

Sport Leeds: Future Leadership and Governance

Introduction

Sport Leeds came into being some 15 years ago and has established itself over that period as a vibrant city sports network with a good reputation within the City itself and across the region and nationally. When first established Sport Leeds was constituted to sit within a wider City partnership structure that no longer exists. That said Sport Leeds operated effectively in its own right and has continued to develop in a positive way, bringing together partners to work towards a common vision.

A new city wide group the Sustainable Economy and culture Board was established and Sport Leeds does have a place on this and reports on progress of its strategy to this group annually, though it is not through its own constitution part of that Board.

The Sport Leeds 'Board' has a terms of reference / constitution – attached - which outlines how Sport Leeds operates. This constitution was reviewed by the board in 2015/6 and has sought to retain its flexible and relatively informal nature of the partnership in a deliberate attempt to be as inclusive as possible and avoid time spent on unnecessary bureaucracy.

This said the environment within which partners are working is becoming increasingly challenging with resources being significantly reduced in many parts of the public sector. In this context there are a number of drivers that need considering:

- There is an increasing need to move to collaborative approaches rather than simple partnerships and this potentially drives the need for increased formality of working arrangements between partners
- Grant funding for programmes will increasingly focus on how local areas (Leeds and its communities) can show they are working together and focussing on how physical activity and sport can contribute to wider social outcomes
- Sport Leeds is an unincorporated member body and has no legal standing. We hold a bank account within YSF which has a very modest balance. We are not able in our current form to accept or formally apply for grants, can't sign contracts and cannot employ people even on a temporary basis. Leadership through Chair and vice chairs and its operations group is all undertaken through voluntary capacity.
- Capacity to drive Sport Leeds work forward has always been and challenge. Recent support from the Yorkshire Sport Foundation (CSP) has helped in recent months.
- The leadership, focus and governance of Sport Leeds potentially requires further review to ensure it remains up to the challenges that lie ahead.

Leadership issue

In 2016 the current chair of Sport Leeds indicated a desire to pass the baton onto another member having been vice chair and now chair for now 9 years. Unfortunately at that time no member felt able to accept the chairs position and so the incumbent agreed to stay on for one further year until the AGM in April 2017. The Chair has committed time and energy to the position and the Board grateful for his support, and a succession plan is required moving forward.

This date is now fast approaching and the Board need to consider how it wishes to manage a transition to new leadership. Two potential routes are being considered

- To once again seek interest for the chair amongst its members and representatives. This paper seeks to do this formally.
- To consider whether the Board might support an external advertisement for chair of the Board

Proposals

1. Member's views are welcomed on their preference on these options.
2. It is proposed the board through the operations group instigate a governance review of Sport Leeds which seeks to identify a preferred future model for governance and that this be discussed at the forthcoming AGM in April 2017.



SPORT LEEDS CONSTITUTION

Constitution as at July 2015

1. TITLE

The organisation shall be known as “Sport Leeds”.

2. MISSION

The Mission of Sport Leeds is to support and develop a sport and active recreation network within the Leeds City Council local authority boundary (the ‘Sport Leeds Network’) so that more people want to play sport; more people can play sport; more people do play sport; and more people achieve sporting excellence.

3. STATUS

Sport Leeds is not owned or controlled by any single organisation. All those involved with Sport Leeds remain independent.

Sport Leeds is formally recognised as the representative body on behalf of sport and active recreation on the Sustainable Economy and Culture Board.

4. AIMS

Sport Leeds Board aims to;

4.1 Provide leadership and co-ordination for the development of sport and active recreation opportunities in Leeds. These opportunities include; to participate; to learn; to gain qualifications; to excel; to volunteer; and to be entertained.

4.2 Represent the interests of sport and recreation providers and participants in building a strong sporting infrastructure and a vibrant sporting community.

4.3 Influence the future development of sport and active recreation across Leeds, raising awareness of Sport Leeds, and improving and enhancing the opportunities to take part in sport and active recreation.

5. FUNCTIONS

Sport Leeds Board will seek to achieve its aims by:

5.1 Bringing together and securing a common purpose amongst all the agencies which are responsible for providing and developing opportunity for participation in sport and active recreation in Leeds

5.2 Establishing, publishing and advocating shared visions and strategies, endorsed by all members of the Sport Leeds Network

5.3 Overseeing implementation, delivery, and review of the strategy and resulting action plans.

5.4 Identifying shared agendas and objectives through the action planning process and encouraging joint working towards these.

