



Précis and action points from the Scottish Student Sport Executive Council
Meeting held on Friday 20th August 2021, via Zoom
Meeting 10:00 – 14:00

Present

Jordan Moore (JM)
Gregor Malcolm (GM)
Sophie Charlton (SC)
Jonny Pearson (JP)
Neil Brown (NB)
Ciaran O’Brien (CO)
Chris Sellar (CS)
Claire Scott (CSc)

In attendance

Stew Fowlie (SF)
Totty Horn (TH)
Vince Mayne (VM)
Sarah Birrell (SB)

Apologies

Andre Reibig (AR)
Cathy Gallagher (CG)
Pete Burgon (PB)
Robin McGregor (RM)

Actions

1. Welcome, intro and scene setting

Before starting the meeting, SF asked the group if they were happy for the meeting to be recorded, for the benefit of those absent. The group agreed.

CS chaired as PB unavailable. Welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 21/22 with a particular welcome to new ES, Sophie and Gregor and returning ES, Jordan.

2. Homologation

Apologies were received from AR, PB, CG and RM.

No conflicts of interest were noted.

The minutes from the previous meeting in May 2021 were accepted as a true and accurate reflection. Thanks to TH for managing the awards process- well received.

3. Strategic Update

1. View from the COO

Still awaiting an update from SFC, email from AR suggesting decision could be pushed back a little while. We are cracking on with new plan as best we can, assuming a good result with our approach. If the contrary, Exec will need to be called in to work out a plan. Main difficulty- contracts, staffing. Semester 1 is upon us; people are keen to get sport back but of course there will be anxieties around return to activity. Few institutions facing facility problems. Kindness is important, as are communities and helping each other. If need be, new staffing

extension mid-September, to avoid losing momentum. Staff morale is OK, staff have all info, no surprises, optimistic, moving ahead with work they're doing- trust we're on the right lines.

2. Member Perspectives

ES- keenness to return to sport, everyone has really missed it. Optimistic. Contingency plans, including virtual events planned. Policies and handbooks updated, info/ education in place. Safety paramount- manage expectations, people will be anxious. Congrats to JM for election as Chair of ES.

Staff- hopeful sport will come back, it has been a long time so fear certain people may have moved on. Challenge will be engage new and previous users, reinvigorate disengaged groups etc. Predicting 50% return in membership due to lack of students still on campus. Desire to play as much sport as possible- training OK but fixtures still have challenges such as showers (Strathclyde have showers open already though so on case by case basis). Need to provide protective measures, in some cases over and above the government rules. Heriot-Watt won't have organised social events in Semester 1- no SU ceilidh for example. Students able to socialise themselves but HW not facilitating. Spread load on priority basis. Offering halls as quarantine hotel- help students to return. Mixed messages at Edinburgh College – senior leaders taking on significant responsibility amidst variable guidance.

BUCS- student recruitment healthy across HE sector, better than expected. Increased team entries. Unfair practice on campus- normal environment in other walks of life, however students penalised and facing further restrictions. 30,000 fixtures planned. EUSA discussion surrounding the financial commitment to sit on their Executive Committee which feels very unfair and exclusive. Certain BUCS staff members are to undertake secondments with Commonwealth Games. Office closed until end Sept though staff are able to use it by booking a space- wellbeing and comfort is upmost in their thinking. Culture so important; blended approach to working moving forward. Return of BUCS events in person in September.

3. Funding Partner Updates

Meeting with **sportscotland** in Oct. Guidance on website. Thanks noted for comms from John Lunn, really vital and helpful.

SF often in communication with AR at SFC regarding funding and hopeful to hear outcome in coming weeks, remain optimistic.

4. 21/22 Delivery

1. Development

First meeting upcoming. Look into Operational Plan. Look at new staffing plan with change from regional to project based to ensure no gaps. Setting scene and mapping out how committee can support dev work across the sector.

2. Competitions

First meeting happened. New basketball event signed off. Excellent process now for on boarding new sports. Event plan created. Culture hugely important- supportive, flexible and enabling sport to be played and fixtures to happen.

