## **CONSULTATION ON ROLE AND REMIT OF SPORT IRELAND**

### **SUBMISSION TO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT, TOURISM & SPORT**

### Introduction

- 1. We welcome the opportunity afforded by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport ("DTTAS") to the Federation of Irish Sport (the "Federation") to make a submission on the role and remit of the proposed entity "Sport Ireland" arising from the merger of the Irish Sports Council ("ISC") and the National Sports Campus Development Authority ("NSCDA")
- 2. In preparing this consultation we have consulted with the membership of the Federation which is currently comprised of 71 National Governing Bodies<sup>1</sup>, 3 National Multi-Sport Organisations & 28 Local Sports Partnerships (the "Members"). It is estimated that up to 2.1 million Irish people actively participate in sport in approximately 12,000 sports clubs nationwide.
- 3. The Federation has also in preparing this submission examined international models of sports policy which is referred to in the course of this submission.

# **Impact of Sport**

- 4. In designing the proposed legislation it is important not to underestimate either the existing impact of sport in Ireland or more importantly, the potential impact were the benefits of sport to be maximised. There is a role for sport in developing the;
  - Economy the sports industry worldwide is estimated to be worth between \$350-450 billion. In Ireland alone sport contributes between €1.4 and €2.4 billion to GDP and supports in excess of 40,000 jobs.<sup>2</sup>
  - Tourism sports tourism is said to be the fastest growing niche of the global tourism industry. Sports Tourists have been found to spend twice as much as so called "ordinary" tourists. In Ireland sport is estimated to generate in excess of €800 million per year.
  - Public health the WHO estimates that physical inactivity is responsible for 6% of deaths globally each year whilst, UK research indicates that up to 11% of their health spend each year is attributable to physical inactivity. In Ireland overweight and obesity costs the state €1.13bn annually³.
  - **Enhanced Communities** sport is the biggest single driver of active citizenship in Ireland with over 500,000 Irish adults volunteering in sport each year.
  - Ireland's international Reputation- 89 per cent of Irish people believe that sport has a positive effect on the country's reputation<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The makeup of the Federation's membership is estimated to be in excess of 90% of the sector

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 2}$  Study on the Contribution of Sport to Economic Growth and Employment in the EU, 2012

 $<sup>^{3}\,</sup>$  The cost of overweight and obesity on the island of Ireland, UCC & Safefood, 2012

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Ignite Research, 2012

### Opportunity

- 5. Sport has the potential to serve as a cornerstone for the improvement of Irish Society and to assist in the delivery of wider government policy objectives particularly in the areas of public health, education, social integration, tourism and the rebuilding of the economy.
- 6. The Federation therefore strongly agrees with the contention made by the Minister that the proposed Sport Ireland legislation provides an opportunity to develop government policy in relation to sport.
- 7. In examining how the delivery of policy has been achieved to date it is important to note that Ireland's sporting system is relatively new compared to other countries. Irish Government investment in sport only began in a meaningful way in 1997 with the Irish Sports Council ("ISC") being formally established in 1999. This contrasts with the establishment of the UK ISC equivalents in 1972 and the Australian equivalent in 1984.

# **Current Regulatory Framework for Sport in Ireland**

- 8. The current regulatory framework for sport in Ireland is complex with a number of state sponsored entities involved in the regulation and development of sport.
- 9. DTTAS set sports policy. It also administers the Sports Capital Programme which allocates funds to sports organisations for the development of sports facilities.
- 10. The Irish Sports Council, under the auspices of Section 6 of the Irish Sports Council Act, 1999, take responsibility for the delivery of the following policy objectives:
  - Development of sports participation
  - Development of high performance
  - Anti-Doping
  - Code of Ethics & Good Practice in relation to the participation of children in sport
  - Research
- 11. Over time Coaching Ireland and the Irish Institute of Sport have evolved and now deal with the development of coaching and the delivery of services to high performance programmes and athletes respectively. It is generally understood that each of these organisations operate in association with or under the auspices of the Irish Sports Council however this relationship is not on a statutory footing.
- 12. The National Sports Campus Development Authority's (NSCDA) principal function is to develop the lands dedicated for the proposed Campus at Abbotstown and to operate the facilities so developed. However, more recently the NSCDA has also taken over the operation of external facilities such as Morton Stadium.
- 13. The Federation's contention is that the current regulatory framework is fragmented, albeit most of the component parts exist to create a more cohesive strategy. This is particularly so if you consider the other government departments and agencies whose work impact on sport and yet there is no formal engagement between these agencies and the sport sector. Organisations falling into this category include the Department of Health, the HSE, the Department of the Environment, the Department of Education, Tourism Ireland & Fáilte

