

Clubgolf Strategy Review

A. Introduction

Aims of the review

The aim of this paper is to review the original clubgolf strategy, report against the targets within this strategy and to recommend the action required to establish a Strategic Framework for the clubgolf project to 2014.

The following are key inputs:

- Assessment of progress to date against existing clubgolf targets
- Recommendations made in clubgolf Evaluation report (TNS & MW Associates)

Structure of the review

This review seeks to summarise the findings of Mike Williamson's evaluation (Appendix D) and compare these findings with the views of the review group and comment on both. This approach will be applied to the existing clubgolf strategy, culminating in conclusions and recommendations in each key area of this existing strategy.

B. Current Context

Ryder Cup

clubgolf was founded on the pledge "to provide every child in Scotland with an opportunity to experience golf by the time they are nine years old" made by Henry McLeish in 2001 as part of Scotland's bid to host the 2009 Ryder Cup.

The original strategy was developed on the basis of this pledge, both in terms of the programme to be developed and the timescale in which it was to be delivered.

The original strategy envisaged a fully rolled out programme by 2009, although the outcome of the Ryder Cup bid, and the events of 11 September 2001, resulted in the Ryder Cup being awarded to Scotland in 2014.

One Plan for Golf

"One Plan" is a work in progress and aims to provide the overarching strategy within Scottish Golf, around four key areas – Performance, Growing the Game, Events and Handicapping & Course Rating. Work on this strategy is almost complete and the partners will now turn their focus to establishing the most suitable delivery structure for this strategy. The partners in One Plan for Golf are the SGU, SLGA, and PGA, supported by sportscotland.

Concurrently, at the request of Scottish Government, Event Scotland has coordinated meetings of all bodies (public and private) involved in the golf industry in its widest sense. Under the banner of 'A Framework for Scottish Golf', a straw man has been written, identifying key work areas and high level objectives. At the time of writing this document, this welcome initiative is at a fledgling stage.

Reaching Higher

The Scottish Government strategy for sport, 'Reaching Higher' was published in February 2007. This strategy sought to build on the success of its predecessor, Sport 21, and identifies two key outcomes; Increasing Participation and Improving Performance.

sportscotland Strategy

sportscotland's strategy provides a framework for the development of local sport and physical activity across Scottish communities. The clubgolf programme has been developed to take advantage of this framework, most notably utilising the Active Schools network to roll out the introductory game firstclubgolf, and in aligning the PGA Level 1 coaching qualification with SVA standards, thereby attracting considerable subsidy for coach education.

In a wider context clubgolf (and Scottish golf in general) has benefited from consultancy support in facilities development, and in identifying additional sources of funding for clubs and golf organisations to access.

Commonwealth Games – Glasgow 2014

In November 2007 the Commonwealth Games committee announced that Glasgow had been successful in its bid to host the 2014 Games. It is reasonable to expect that significant sports funding will be directed to support that event (as well as the 2012 Olympic Games in London). There may be an impact on the Scottish Government's ability and desire to continue to provide financial support for clubgolf at current levels.

At a press conference in Edinburgh (December 2007) to announce government investment in Scottish Golf for 2008, the minister for Sport said the Government would attach equal importance to the Commonwealth Games and Ryder Cup as major sporting events in Scotland in 2014.

C. The Review

The review section of this document is presented in a structured format for ease of use and should be read in conjunction with the current clubgolf strategy which is attached as Appendix F. Each strategy area is assessed based on both the findings of the clubgolf Evaluation (Appendix D) and the views of the review group, leading to comments and culminating in a Conclusion and Recommendations.

1. Ambitions

Assessment

Evaluation: MW does not make a judgement on the ambitions, they are taken as read.

Review Group: Ambitions remain relevant today and should be retained as stated

Comments

As above.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Retain as per original strategy.

2. Principles

Assessment

Evaluation: No reference made by MW

Review Group: Some amendments to the principles are recommended based on experience and development of the programme.

Comments

The principles need to be updated and should be adapted to reflect the development of the programme.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Review the existing principles.

3. Objectives

The 2001 strategy detailed a number of specific targets. Each target is assessed and comments, conclusions and recommendations made in relation to each specific target below.

3.1 50,000 Nine Year Olds with an Opportunity to Access an Introductory Game Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports good progress with about 26,000 children receiving the introductory game in 2007. The report cites lack of buy in from education authorities, head teachers and their schools and the lack of control that the Active Schools network has over curriculum time as key reasons for not reaching every 9 year old to date.

