students living on campus.

PB question to group, how we are speaking to the students who are not active on campus?

- HW - cost is an issue and a participation grant has been created via student association, and had 20 applicants in day 1.
- GUSA providing 1st year students living in university accommodation with membership which is providing a great focus group and seems to be helping club sport recruit and retain as cost is the biggest barrier (in order to join sport an upgrade is bought).

SF question to the group, how is Movember going and charity backing during the cost of living crisis?

- HW a lot of money has been raised with great attitude and buy in from students.

UoE Winter Run example as future areas of interest. HG mass participation brings the university together but finance discussions underway to gain further university support. Also need to discuss pathway of how we keep a student active.

- CO reflected good uptake during lockdown tracking student/staff activity which could be ran again.
- CS said Heriot-Watt struggle to get the interest for a mass event unless partnering with another department. How can SSS help in this space in future, what else can happen where on campus options are not available? Mixed recreational sport definitely an option and looking at the city wide view as well. This could lead to the best induction pack for active campus coordinators.

EL asked the about Brit Challenge uptake, Phil has listened to previous feedback, charity work could be further centralised within Scotland. Uni of St A are to chair a steering group and SSS will join them on a call of other steering group heads in December.

4. SSS Strategic Update

Overall – lots of engagement and activity so far, cost of living impacting students but not yet SSS nationally though we are preparing for it behind the scenes.

Dev – Great to see a first student Boccia opportunity, lots more can be done in that space. HBHM going well but review will be ongoing, NESCOL and Uni of St A achieving awards, Jo continues to develop opportunities within refereeing.

Comps – We are a third of the way through season and have a lot of great competition to reflect on. Our netball champs have gone ahead for the first time in four years with a brilliant turn out. Been great to see recreational events go ahead within volleyball and shinty as well as our, fixtures going ahead at a pace. We've also been delighted to welcome our new Competitions Assistant Sean to the team.

Adv – midway through a roadshow (SSS, **sportscotland** & CIMSPA) 18 colleges were interested, 8 met so far with the diary full to the end of the year. Did not need much encouragement and are working well alongside community partners and by Easter there will be staff in most – if not all – 18 colleges. SF presented to Scot Gov about why student activity should be part of Mental Health & Wellbeing discussion. Strategic forum attending to share the member's views. PHS Report shared, duty for campuses to provide a service.

Strong Org – KPMG coming to visit as per our **sportscotland** agreement and are good to go. Well-prepared for dev audit. Staff are performing well and delighted to be in the IIP's top 10 employers even though we did not win.

5. Strong Organisation

1. Finance

i. Year End 21-22

PB thanks TSR for putting together and D&L for work.

Membership income up, due to change on discount to members. Up on grants but will be lower in 22-23 due to assistance from SFC in new strategy. Most spend in July is similar to normal. Staff back to in person meetings, hence the low expenses which will rise in 22-23. 51k surplus made but not wanting that to be the norm, hence the SP fund. In a healthy position whilst surrounded by risk. Some movement into another bank account to gain interest on behalf of members. Debt has been carefully managed. Current reserves policy is to keep to 200k. CO reflecting on reserves policy and asking if 40% of core costs still round up to 200k or does that need to be revisited. PB when looking at surplus, staff are careful at spending members' money to comfort the committee.

[SF](#)

[TSR](#)

SP Funding – Boccia development pathway bid approved, HW needing further information before approving, rejected Stirling virtual tour and rejected Edinburgh's Zambia project. CO raised if SSS can share successful bids to assist those writing in to further support. PB suggested a space on the website for this area as well as reaching out to SSS staff for support. CS suggested sharing SP successful bids at FG and open up questions and suggestions to the floor.

ii. Finance – NPF Exec Nov figures

Set out to make £1000 with the thought if we don't have to dip into contingencies, little to get excited about. Column G highlights those who are engaging conversations within active campus. Not nervous about those who owe us and ideally not individuals. Very close to forecast, activity is good and delighted not to have to dip into the red. VM confirmed golf payment has been approved.

PB thanked TH for work and shared at next meeting there is opportunity to further explore investment opportunities

iii. Operational Plan headlines

PB highlighted plan is on basecamp for the committee to look at and can discuss at another time.

6. Partner Updates (30 min)

a. Scottish Funding Council (Anna Wallace)

SF introduced the committee to AW.

AW highlighted this is a new area of work for her. SSS was sitting within skills area but is now within access. SF and AW have begun conversations about future funding. PB asked what demonstrating impact looks like. Mental health work was extremely well received and will continue to work together on this. Looking forward it is one year funding as is SFC funding from government. Next meeting in next scheduled for January. SF thanked AW for her time and looking forward to being at the front of the queue in future. PB asked AW what the relationship between SFC and **sportscotland** looks like. AW does not believe there is a strong relationship there but would like to be better connected via SSS. CO raised Winning Students is also another business which is mutually beneficial.

[VM](#)

b. BUCS (Vince Mayne)

After hearing from AW and discussing Winning Students, VM made the group aware of possible opportunities within UK Sport to ensure the team within Team England/Scotland. VM will be in touch with SF about a meeting opportunity.