Ireland. There is no overall Vision or Masterplan to which all these organisations can input and then subscribe to.

## **Sport in Ireland 2012**

14. Sport in Ireland has made significant progress since the commencement of meaningful government investment in the late 1990s. There are increased numbers partaking in sport, the high performance system is delivering particularly in terms of increased consistency of performance on the international stage as evidenced in London 2012, our anti-doping system is world class and our sports facilities are better than those in existence 15 year ago. Yet for all the progress made to date key challenges remain.

## 14.1 Participation

Sports participation rates in Ireland compare favourably to our European counterparts with Ireland being ranked 6<sup>th</sup> amongst the 27 EU Member States with Finland, Sweden and Denmark topping the list<sup>5</sup>. The Irish Sports Monitor 2011 indicated that participation in sports in Ireland has risen considerably from 34% to 46% in the past two years. However, according to a study in the Lancet this summer 53% of adults do not get sufficient exercise. This has significant impact on public health with physical inactivity responsible for up to 6% of deaths globally according to the WHO.

### 14.2 Schools

In 2009, only 14% of children and youth met the Department of Health recommendations for physical activity. This was made up of 19% of the primary and 12% of the post-primary participants<sup>6</sup>. Ireland scored lowest on the minimum (30mins) and maximum (60mins) provision of PE time in primary schools in Europe (compared to Poland; min 135mins & France; max 240mins). We also know that 83% of children get their exercise outside school. There is therefore a significant reliance on the sport sector to delivery physical activity and sporting opportunities for our children.

# 14.3 High Performance

Ireland performed relatively well on the medal table at the recent Olympic and Paralympic Games finishing  $41^{st}$  and  $19^{th}$  respectively. However, when taken on a comparator of 'medal per capita' basis, Ireland finished  $20^{th}$  at the Olympics and  $3^{rd}$  at the Paralympics. Developed countries with a similar population that performed similar or better were New Zealand (4.37m population,  $4^{th}$  and  $1^{st}$ ) and Denmark (5.55m population,  $9^{th}$  and  $29^{th}$ ).

### 14.4 Facilities

There can be little doubt that there has been a significant improvement in the standard of sports facilities at both a national and local level. Whilst there is an enviable network of stadia we remain somewhat limited in what is on offer in terms of international standard training facilities particularly, for the Olympic and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Understanding the Game: Sport Participation in Europe, 2011

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> CSPPA Study, 2011

Paralympic Sport. There is also no publicly accessible database of facilities such as exists in the United Kingdom, <a href="www.activeplaces.co.uk">www.activeplaces.co.uk</a>. Multi-use facilities, the preferable solution and the norm across the world, remain limited although the unique situation of the GAA is acknowledged in Ireland's case. In this regard it has been a progressive step in recent times that the GAA has allowed rugby and soccer matches to be played in Croke Park.

### 14.5 Research

The Irish Sports Council has since its establishment commissioned research which, for the first time, has given us insight into the sport sector in Ireland. Reports such as the Irish Sports Monitor, Social & Economic Value of Sport, Sporting Lives: An Analysis of a Lifetime of Irish Sport is an example of the analysis conducted to date. However, the reality is that there is much we do not yet know about Irish Sport for example, we cannot put an accurate figure on the number of sports clubs that exist. Research carried out by individual sports bodies, has often due to minimal resources, been very limited. There is also a perception that the research findings have not always translated into policy development.