5.5 Improving co-ordination and communication to create a dynamic environment conducive to partnership working and sharing of good practice.

5.6 Championing the case for sport and active recreation at local, regional and national levels.

5.7 Providing a forum that can offer strategic advice and guidance on sporting issues.

5.8 Building relationships with other cities, encouraging collaboration and effective regional planning, sharing good practice and avoiding duplication.

5.9 Advising on or determining the allocation of funding opportunities and resources that may impact sport and active recreation in Leeds

5.10 Nominating representatives to serve on the Sustainable Economy and Culture Board and other appropriate agencies as and when invited so to do.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 The management of Sport Leeds will be vested in the Sport Leeds Board ('The Board'). Board members are expected to act individually and collectively in the best interests of Sport Leeds.

6.2 The Board will comprise 28 members, taken from:

- The voluntary sector;
- The health sector;
- Children's Services;
- Sport England;
- West Yorkshire Sport;
- One elected member nominated by Leeds City Council;
- Officers nominated by Leeds City Council (Sport & Active Lifestyles and Parks & Countryside);
- Professional sport;
- Performance sport;
- Media;
- Higher Education;
- Further Education;

- Disability Sport;
- Women's sport;
- BME sport;
- Local businesses (marketing, legal, sports sponsors)

6.2.1 The Board shall represent a range of skills that reflect the aims and enablers of the Sport & Active Lifestyles Strategy.

6.2.2 Where expressions of interest exceed the places available, the Board will implement an appropriate interview / selection process to determine Board Membership.

6.2.3 If insufficient nominations are received from the nominating sectors/bodies, or there are insufficient numbers of expressions of interest from the Sport Leeds Network, the Board may make appropriate arrangements to fill the vacancies.

6.2.4 Ex Officio Membership

The Board is entitled to invite representatives of appropriate other organisations to serve in an advisory and non-voting capacity.

6.2.5 Power to co-opt

The Board shall have the power to co-opt up to five additional members at its absolute discretion. Such co-opted members shall enjoy full voting rights, but with membership being subject to annual review.

6.3 Term of office.

6.3.1. The term of office of all Board members (except ex-officio and co-opted members) is one year, but members may be re-nominated. In the event of any Board member resigning during their term of office, the Board may make appropriate arrangements to fill the vacancy.

6.3.2. All Board members appointed in accordance with 6.2.1, 6.2.2 or 6.2.3 shall designate their representative member at each Annual General Meeting.

6.3.3. All Board members who are to be invited to join the Board in accordance with 6.2.3 or 6.2.4 shall be subject to approval at each Annual General Meeting.

6.4 Officers

A Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected by the Board from within its membership each year at the first Board meeting following the AGM. A person appointed Chair or Vice-Chair shall then be deemed to be a member of the Board in their own right until and including the first Board meeting following the next Annual General Meeting.

6.5 Frequency of Meetings.

The Board shall meet at least four times per year.

6.6 Quorum

The Quorum for Board meetings shall be one third of the membership of the Board.

In the event of a meeting being inquorate, any decisions made at that meeting shall require approval at a subsequent quorate Board meeting.

6.7 Voting

6.7.1 Voting at Board meetings when required, shall be by a show of hands, and matters determined by a simple majority. All Board members shall have one vote, and in the event of equality of voting, the Chair shall have a single casting vote.

6.7.2 A declaration of interest shall be made by any member where there is a conflict of interest in the matter under discussion.

6.8 Terms of Reference

The Board is responsible for:

- Representing the interests and advocating the benefits of Sport and Active Recreation to the Local Strategic Partnership through the Sustainable Economy and Culture Board.
- Being the voice and visible face of Sport Leeds.
- Raising the profile of sport and active recreation in Leeds by generating greater awareness of both Sport Leeds and the good work being undertaken in the development and provision of sport and active recreation.
- Driving the action planning process, including establishing Task Groups to ensure delivery.
- Ensuring the sustainability and success of Sport Leeds, driving its continued development and encouraging cohesion and development.
- Communicating progress with delivering the strategy to the wider Sport Leeds Network, and, more generally, at local, regional and national levels.
- Overseeing the continued development and implementation of the strategy.
- Convening a seminar/meeting or similar event with the wider Sport Leeds network

6.9 Operations Group

The Board will establish an Operations Group, with the objective of providing a forum to discuss and formulate detailed proposals for the Board's consideration. The Operations group will do this by reviewing (on an ongoing basis) the operation of Sport Leeds and its sub groups, developing and proposing key priorities for Sport Leeds to achieve each year, developing and monitoring the Sport Leeds strategy and by discussing and agreeing methods by which Sport Leeds can influence other key Partnerships, through advocacy and representation on key strategic boards.