3. Engagement across SSS Membership

We are now working to all intents and purposes within new structure. Aim is to be really well connected with different groups to engage at all levels. We are mindful to ensure clarity of roles internally and who members are to contact on each topic. There may be number of communication lines and some crossover as we move into new structure but it will become clear and the team will be really clear among themselves to ensure info

is disseminated, not lost and the right people are in the right conversations. We all serve the members in different ways. The contracts will catch up.

4. Key Partnerships

We need to be plugged in to BUCS. Plan for charity work, campaign and issue work- gender based violence, for instance. In new structure we need to be nimble enough to what is going on so we can flex and be in the right spaces. We need to understand how to bring multiple partners into the same space.

5. Business Updates

1. Provisional budget 21/22

TH presented year-end figures, posting a deficit of £32.4K. No surprises from position projected at AGM, savings made due to COVID-19 and careful management of spending. The files will be shared with the accountants at the end of Aug with a view to having the final accounts in Sept.

The new budget was then shared, projecting a deficit of just shy of £19K which is broadly equivalent to the membership discount of 15% being offered, as agreed at AGM. Thanks to TH for the Finance.

2. Staffing Matters

SF shared JDs with Exec prior to meeting. Structured conversations being had with hope of switching over to new jobs by end Sept. Committee broadly comfortable with JDs. Couple of questions surrounding experience required for dev roles and potential need to upskill for specialist areas. SF to refine section 8 in JDs. A further query on language with a change from equality to inclusion and culture and whether this is the same thing.

SF

SF acknowledged the class with which the whole staff team have coped, given the uncertainties. Many thanks from SF and the committee to the staff team.

The group are comfortable with the direction and happy to approve.

6. SSS Exec- Roles and Functions 21/22

We have 6 months to assert the fact that sport and active health is vital to the student experience and to Scotland's recovery from Covid.

Student voices are crucial; make it relevant to student experience and they'll talk about it. Make them be the influencers, social media campaigns, podcasts, 30s videos on different platforms, groups that students can sit on. Make it beneficial and easy to access.

Opportunities to engage with different staff at member institutions- new roles will bring operational staff back to the table which is excellent as it will widen our reach.

Data gathering-it's going to be a challenge over the next year, we aren't back to 'normal', we need to collect (more and better) data to use and influence future years- we need to be at the heart of that to be funded. Actively collating the difference we make. We must be clear on the core routes and core messages we want to draw upon. Use of Basecamp; real-time data and intelligence when term starts. Gather video content. How to gain data? How to assess how are we getting on? Need to understand how engaged clubs are in each institution. Worry with smaller clubs they could fold if they don't get influx of new members so focus is on those clubs in danger- good committees and handovers.

Comps- be clear on the scope of what SSS is involved in- we will be able to reach university sports department staff, disability officers, welfare services.

Rec sport offering/ IM- will be crucial this year in particular to bring new students on board.

Group asked for some concise, sharp resources they could use to advocate within their institutions- benefits, resources, services available, and opportunities- working in partnership rather than an external body. This view is expressed by Student Unions also and something we are minded to address in conjunction with BUCS- SSS need to help institutions spread the word about student sport and understand the various layers. SF

7. AOCB

Discussion around charity work- should we have an official charity partner, with good comms and education, across student sport? Are institutions aware of what individuals are doing? Would a joined up approach be better, have greater impact, good news story? Or might this prove a challenge as often the charity partner is selected due to close to home reason/ individual in club? TH to share the list of charity partners gathered across the institutions and Exec can think on. Having one partner would give clarity and enable focus. TH, Exec

8. Closing remarks

1. Dates and venues for the diary

- i. 24th September via Zoom
- ii. 19th November via Zoom
- iii. 18th February via Zoom

2. Confirm actions and close

CS closed the meeting, thanking everyone for their input. Thanks to TH for the minutes.

ACTION LIST

Summary of Action	Initials
Refine section 8 in JDs	SF
Create resources that institutions can use to advocate on behalf of SSS	SF
Share charity list on Basecamp	TH
Think about merit in having one official charity partner, plus who that potential charity partner for SSS might be	Exec