## 15. International Models of Sport Policy

#### 15.1 **Overview**

- (i) The trajectory of sports development varies between nations but there is a commonality across a range of diverse policy areas such as health, social inclusion, social development, economic development and elite sporting success. We have tried to provide a summary of some of the different approaches to these common issues.
- (ii) In doing so, we have firstly set out a model developed by a European research group ("SPLISS Research Group) to compare nations and the contributing factors that lead to elite sporting success. Despite the focus of the SPLISS group being on elite sporting success we feel that their model is also applicable in looking at the required factors for sports development generally.
- (iii) We have also examined the role and functions of state agencies with responsibility for sport in a number of countries around the globe. Full details of which are set out in Appendix 1 however we have sought to highlight here examples that we feel are worthy of particular consideration in the context of the design of Sport Ireland.

## 15.2 SPLISS Research Group

The SPLISS group representing researchers from the UK, Belgium and the Netherlands have identified nine factors (pillars) which contribute to sporting success. These pillars are useful in informing the basis of an integrated sporting policy in Ireland between the various agencies involved in sport.

## (i) Financial support

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Participation in Sport-International Policy Perspectives, 2011

This pillar refers to public expenditure on sport at national level – that is, expenditure derived from central government and/or national lotteries. To date central government financial support for sport has been limited to funds coming from DTTAS. However, this is not the approach in other countries such as the UK where funds to sport come from the Departments of Health, Education, Children as well as the Department of Media, Culture & Sport. It is clear that for Irish Sport to continue to grow central government must continue to commit funds to sport as well as look to develop other avenues to facilitate the growth of additional revenue and investment streams for sport. This will be central to the potential impact of Sport Ireland and the continued development of sport in Ireland.

# (ii) Integrated approach to policy development

There must be a good communication system in place between the various stakeholders in sport as well as clear task descriptions. At present the breakdown in roles between the various agencies involved in sport is not as clear as it might be. In addition there is room for increased co-operation between the government departments whose work impacts on sport. It is hoped that Sport Ireland together with DTTAS will have a stronger remit to co-ordinate central government's impact on sport.

# (iii) Participation in sport

There must be a clear strategy with a co-ordinated division of responsibilities designed to increase participation rates in sport. The public health benefits of long term increased participation rates are significant. The National Guidelines on Physical Activity must have a role in the establishment of targets for the participation levels we as a country should be looking to achieve.

### (iv) Talent identification and development system

It is particularly important in smaller nations that as many prospective talented athletes as possible are identified. Therefore, from a policy viewpoint, there is the necessity for: monitoring systems to identify talent characteristics; talent detection systems that minimise drop out; and well organised scouting systems. Many countries have set up national coordinated programmes to support governing bodies to set up high level training and competition programmes and to support athletes to combine an academic career with a sports career. It is important as a country that we provide an avenue for talented individuals to become the best that they can be.

# (v) Athletic and post career support

The logical extension of the talent identification and development phase is the production of elite athletes capable of competing at the highest level. Many athletes who have the potential to reach the top do not reach it. In only a few sports can athletes make a living from their earnings and pay for all the costs they incur. Therefore some countries provide financial support for athletes to meet their living costs and support programmes to give them access to the services needed to help them realise their potential as the Irish Sports Council currently do. Finally, athletes also need to be prepared for life

after sport whilst they are still engaged in their athletic career and **pathways** to education and employment should be developed in Ireland.

# (vi) Training facilities

Training facilities are an important success factor enabling athletes to train in a high quality environment. Facility provision also provides a link between participation and excellence. The NSCDA currently partially fulfils this role however the new Sport Ireland should consider a more strategic role nationally in partnership with government, local authorities and sporting bodies.

# (vii) Coaching provision and coach development

The quality and quantity of coaches is important at each level of the sports development continuum. **The on-going development of coaches at all levels of the sporting spectrum must be prioritised**. Coaching Ireland currently operates in this area and the development of coaching in Ireland needs to be encompassed within Sport Ireland.

# (viii) International competition

This relates to the exposure to international competition and a co-ordinated approach to the staging of international events. Athletes need to measure their progress against rivals by regular exposure to the pressures of international competition. It has been shown in several studies that the organisation of international events in the home country has a positive effect on international success. There are also significant benefits to the domestic economy from the strategic bidding and hosting of international sports events in Ireland. The attraction of sporting events into a country is best done by government and sporting authorities working in partnership. Ireland is no exception. Sport Ireland should have a role to play in the bringing in of events to Ireland but for greatest success this should be done in tandem with DTTAS, the Federation of Irish Sport and the Olympic Council of Ireland.