The Board will identify suitable individuals, who may or may not be members of the Board to lead the work of the Operations Group. The Board has agreed Terms of Reference and membership of the Operations Group, and will receive regular reports of progress at Board meetings.

6.10 Task Groups

The Board will establish specialist Task Groups where necessary to act on its behalf, to provide support and co-ordination in specific areas of sport and active recreation provision. The Board will identify suitable individuals, who may or may not be members of the Board to lead the work of the Task Groups. The Board will agree Terms of Reference and membership of the Task Groups, and will receive regular reports of progress at Board meetings.

A Task Group should be disbanded whenever the function for which it was set up has been completed.

6.11 Secretariat Provision

Secretariat support will be provided by officers of Leeds City Council or by such other agency as the Board may from time to time determine. Such provision of secretariat support does not imply any ownership or control of Sport Leeds by the local authority or any other agency.

7. FINANCE

The Board shall determine appropriate arrangements for the administration of the financial affairs of Sport Leeds.

The Board will ensure that accounts are prepared annually, as required, to reflect any transactions and liabilities of Sport Leeds. The financial year shall end on 31st March each year.

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8.1 One meeting of the Board each year (normally the April meeting) shall be designated the Annual General Meeting. The business of the Annual Meeting shall be to:

- 8.1.1. Consider and endorse the proposals for membership of the Board for the ensuing year.
- 8.1.2. Receive an Annual Report on the work of the Board and confirm the Action Plan for the subsequent year
- 8.1.3. Receive and endorse any financial statement of accounts to March 31st (if appropriate)
- 8.1.4. Consider any amendment to the constitution or any other resolutions for which due notice has been given.
- 8.1.5. Seek the endorsement of the Leeds Initiative through the Cultural Partnership, of the Annual Report and Financial statement.

8.2: The following shall be entitled to attend the Annual General Meeting with full voting rights:

- All current members of the Board who were appointed in accordance with §6.2.1, §6.2.2, §6.2.3, §6.2.4, §6.2.5 or §6.4
- A representative of such other organisations from the Sport Leeds Network as the Board may from time to time recommend and the Annual General Meeting has endorsed¹

¹ The definition and identification of those organisations and the method by which the AGM is staged and conducted requires further discussion

8.3: The following may attend the Annual General Meeting in a non-voting capacity:

- Any person who is a current member of the Sport Leeds Board appointed in accordance with §6.2.5
- Any person, not being a current member of the Sport Leeds Board, who has been proposed by the Board for endorsement by the Annual General Meeting to become a member of the Board

8.4: The Chair of the Board shall preside at the Annual General Meeting.

8.5: No proxy votes are permitted and no person shall be entitled to vote in more than one capacity.

9. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Annual General Meeting

9.1 This constitution is subject to approval by the Annual General Meeting. Any alterations to this constitution may only be made at an Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting convened for that purpose, provided that at least 21 days notice has been given of the date of the meeting and the content of the proposals to all those persons and organisations entitled to vote at the meeting. Any proposal to modify this constitution must have been proposed and seconded by persons or organisations entitled to vote at the meeting.

9.2 Any proposal to alter this constitution shall be considered to have been carried if it is supported by at least two thirds of those present and voting.

Special General Meeting

9.3 Alterations may be made at a Special General Meeting convened for that purpose provided that due notice of the proposal has been submitted in writing to the Secretariat

9.4 A call for a Special General Meeting must be submitted in written form to the Secretariat and to be valid must be supported by a proposer and seconder and by at least four other persons or organisations eligible to vote at a General Meeting. The Secretariat shall convene any validly requisitioned Special General Meeting to take place within 42 days of the request having been submitted.

9.5 In the case of a Special General Meeting, the right of attendance and voting shall be the same as for an Annual General Meeting.

10. DISSOLUTION

Sport Leeds shall be dissolved by a resolution to that effect passed by an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting convened for that purpose, for which due notice has been given in accordance with §9.4. To be carried, such a resolution shall require the support of at least 75% of those present and eligible to vote at the meeting.

If Sport Leeds is wound up or dissolved, and after all debts and liabilities if any, have been paid, there remains any assets, these shall not be paid to or distributed among the members but shall be given or transferred to some other organisation having similar aims and objectives.