Review Group: In 2007, the number of children accessing firstclubgolf in P5 was 25,746, or 46% of Scotland's P5 population. A full breakdown of firstclubgolf participation by Local Authority Area in 2007 is provided in Appendix A. This illustrates clearly the variable levels of implementation across the country.

Comment:

The introductory game 'firstclubgolf' was trialled during the programme development phase. After an initial study clubgolf determined SNAG[®] as the recommended equipment for delivering firstclubgolf to P5 children (aged 9-10). The programme also recognises the Golf Foundation supported Tri-Golf[®] equipment as a suitable alternative.

From early 2006 clubgolf has offered a 50% subsidy to Local Authorities towards the purchase of an initial bag (either SNAG or Tri-Golf) in each school, irrespective of school size.

firstclubgolf National Training, delivered to a standard approved by the Youth Sport Trust has also been provided to Active Schools staff (fully funded by clubgolf). No subsidy is offered to independent schools.

However it is clear that for there to be an "opportunity" for any child to access the introductory game, the child's school must offer it. For this opportunity to be extended to all P5 children, all schools must decide to offer firstclubgolf, something that is dependent on Education, not under the control of the clubgolf project, or of Active Schools.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A target for providing an opportunity for every 9-year old should be retained. However, the new strategy should consider how influence over Local Authorities can be maximised and also what actions the partners in clubgolf can take to achieve this ambitious aim.

3.2 20,000 Children Aged 9-14 Accessing Community Based Programmes

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports that targets set for the delivery of clubgolf to community groups are seen as no longer relevant and can be dropped.

Review Group: Agree with Evaluation.

Comment

The original Strategy gives Scouts and Guides as examples of groups where such community based programmes could be developed, and within this target specific reference is also made to Social Inclusion Partnership areas. Clubgolf has run a Social Inclusion pilot, which provided a model for current and future work in socially deprived areas, however this did not include the establishment of clubgolf programmes in community based groups.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This target is redundant and should be removed.

3.3 50,000 Children Aged 9-14 in Core Skills Programmes at Clubs

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports about 15% of those experiencing firstclubgolf going on to receive clubgolf coaching. The report suggests that approximately 6,000 coaches would be needed to achieve this target and that the current golfing infrastructure may not be capable of delivering these numbers and indeed that this number of volunteers may not be available for recruitment.

Review Group: The number of children in Core Skills programmes at clubs in 2007 was 5,852.

Comment

When this target was set little detail was known about the Core Skills programme, the end-to-end age spectrum or the qualifications required for the coaches who would deliver it.

The programme has been developed on the basis that Stages 1 & 2 will be delivered by PGA qualified volunteer coaches, and there is therefore a capacity constraint which is dependent on the number of volunteers that can be recruited and retained.

In recent years the PGA coach education programme has also changed considerably, and the PGA Level 1 and 2 qualifications are now fully UKCC compliant.

No specific targets were set for the number of volunteer coaches, or for the

number of PGA Pro's delivering more advanced clubgolf coaching, however very rough calculations indicate a need for somewhere in the region of 6,000 volunteers and 750 Pros to support 50,000 children in coaching programmes at clubs.

It is reasonable to assume an attrition rate in the region of 25-30% each year (other sports indicate in the region of 30%) for volunteer coaches, which would imply a requirement to train up 1,500 to 2,000 new coaches each year.

It seems unlikely that an assessment of coaching capacity was ever done in setting the initial target, and it is important that this is now reviewed. The number of children that can ultimately be accommodated on Core Skills programmes will be constrained by the number of coaches that the coach education programme can support.

A breakdown of clubgolf participation within golf clubs by Local Authority Area in 2007 is provided in Appendix B.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Establish an achievable target for the number of children in core skills programmes at clubs aligned to the outcome of an assessment of coaching capacity and based on an agreed model.

3.4 100,000 Members of the Scottish Junior Golf Club

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports that targets set for membership of a 'Scottish Junior Golf Club' are seen as no longer relevant and can be dropped.

Review Group: Agree with Evaluation.

Comment

The envisaged "Scottish Junior Golf Club" has never been established, and nor is there any perceived benefit in establishing such an organisation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

References to the Scottish Junior Golf Club be omitted from the new strategy

3.5 50,000 Junior Members of Golf Clubs in Scotland

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports on the current trend of falling membership overall and the considerable effort and innovation required of some clubs in terms of attitudes and policies at club level.