# (ix) Research

Research is essential to the on-going development in sport. We need more information and data about the sport sector in Ireland. We also need to know that the programmes in which, the Government is investing are delivering a return. One of the inhibiting factors in the development of sport is the lack of known information on sport in Ireland some of which is quite basic. It is important going forward that the minimal resources available for research are maximised and there should be some level of coordination in this regard. Research will need to form part of the remit of Sport Ireland but arguably; there is also a need for the Department who shall bear responsibility for the setting of sports policy to have a research function. The Department might also look to serve as the co-ordinating body in terms of research being carried out by other bodies.

We feel there is significant merit in looking at the model adopted in Singapore and the set-up of the Singapore Sports Council ("SSC"). This is particularly so given the similarities between Ireland and Singapore in terms of population size and the nature of the two economies. Interestingly, in terms of what is being proposed with Sport Ireland the SSC is the product of a merger between the National Sports Promotions Board and the National Stadium Corporation.

The remit of the Singapore Sports Council includes participation, high performance, development and management of facilities, physical education and the organisation of events. The SSC have also been involved in the adoption by the Singaporean Government of the Singapore Vision 2030 which is seeking to improve the lives of their citizens through sport.

There are also learnings to be obtained from other countries:

- Diversified funding model of sport in the UK where a number of government departments contribute funding for sport
- Sport Scotland draw their board from both sport and business with a number of people on the board having significant commercial experience
- The Finnish experience of using sport as a key tool in social policy particularly, in relation to public health. They now have the highest participation rates in Western Europe
- New Zealand too have looked to set a goal of integrating sports policy into other government departments such as health and education
- Australian Sports Commission provides some leadership in the development of private sector and philanthropic investment in sport

#### 16. Member Feedback

The recommendations and feedback received from our member organisations is encapsulated in the recommendations set out in Section 17 below.

# 17. Recommendations for Sport Ireland – A New Way

# 17.1 Overview

In our view there are a number of objectives to be achieved in the establishment of Sport Ireland to ensure that the opportunities created by its setting up are not lost. The remit needs to be extended beyond the current functions of the Irish Sports Council and the National Sports Campus Development Authority to ensure that in collaboration with the Department, there is a place for sport at the centre of government policy.

The role and remit of Sport Ireland needs to reflect the reality that sport has a much wider impact than simply the sporting activity itself. In particular, to ensure that the true potential of sport in terms of its contribution to Irish Society is maximized there should be:

(i) Improved partnership and collaboration between all organsiations involved in sport. This spirit of co-operation should be reflected in the legislation.

- (ii) The adoption of a Master Plan for Irish Sport & Physical Activity by Government. This plan would form the basis to which Sport Ireland would work. However, the Master Plan would also inform the agendas of other agencies whose activities impact on sport & physical activity.
- (iii) The Department, as the supervising government Department, for Sport Ireland should take a lead role in the co-ordination of all government policy impacting on sport and physical activity.
- (iv) The role and remit of Sport Ireland and the Department is clear.
- (v) There is one body responsible for funding decisions with transparent and accessible guidelines or criteria around which funding decisions are made.

#### 17.2 **Board**

The composition of the Board should be skills based. Expertise to be included on the Board should include legal, financial, commercial, communications, high performance sport, sports development, sports tourism/events, management of sports facilities, IT and experience of voluntary organisations.

It is suggested that persons in the employment of organisations in receipt of Sports Council funding should not serve on the Board of Sport Ireland.

It would be worth considering that a number of board members should be entirely independent meaning that they have no prior involvement with the ISC/Sport Ireland or any of the organisations funded by the agency. This is a model adopted by the United States Olympic Committee.

