

Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales – The story so far

Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales Officer, Rhian Pearce, outlines the developments that have taken place to drive positive changes in governance in sport and recreation organisations.

It's a challenging task to change the culture of an organisation, but now more than ever the sport and recreation sector has increasingly acknowledged the fact that good governance is a key foundation for the success of any organisation whether commercial or not-for-profit, and in or out of sport. Together the sector recognises that they must modernise their approach to make sure that they can sustain and grow sport and continue delivering the physical and mental wellbeing benefits being active delivers across all of society.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance was asked in 2015 to help consult with key stakeholders in the Welsh sport sector and develop a support programme to help establish best practice for good governance. This was a very positive step for the sector, but establishing the best route to achieve this culture shift has been a challenge. The diversity of sports provision in Wales has meant that the framework needs to cater to different sized organisations all with varying capacity for change.

Fast forward two years, and a significant amount of work later and the Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales (GLFW) is live and being actively implemented by the Wales sport and recreation sector:

- The GLFW is based on the Alliance's Voluntary Code of Good Governance (2014), and has been tailored to the needs of Welsh sport and recreation organisations through consultation events.
- "Minimum Expectations" were developed, to establish priority areas that could be included in an individual organisation's governance and leadership improvement plans.
- The GLFW also includes guidance on positive behavioural indicators for Board Members to drive improvements in their organisational culture and leadership.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance and Sport Wales have established a key partnership working together to deliver the support services that are designed to help you reach some of the targets established by the GLFW. I joined in October 2016 as the GLFW Officer based in Wales. As the project continues to develop, my remit is to



focus on the Welsh Lower Funded National Governing Bodies of Sport as the Higher Funded organisations have been receiving support packages for some time. This means that I'll be focusing on around 20 sport and recreation organisations that:

- receive between £0-50,000 in grant aid from Sport Wales;
- have around 100,000 members or participants across the country;
- only a handful of paid staff.

I've spent my first few months learning and understanding more about the challenges and opportunities that each organisation faces and how we can help to provide support along the way. It has been great meeting the organisations, which has only embedded in mind how truly voluntary the sector is.

My next project is to track down the more elusive sports and then develop a suite of suitable, flexible support to address the longer term needs of these organisations. Watch this space! I'll be reporting back on the initial findings from these meetings shortly and announcing what support is available.