Sport England (SE) colleagues suggested that student participation levels were dropping unlike the figures BUCS have. Looking to collaborate with SE about running another BASS survey and VM will reach out with further info when further developments come around. CO questioning what the methodology is looking like for future. VM said Sport England are hiring external consultants to work on this but yet to get an answer themselves.

New headline partners which delighted to announce.

Culture – this time last year staff were overwhelmed with appeals but this year there are no appeals. VM thanked the regional staff who are solving the query and not needing to come to BUCS office. World Uni Games heading to Lake Placid in January. Winter Summit being held on 13th Dec in Birmingham alongside a train strike and programme is looking good. Lots of BUCS branding is needing replaced as well as how that looks. Students were first consulted and on reflection members should have been first asked. Expect an email about this and a meeting with SSS to discuss further. To be launched alongside new strategy at AGM. Affiliation discussions underway and aware advice is to raise with inflation and aware membership would not tolerate that rise. 7% is being suggested as well as 0% rise, if 0% is chosen then which area is comp is cut. Dev work is funded externally and makes money and as is Comms.

Equality, Inclusion and Diversity – Trans inclusion is the hot topic within the business though not more important than ethnicity and other areas of inclusion.

EL asked when suggesting a 0% rise will this come with a plan alongside or awareness cuts will be made. VM shared the committee only met yesterday and papers need to be released early next week so releasing a plan alongside would not be possible. Members will be made aware of the risk alongside that offer.

CS raised inflation is a challenge for us all but are BUCS making sure they have most up to date projected costs to justify the 7% suggested affiliation rise. VM made aware that cost comparison has already been underway but a Feb/March EGM can be an option.

SF is wondering how commercial environment can be so strong when money isn't quite where expected. VM shared one partner has recently shifted priority and are reluctant to sign the dotted line.

SF raises that alongside BUCS, SSS are going through similar affiliation conversations and would like to be better involved in that conversation. VM welcomed SSS into that conversation.

PB asked about the gap between Higher Education and performance sport. VM shared an example that of a third athlete and staff from Team Wales came from Cardiff Met.

7. SSS Exec Projects 22-23 (45 min)

[CS & SF](#)

a. Governance structure

HG – Communication underpinned most areas. Newsletters could move into a space where group exist and consult members rather than meet. Cameron coming onto the group would be of benefit. CS added it is important to think how we engage audiences and be very deliberate with the time. Creating a matrix on decision making would be useful and discuss the success of existing groups.

National Forum was discussed about how better the forum can be utilised, could the time we hold AGM move. SF suggested creation of a flow chart and renaming the group to governance and engagement. EL asked how Comps interests will be noted, CS said recommendations would be shared to committee and staff feedback.

b. SSS Membership fees

DP – Been a challenging piece of work so far and will try to meet before the festive break. Have come across some tensions in a bid to achieve balance and fairness. Up to date student population numbers which will assist us moving forward. So far we are focusing on the ratio and not the total figure and aware of the difference between the University and College landscape.

CO raised if there are other bodies we can compare ourselves too. SF shared that is work that RM has been assigned to.

EG raised if the student population number includes distant learners. SF agreed that is a point to be aware of.

c. Award categories review

EG – Awareness we are looking to tidy up the process. Suggesting to align what the institutions award content with SSS’ so it is one nomination process. CO added where SSS places itself amongst the awards and how we organise that, themed, forward thinking. We are discussing the ease of which nominations happen is a priority. Volunteering and coaching are particularly challenging to award due to the diverse experience nominated. Ensuring guidance notes and clarity are at the forefront.

[SF](#)

d. Long Term targets

SF – Recommend a catch up with committee leads to discuss these lines in further detail. Comps, I’d like these points to be picked apart. Strong Org are quite predictable. Advo - is it useful to measure everything in line with sportscotland’s thinking. Development – sportscotland are continuing to fund Reffin Brilliant, lots other to discuss so please do feedback.

[KC & EL](#)

EL – some sports receive funding to run so that should be taken into accounts.

SF – this will remain on basecamp for feedback to be gained. Time added to Comps and Development Committee agendas to workshops points.

8. Closing remarks, future meetings and actions

PB closed the meeting, thanking everyone for their input and attendance and EG for hosting the meeting. Progress made has been made and feels like an excellent start to get into various projects and meet the challenges to come. Thanks to EP for the minutes.

Exec meetings 22-23

Structure, focus, venues and guests

Friday 24th February: Edinburgh College, TBC Milton Campus

Friday 21st April: St. Andrews

ACTION LIST

Summary of Action	Initials
Review special project balance vs projected annual core costs	SF
Share successful Special Project bids with Members	TSR
Meeting invite to SF to discuss Team Scotland opportunities within UK Sport	VM
Invite Cameron Wright into Governance and Engagement Project group	CS & SF
Catch up with committee Chairs regarding the long term impact points raised	SF
Add areas with long term impacts to next committee meeting agendas	KC & EL