#### 17.3 Functions

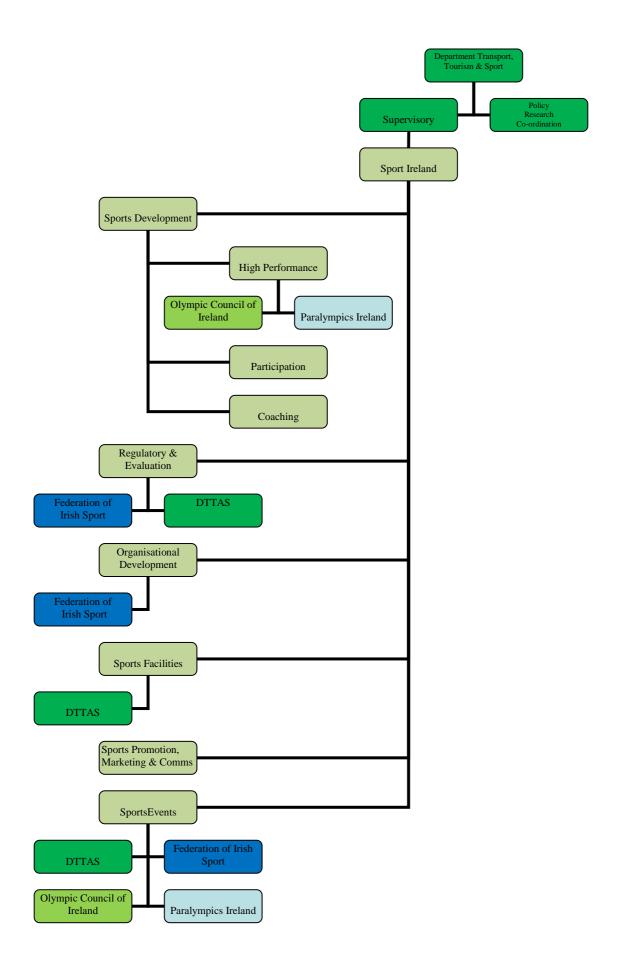
In order for Irish Sport to continue to prosper there are a number of areas that require focus. These include:

- Development of Sports Policy
- Continued growth of participation rates
- High Performance Sport to include all aspects of athlete welfare
- Coach development, education and training
- Sports Facilities at national, regional and community level
- Research in respect of specific programmes being implemented, tracking of KPIs and general research into the sport sector in Ireland
- Promotion of sport & physical activity social marketing aimed at changing behaviour
- Hosting of international sports events
- Coordination between other government departments and agencies whose work impacts on sport
- Anti-doping
- Provision of services and capacity building of organisations in receipt of public monies
- Research both of the impact of sport generally as well the evaluation of particular programmes and other areas of activity

## 17.4 Potential Structure

The relationships between the various stakeholders in Irish Sport are essential to the on-going development of Irish Sport. Of this in particular, the relationship between Sport Ireland and its supervisory Department is key. However, there are also areas where collaboration with third party organisations will be essential. The partnership approach has on occasion been missing in Irish Sport and the establishment of Sport Ireland is an opportunity to improve our track record in this regard. For example, there is a role to be played between Sport Ireland and the Olympic Council of Ireland and Paralympics Ireland in relation to High Performance in respect of the sports that form part of the Olympic & Paralympic programmes.

Set out on the next page is a proposed organisational chart. The key functions of the Department and Sport Ireland are set out with third party organisations listed as coworkers or assistants where it felt collaboration is warranted.



### 17.4.1 Department

We would propose that the Department would develop government policy for sport supported by a research function. We would hope that government policy would increasingly impact on areas outside the immediate remit of the Department and that the Department would become the principal co-ordinator and driver of sports policy across all of Government.

The Department would also retain a supervisory function over Sport Ireland.

### 17.4.2 Sport Ireland

We would see Sport Ireland's remit being over 6 core areas namely:

# (i) Sports Development

This would encompass both growth of participation and high performance with the agency being charged with the development of sport no matter the performance pathway of the participant. This core function would also encompass the delivery of elite athlete support and development. There will need to be collaboration with Paralympics Ireland and the Olympic Council of Ireland in respect of the high performance programme for Paralympic & Olympic Sports. Coach education and development would also come within this function given its necessity to continue growth in participation as well as high performance sport. In respect of funding of all sports development criteria the single biggest requirement is clear and transparent criteria which, will help in aligning the strategies and programmes of the sporting bodies to the outcomes desired by government.

