

AGM 2009 PRESENTATIONS

Comments from Alan Jones

1. Annual Report

I think it was a bit unfortunate that, because of the wish to get on to the various presentations, there was no debate on the Annual Report this year. I have however written to Peter Stratton to support his view that we need to know much more about our membership than is known at present, even within the Clubs.

2. Sport England Strategy 09-13

The brief presentation on Sport England's Strategy shows some significant implications for snowsports which need to be addressed in the Strategy Review. Snowsport England (SSE) cannot "create opportunities for all" without vastly more local facilities. A strategy for achieving this must be included in its development plans. Given more local facilities, snowsports could make a very significant contribution to the 1M people doing more sport by 2012-13.

The way the 'Active People Survey' and the 'Satisfaction Survey' are designed, they will provide poor indicators of progress in snowsports. SSE will need to develop its own more accurate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

3. Whole Sport Plan, What is it?

I have understood it to mean a strategy for development of the whole sport from aspirant beginners to World Class (Olympic Gold Medals aspirants) in all disciplines and all locations. This must cover all participants, not just members of clubs and those registered with the governing body. Ideally therefore, it needs to be UK wide, which will be difficult to achieve within snowsports as the 'Modernisation' project to create a unified structure for the sport failed. Such a plan should be formulated for the benefit of the organisation and for the sport, not for the benefit of the Sports Councils. As well as an operating plan for the organisation, it would be used as supporting evidence in funding applications of all sorts, not just from Sport England or UK Sport.

4. Snowsport England Whole Sport Plan

It appears that Snowsport England is using the term 'Whole Sport Plan' to refer to the submission document 'Funding Bid 2009-13 to Sport England'. Whilst this was outlined in the presentation at the AGM, so far as I know, the full document has not been circulated generally or published in full on the SSE web site. I was sent a copy by Sandy Telling which he presumably received through London & South East Regional Ski Association (L&SERSA). (I hope it was not intended to be confidential; it certainly should not be). I have commented on this in detail in the Appendix to a separate paper on the Whole Sport Plan.

5. Snowsport England Strategy Review 2010-2014

There is a need to clarify the use of these various terms so that the Members are clear on what documents are being referred to. I would hope that the 'Strategy Review' is the consultation process to be followed in order to formulate the 'Snowsport England Forward Plan 2010-2014'. It seems unfortunate to me that the Sport England Funding Bid does not quite reach the next Winter Olympic year. I noted that the Snowsport England Forward Plan 2007-2010 was included as an appendix to the Funding Bid 2009-13.

Adequate consultation has been sadly lacking in most of the forward plans produced by ESC and was also lacking in the recent funding bid. No doubt this was due to the short notice of the invitation from Sport England to submit a bid, but it has led to some errors and omissions which might have been avoided with more consultation. In the past, there have been occasions when, I think, the Board has had a lack of will to consult and forward plans have sometimes been seen just as a hoop through which governing bodies have to jump to get a grant and not as an essential tool for the long-term good management of the organisation. There have been occasions where it appeared that the Chairman had been left to cobble something together at the last minute. I am delighted therefore that we seem now to be moving in the right direction at the right time. I have attended a number of Sports Council Development Planning courses over the years where emphasis has been put on the need for consultation and how it should be implemented. Sadly, it has sometimes been the Sports Council which has got in the way of implementation of its own recommendations.

As things have turned out, I presume that the content of the Funding Bid will form the foundation of the 'Snowsport England Forward Plan' which I hope will be a 'Whole Sport Plan' as I have described. The Plan needs to have a format which suites our sport rather than a stereotyped format to satisfy the whims of Sport England. I do not think the division into so called 'Interventions' was very helpful and I am guessing that this was the latest piece of Sport England jargon.

There needs to be a separate strategy for facilities development which goes into more detail than would be appropriate in a general Forward Plan.

For all its shortcomings, the Bid was clearly very successful and the Board has to be congratulated on this. However, I would not like to see some of the errors and omissions carried forward into the next 'Forward Plan' (or 'Whole Sport Plan' as I would prefer to see it). I have therefore been through the Bid document, quite carefully I hope, and made a number of notes as I went along. I have put the main issues together in a separate paper on the Whole Sport Plan in the hope that they will help to ensure that we formulate a Plan which is both accurate and complete.

09/07/09