Review Group: Available data illustrates static boy's membership and an increase of 6.6% in girl's membership over the last 5 years.

Comment

Both SGU and SLGA collect data annually on the number of junior members at golf clubs throughout Scotland. However, this data is provided on a voluntary basis by clubs and is therefore not wholly reliable. Experience suggests most urban clubs do not have spare capacity, at least for boys. Some rural clubs are able to accommodate additional junior members. This scenario may often be compounded by large numbers of paid up junior members who are effectively inactive, giving a false impression of that golf clubs capacity for new junior members.

Historically, membership has often been seen as the sole measure of participation. However, recognition of general participation needs to be made in future.

As increasing numbers of children convert from firstclubgolf to coaching at clubs, a focus on club development is needed. Consideration of targets based on club accreditation might be considered.

The effective communication of the Scottish Golf Pathway to golfers, clubs, Areas and Counties and at National level is considered to be very important.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is important that the success of clubgolf is assessed by some measures which are quantifiable outside the programme itself. These measures should include participation as well as membership, and a Scottish Golf Research Strategy should inform such targets. A tracking system should be continued to monitor the progress of clubgolf 'products'. In addition, the new strategy should include targets around club development including accreditation.

3.6 Percentage of Girls to Increase from 10% to 20% of Junior Golfers

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports that the achievement of this target would require almost a quadrupling of the actual number of girls playing which, it is suggested, is unlikely to be achievable. The report states that doubling the number rather than the proportion of girls playing golf would be a considerable achievement.

Review Group: This target was understood to refer to the number of junior girl members at golf clubs and was therefore unrealistic as indicated by the evaluation. See comments below.

Comments

clubgolf researched Girls participation (Grampian pilot 2005) and concluded that there are different motivators for girls than boys, perhaps including types of participation other than traditional membership. In 2007:

- 48% of children in firstclubgolf were girls

- 27% of children in clubgolf Stage 1 were girls (33% in Grampian)
- 18% of children in clubgolf Stage 2 were girls (24% in Grampian)
- 15% of children in clubgolf Stage 3 were girls (20% in Grampian)

As reported in 3.1.5.1 above, the last 5 years has seen a reported increase of 6.6% in the number of girl members during which time boys membership is reported to have been static.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Achievements in increasing participation amongst girls should be measured within targets set for increasing membership and participation. In addition, emphasis is required on positive action such as the Girls in Golf initiative.

3.7 200 clubgolf Centres (i.e. Clubs Delivering the Core Skills Programme)

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports that targets are achievable and already close to being met. A long term view is required to ensure that facility related targets are linked to other participation related targets.

Review Group: As at October 2007, 214 clubs and facilities were signed up to clubgolf, although participation figures showed that only 190 of these actually delivered clubgolf coaching in 2007. It is anticipated that up to 230 clubs will actively deliver clubgolf coaching in 2008. Although this target will have been achieved, there is an issue regarding the geographical spread with a lack of clubs in urban areas.

Comments

A list of the clubs / facilities which delivered coaching in 2007 is provided in appendix C.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Such a target is valid and should be reviewed and retained. This review should consider geographical spread and alternative delivery centres beyond golf clubs. It should also consider targets for the number of children participating in core skills programmes (3.3), and for other current targets for facility development (3.8 & 3.9).

3.8 20 New Junior Specific Golf Facilities

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports that such facilities have been installed at over 50 facilities, albeit sometimes of a very simple kind.

Review Group: It is not clear from the initial strategy whether a new Junior Specific golf facility refers to a new course, short course, extension/improvement to existing practice area, etc. However clubgolf has been the vehicle for a large number of facility projects, which are listed in appendix E and so it is fair to conclude that this target has been met.

Comment

As above.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Such a target should be incorporated within the facilities element of the new strategy.

3.9 45 Affiliated Junior Golf Facilities (Commercial Facilities / Driving Ranges)

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports 38 municipal or commercial facilities delivering clubgolf coaching.

Review Group: Of the 190 centres where volunteer coaches delivered clubgolf coaching in 2007, twelve are commercial centres or driving ranges. However there are many golf clubs which make use of local or associated commercial driving ranges to deliver part of their coaching programme and so a meaningful assessment is difficult to achieve.

Comments

clubgolf will continue to make use of a wide range of facilities in an effort to deliver against other participation targets. It is questionable whether a specific target for commercial facilities is necessary, especially as the cost to participating children tends to be a little higher at these venues.