# (ii) Regulatory & Evaluation

The anti-doping regime would fall within its remit but it is envisaged that Sport Ireland would, in consultation with the sector, set standards for the appropriate governance of sport. This function would allow for the setting of such standards and ensuring compliance with them. The transparent development of criteria and the availability of them will be essential to the effectiveness of this function. There would also be a research and evaluation ability both in terms of programmes being supported by Sport Ireland and carried out by funded bodies as well as the agency's own activities. We would envisage a collaborative role for the Department in relation to this function. There should also be a role for the Federation of Irish Sport in the development of the requisite standards.

### (iii) Organisational Development

This function would look to build the capacity of the Irish Sports Community which, would ensure both that maximum value for money was being obtained from all government investment but also to facilitate the attraction of finance from third party sources. We feel that this role would be most effectively carried out in conjunction with the Federation of Irish Sport.

### (iv) Facilities

We would suggest that this function might not include just the continued development of the National Sports Campus but also see Sport Ireland actively engaged with the development and management of other national and regional facilities. We would envisage that this group would work with all of the National Governing Bodies and Local Authorities to develop facilities strategies for both sports and communities. There would therefore be a strategic blue print available when capital decisions in relations to facilities were being taken by Government.

# (v) Sport Promotion, Marketing & Communications

There is significant work to be done to raise awareness about the importance of lifelong involvement in physical activity and in changing the behaviour of Irish people in relation to activity levels. It is also important that there is more done to raise awareness of the existing opportunities for activity that exist. We therefore believe that Sport Ireland would benefit from having a role in the promotion and marketing of sport and sporting opportunities in Ireland.

# (vi) Sports Events

Ireland has a proud track record in the hosting of sports events. There should be a dedicated sports bidding entity. We feel that the creation of Sport Ireland provides an opportunity for including this role within its remit. However, it will only be successful if it is done in partnership with sport. Indeed, no bids should be made without the input of the national governing body for that sport. It would be worth considering inputting into the legislation a power allowing Sport Ireland to enter into the necessary Memoranda of Understanding with third parties to facilitate the development of such a bidding agency.

# 18. Conclusion

18.1 The potential of sport in terms of its wider impact on society needs to be reflected in the legislation in terms of the remit afforded to Sport Ireland as well as the supervisory function of the Department.

- 18.2 The wiser impact on society should also be recognised in a wider role of the Department in leading and influencing national policy regarding sport and physical activity where the activities of other government departments or agencies are impacting on same.
- 18.3 It is proposed that the spirit of partnership and collaboration both with other areas of government and third party agencies/stakeholders in the sector be encapsulated in the legislation.
- 18.4 The existing functions of the ISC and the NSCDA should be added to in terms of role in organisational development, regulation, events, sports promotion and the strategic development and management of facilities.
- 18.5 The composition of the Board of Sport Ireland should be skilled based with a number of independent person.
- 18.6 Clear transparent criteria are developed for the recognition of National Governing Bodies by Sport Ireland and the awarding of all grant funding.
- 18.7 It is recommended that the role and remit of the Singapore Sports Council be examined as being a model from which Ireland could draw some learnings.

## Appendix 1 - International Models

### 1. United Kingdom

#### Structure

In the UK there is a dual-agency approach with UK Sport being responsible for high performance sport throughout the UK with sports development to include participation being administered by the four "home country" sports councils namely, Sport England, Sport Scotland, Sport Wales and Sport Northern Ireland.

### **Board Composition**

The board of UK Sport is comprised of the chairpersons of the four Sports Councils together with other persons appointed by the Department of Media Culture and Sport. The persons so appointed are to come from a variety of different backgrounds and be representative of the community.

**UK Sport (High Performance)** – comes under the remit of the Department of Media, Culture & Sport and was established by Royal Charter in 1997 and is responsible for investing what is currently approximately £100 million of public funds each year in high performance funds. These funds are derived from the National Lottery together with the Exchequer and are supplemented by a private sponsorship scheme. UK Sport invests funds in Britain's best Olympic and Paralympic sports and athletes to maximise their chances of success on the world stage. They have no direct involvement in community or school sport.

