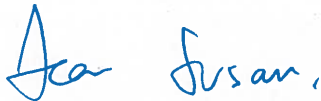


Susan Hall AM

Chair
London Assembly Economy Committee
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

Date: 04 DEC 2018



Thank you for your letter of 19 October on behalf of the Economy Committee about the draft Sport Strategy. As you know, Matthew Ryder has now stepped down as Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement, and Debbie Weekes-Bernard took up the post on 19 November. Debbie is the Deputy Mayor responsible for community sport.

Consultation Feedback

Since your letter, we have been able to assess the responses to our consultation which closed on 12 October. You will be pleased to hear that the feedback was very positive and highly supportive of the approach we proposed in the strategy document. An independent evaluation company has assessed the responses and found the following:

- Over **100 stakeholders** responded to the consultation.
- They provided a total of **535 suggestions** to the draft strategy. 246 of the suggestions specifically indicated the level of support given, positive or negative. **229 (93 per cent) were positive.**

I would like to thank you for the detailed comments made in your letter, which were very helpful in guiding our work following the consultation process.

We have taken the time to review all your comments. Where possible, we have taken them on board - either by clarifying existing points or adding new text to the final strategy. You will appreciate that a strategy document cannot set out our programmes or our methods with the same level of granular detail that will be provided when formulating grant criteria or the specifications for projects; but we will continue to keep the points you have raised in mind as we deliver projects and programmes. If, at any time, you and the Economy Committee would like to know more about the programmes being developed please do not hesitate to contact Simon Cooper, Head of the Sport Team.

MAYOR OF LONDON

Clarity over key partners

In respect to the comments you make about Laureus Sport for Good and Comic Relief and the apparent lack of clarity around these partnerships, I have provided an appendix to this letter (Appendix A) which addresses your queries on both organisations and provides assurance over due diligence and standard partnership process. Additional information has also been included in the final strategy document.

The vision

In respect of your comments regarding our issues-based approach, the final strategy incorporates a new section which explains this in more detail. This also includes highlighting the key issues the entire programme aims to address; inactivity, mental health, serious youth violence, social isolation and social mixing. It also discusses the key groups we believe are most affected by those issues, thus ensuring that we focus on them. Those issues, and the relevant groups most affected by them, will inform future funding criteria.

In addressing your point on outlining successful programmes that specifically address social integration, I enclose a list of projects that Sport Unites has funded to date (Appendix B). Please note that as these projects are in the delivery stages, final measures on success and benefits are not yet available.

You have pointed out that, '*[P]articipation rates are an important indicator of the extent to which the programmes are getting buy-in from the local community, but they cannot be the only metric used to define success.*' I strongly agree, and this has driven our desire to move away from solely using participation rates as a metric for success, to an approach that measures social outcomes. We believe that the number of beneficiaries referenced in the strategy are realistic, based on findings from the previous programme and research commissioned during the development of Sport Unites. However, measuring social outcomes is of course more complex than measuring participation. We will, therefore, keep this under review as part of our ongoing work. It will be closely aligned with the ground-breaking work being done by the Social Integration team in partnership with the Intelligence Unit to develop more effective measures of social integration as part of the new social evidence base.

I should add that in order to ensure that the issues-based approach is effectively tackling the right issues and reaching the right groups, the initiatives funded will be regularly reviewed. Those reviews will consider whether there are groups of Londoners that our initiatives are missing or are not engaging with sufficiently. For example, special educational needs and disability (SEND) children and older Londoners. Our review will also include ensuring that our outreach and communications is effective, which is why we have appointed a Communications Lead for this strategy.

I am grateful for your comments about the need to align Sport Unites initiatives relating to active travel in the *Transport Strategy* and *Healthy Streets Approach*. The final strategy now sets out the common themes between the strategy, the *Transport Strategy* and the *Healthy Streets Approach* in more detail. Our definition of sport has also been clarified to ensure that it makes clear that active travel is complementary to sport and other physical activity, as an important way to stay healthy.

Sport Unites

You suggested that a practical example of a programme that supports groups such as seniors be included in the final strategy. A case study – Tottenham Silver Sports: Ground Work London – has therefore been included in the final strategy.