# The Sports Councils: A Case Study - Sport Scotland (Population 5.2m)

Rather than detailing each of the four home countries systems we have chosen Sport Scotland because of its similarity in scale to Ireland.

### Structure

Sport Scotland ("SS") is a non-departmental public body, responsible through ministers to the Scottish Parliament. SS has three directorates being sports development, high performance and corporate services. They also have a trust company which is designed to develop regional infrastructure aiming to deliver 'quality, affordable, residential and sporting facilities and services for the development of people in sport.'<sup>8</sup> The Scottish Institute of Sport which had been a stand-alone entity was merged with SS in 2008. The Board is drawn from both sport and business with a number or people on the board having significant commercial experience.

#### Role:

The functions of SS can be summarised as follows:

- Advising the Scottish Government and supporting delivery of its policies
- Leading, supporting and coordinating key organisations involved in sport
- Investing National Lottery and Scottish Government funding
- Delivering quality products and services in targeted areas
- Promoting the power of sport and the contribution it makes to life in Scotland

<sup>8</sup> http://www.sportscotland.org.uk

- Collaborating with UK and international sporting systems to ensure Scottish Sport is well represented and integrated
- Adding Value to major sports events and additional investment

#### 2. Finland

Since the early 1960s Finnish sport activities and policies have focused on the promotion of 'sport for all (SfA)' over and above elite sport which has resulted in Finland achieving the highest participation rates in Europe. <sup>9</sup> It was one of the first countries in Western Europe to use sport as a key tool of social policy particularly, in relation to health.

#### **Government Structure**

There are two key government entities involved in Finnish Sport being the Sports Division which comes under the auspices, of the Ministry for Education and the local authorities. Under the Sport Act 1998, the Ministry is required to create and maintain the preconditions for physical activity, ensuring that all citizens have equal access to public services. This is done through securing public subsidies for sports organisations and the coordination of building new sports facilities.

There is a National Sports Council which acts as an advisory board to government with members appointed after each general election. The Sports Council is itself made up of four divisions being sports policy, facilities, sports science to include research and sport for people with a disability.

### Municipalities

The municipalities create the administrative framework for the delivery of sport providing some 30,000 different facilities 95% of which are in public ownership. The municipalities have been entirely independent since 1993 and since then have been able to allocate funding according to their own priorities. The municipalities have adopted a cross-sector approach with sport boards working very closely with other policy areas such as transport, health, environment, youth and education.

### 3. New Zealand (population 4.4.m)

Sport & Recreation New Zealand ("SPARC") was established in January 2003 but became known as SportNZ on February  $1^{\rm st}$  2012. Sport New Zealand's (or Sport NZ) mission is to 'create a world class sports system at all levels, so we have more kids playing and enjoying sport; more adults participating and getting involved; and more Kiwi winners on the world stage.' 10

### **Function**

The functions of SportNZ include:

 Development and implementation of national policies and strategies for physical recreation and sport

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Policy, politics and path dependency: Sport development in Australia and Finland, 2008

<sup>10</sup> http://www.sportnz.org.nz

- Promotion and dissemination of research relevant to sport and physical recreation
- Provision of advice to the Minister on issues relevant to physical recreation and sport
- Facilitate resolution of disputes between persons or organisations involved in physical recreation or sport
- Work with schools, regional, central, and local government, and physical recreation and sports organisations to ensure the maintenance and development of the physical and organisational infrastructure for physical recreation and sport
- Work with health, education, and other agencies to promote greater participation in physical recreation and sport through policy development, advocacy, and support, in line with the objectives of the New Zealand health strategy
- Provision of advice and support for organisations working in physical recreation and sport at national, regional, and local levels

## **High Performance**

High Performance Sport NZ was formed in August 2011 through a merger of the New Zealand Academies of Sport and the former SPARC High Performance unit and is a subsidiary of Sport NZ.

#### **Board**

The Board is small and is to be comprised of not less than 5 but no more than 9 members. The members are appointed by the relevant Minister and appear to come from a sporting and business background.