MAYOR OF LONDON

Regarding your point to make use of professional venues, clubs do undertake outreach work to engage with their local communities, for example the foundations that football clubs have established. The Crystal Palace National Sport Centre is another example of a venue offering extensive community use. The Sport team will be working with these bodies to see how Sport Unites can align with their work. The final strategy has been amended to reference this.

I acknowledge your point to maximise the Olympic legacy by ensuring ordinary Londoners can access professional sports via these sporting venues. As you may be aware, the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) has a pricing plan on facilities. Since Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park was reopened in 2013, LLDC has been committed to keeping pricing low to encourage as many people as possible to use the facilities. As a general guide, pricing is similar to the prices charged in the facilities in the surrounding host boroughs. LLDC remains committed to providing the facilities at low prices to encourage use by local people, whilst at the same time seeking to avoid displacing users from facilities elsewhere in the host boroughs. To provide an example: in 2017/18, there were over one million visits to the London Aquatics Centre and 450,000 to the Copper Box Arena. Over 50 schools have used the London Aquatics Centre for their school swimming lessons. Over 1,400 local school children access school swimming every week at the venue. Meanwhile at the Copper Box Arena, Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) deliver a diverse grassroots sports programme for the local community and the venue is used by more than 20 local sports clubs and 20 local schools.

I agree with your suggestion to be clearer in the strategy about how we will support people on low incomes through Sport Unites and with major sporting events. The final strategy has been revised accordingly. Through our issues-based approach with work focussing on social isolation, social mixing and inactivity, we will address the barriers that affect people on low incomes participating in sport. For example, by focusing on projects supporting disadvantaged communities or areas. In respect of the steps needed to ensure that people on low incomes can watch world-class events, additional text has been added in the final strategy on how the Sport Team will work with event organisers to develop ticket pricing strategies which make events as affordable as possible, whilst balancing the need for the event to be profitable.

Working with schools and grassroots organisations

I note your concern that the strategy lacks detail in how we will work with schools. New text has been added to the final strategy on how we will support school and college sport and PE.

In respect of your concerns on the need to avoid duplication in terms of grant giving and deliverables in communities, including grassroots organisations, this has been considered as part of our investment principles in the final strategy. However, I would like to reassure you that the Sport Team has extensive experience of grant giving and will take this into account.

I note your request for us to think further about offering small capital funding. Capital spend can be expensive, even for relatively modest contributions to a facility build or refurbishment. Consequently, we feel that the focus for our investment ought to be on revenue rather than capital funding. The Sport Team's research emphasised the importance of encouraging the use of existing community assets (for example, community centres, parks and other recreational spaces), in addition to 'formal' sports facilities, to help reduce barriers for those who may want to become active or get back into sport.

MAYOR OF LONDON

It is often the case that relatively small amounts of funding make a huge difference, especially to small organisations and clubs. Investing in people-focussed initiatives and programmes is the best way to maximise the impact of the funding we invest. The focus on revenue funding is now clearly explained in the final strategy. Equally, the final strategy now highlights my commitment in the London Plan to ensure there is no net-loss of sporting facilities.

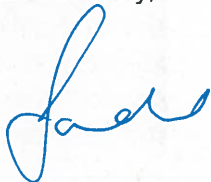
While I note your suggestion to set out established pathways in the strategy for how community groups could look to access other funding sources, such as the Good Growth Fund, this is typically part of the Sport Team's approach in their interactions with stakeholders. Given the Sport Team is proactive in offering solutions or alternative avenues to stakeholders presenting opportunity, I do not feel this needs to be explicitly stated in the strategy.

I note your concern regarding due diligence and the effective use of public money. As mentioned previously, the Greater London Authority (GLA) has a robust grant giving process, which includes a proportionate approach to funding. All organisations applying for funding are subject to due diligence and financial checks.

At your request, the Sport Team will provide the Committee with an annual update on funded projects. This information will also be available to you in the *Mayor's Annual Report*. Information on major funding recipients will also be published on the Mayor of London website and 360Giving.

I would like to thank you once again for your letter and assure you that your valuable feedback has resulted in improvements to the final strategy. I trust that this information addresses the points you made in your letter.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Encs: Appendix A: Laureus Sport for Good and Comic Relief
Appendix B: Sport Unites funded projects