New Zealand has set a goal of integrating sport policy into other government departments, such as Health and Education, and this is an example Sport Ireland should follow.

# 4. Singapore (Population 5.1m)

The objective of the Singapore Sports Council (SSC) is to transform the nation through sport, by inspiring people and uniting communities. As the national sports agency, the SSC works with a vast network of public-private-and people sector partners to create access, opportunities and capabilities for individuals to live better through sports. Their mandate, as detailed in their "Vision2030: Live Better Through Sport", goes beyond driving participation and winning medals. The SSC uses sport to create 'resilient, tenacious people, an appreciation for teamwork, a commitment to purpose, strong united communities and national pride.'

The SSC is a statutory body formed in 1972 and is the lead agency in developing a sporting culture for Singapore. It is relevant to highlight in the context of what is proposed for Ireland, that the Singapore Sports Council is the result of an amalgamation between the National Sports Promotions Board and the National Stadium Corporation.

#### Structure



#### **Functions**

The functions of the Council, as set out in the Singapore Sports Council Act, 1973 are:

- to plan and promote sports in Singapore for both competitive and recreational purposes;
- to co-ordinate the activities of, and to facilitate co-operation among, all sports organisations;
- to co-ordinate, in consultation with the Ministry of Education, the sports activities of schools with those of national sports organisations;
- to encourage and organise, in consultation with the national sports organisations and the Singapore National Olympic Council, national, international and other sports, competitions and games;
- to plan and promote physical education in Singapore;
- to foster research and study in sports and physical education and to prepare and publish such reports or periodicals on these matters as it thinks fit;
- to furnish information, advice and assistance to persons and organisations concerned with sports and physical education;
- to establish any sports stadium or such other sports facilities as it thinks fit and to manage and maintain them;
- to establish any clubs for the promotion of sports and to manage and maintain them;
- to establish and maintain hotels, hostels, restaurants, shops or other conveniences in connection with any sports stadium or other facilities under its control; and
- to prepare, manufacture and supply any sports equipment and other sports items.

## **Singapore Sports Hub**

The SCC are also developing a Sports Hub which will have world class training facilities for high performance athletes as well as an ideal location for sports and entertainment events, sports administration, and sports and recreation businesses.

## **National Physical Fitness Award**

Government sanctioned award through the education system requiring mandatory testing for all primary and secondary school children on top of regular physical education.

### **Singapore Vision 2030**

Vision 2030 is a joint project led by the Singapore Sports Council and the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports with active participation from the public, people and private sectors. Vision 2030 makes recommendations on the future landscape of sport in the country, including: Sustainable Funding, Sports Portal (Technology to promote sport and motivate healthy lifestyle), Unified Sports, Sport Events Strategy, Sports Facilities Master Plan, amongst others.

Singapore perhaps provides Ireland with the best template for combining various agencies under a new umbrella and also for integrating sport with other policy areas such as Tourism, Enterprise, Health, Education and so on. By creating a vision Singapore knows where it would like to be in 2030 and can work toward achieving that goal.

## 5. Australia (population 22.6 million)

Australia's principle state agency for sport was established by the Australian Sports Commission Act 1989. It serves as an agency within the Department of Regions, Local Government & Sport. Its principal objectives are to provide the resources, services and facilities to enable Australians to pursue and achieve excellence in sport while also furthering their educational and vocational skills and other aspects of their personal development. There is also an objective to facilitate private sector investment in sport.

#### **Functions**

The functions of the ASC as set out by the 1989 Act include:

- the development of sport
- promote equality of access to sport by all Australians
- to facilitate research and development in relation to sport
- to establish, manage and develop facilities for the purposes of the Commission
- to raise money through the Australian Sports Foundation, or by other means, for the purposes of the Commission

## **Australian Institute of Sport**

The Australian Institute of Sport comes within the auspices of the ASC. It serves as Australia's premier sports training institute with 36 programs in 26 different sports.

Australia provides some leadership in the development of private sector and philanthropic investment in sport and Sport Ireland should look to develop policies that ensure that the revenue to sport is broadened beyond government funding.