No targets were set for the number of coaches required however there is an implicit required number of coaches based on the target number of children.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Such a target should be incorporated within the facilities element of the new strategy.

Assessment (Overall)

Evaluation: MW recommends that targets are reviewed based on resource availability, practical experience to date, forward projections and desired growth rates, the findings of the evaluation and whether or not other junior programmes are incorporated into the national strategy. The report further recommends that participation and facility targets be compatible.

Review Group: The five-phased approach is no longer relevant to the strategy from 2009 going forwards. The objectives will be achieved by delivering against an agreed project plan.

Comments (Overall)

The Review Group has debated at length the extent to which the partners in clubgolf can deliver against targets that require input and commitment from other agencies such as

Local Authorities. Debate has taken place as to whether the new strategy should include a list of specific objectives as per the current strategy or whether there should be a small number of over-arching objectives, supported by Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) which are controllable by clubgolf partners

Conclusion and Recommendations (Overall)

The new strategy should include a small number of over-arching objectives, supported by key performance Indicators.

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4. Achieving the Objectives

Assessment

Evaluation: MW makes no reference to achieving the objectives.

Review Group: There is a lot of repetition between the achieving the objectives section and the strategic focus section. However, the four key action areas are relevant.

Comments

As above.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Achieving objectives section to be left out of the new strategy and covered under Strategic focus.

5. Strategic Focus

5.1 Research & Evaluation

Assessment

Evaluation: MW recommends that Scottish golf should carry out a comprehensive national survey (the first since 1990/91) to identify and quantify levels, patterns and changes in golf demand in Scotland and thus determine the context for clubgolf. Accurate figures on junior memberships should be gathered from golf clubs. Other

junior programmes in Scotland and elsewhere should be regularly monitored and features from them should be incorporated into clubgolf where appropriate.

Review group: The initial strategy set out that evaluations would be conducted on the pilot phases and the project as a whole. The following evaluations were done:

- Surveys of firstclubgolf participants and deliverers
- Surveys of initial Stage 1 Programmes at clubs (participants and volunteer coaches)
- Participants feedback survey after coach education courses
- Target group reports (girls in golf, social inclusion, school-club)
- clubgolf Rural Demonstration Project
- individual club case studies
- MW research study into clubgolf

Comments

The 2003 strategy set out that independent evaluation will be undertaken during both pilot and Delivery phases. This evaluation will be complete in 2007. There is now a need to set out a framework for continued research and evaluation to ensure the programme remains focussed on the needs of its customers (particularly the juniors).

Conclusion & Recommendations

On a sample basis, clubgolf should continue its annual, self-completion surveys of clubgolf participants and deliverers, and should continue the online tracking survey of participants piloted in this evaluation.

clubgolf should consider whether further case study work is required, to obtain external and in-depth feedback on particular situations or issues, e.g. the specific issues associated with delivering clubgolf in urban areas.

5.2 Programme Development

5.2.1 clubgolf in primary Schools

Assessment

Evaluation: MW found that Active Schools plays a key role in activating the introductory game; the success of firstclubgolf is also crucially dependent on effective partnerships with local authority education at all levels.

Review Group: This element of the programme is well developed, albeit dependent on Local Authority Education departments. In the cases of both firstclubgolf and clubgolf, deliverers (teachers and Level 1 coaches) give high ratings to their training, the equipment, and the lesson plans/coaching manuals.

Comments

As above.

Conclusion and recommendations

That delivery of firstclubgolf remains the initial focus of the programme.

5.2.2. clubgolf in secondary Schools

Assessment

Evaluation: MW makes no reference.

Review Group: the clubgolf programme has not been implemented at Secondary Schools.

Comments

There is no case for delivering clubgolf coaching at secondary schools.

Conclusion and recommendations

The new strategy should not seek to deliver clubgolf in secondary schools.

5.2.3 Special Schools

Assessment

Evaluation: MW makes no reference.

Review Group: the clubgolf programme has been implemented at schools with enhanced provision.

Comments

In order for the new strategy to be recognised as inclusive, provision must be made for those educated at schools with enhanced provision.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The new strategy should provide for the roll out of clubgolf programmes at schools with enhanced provision.

5.2.4 Community

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports that targets set for the delivery of clubgolf to community groups are seen as no longer relevant and can be dropped

Review Group: Agree with evaluation.

Comments

The original Strategy gives Scouts and Guides as examples of groups where such community based programmes could be developed, and within this target specific reference is also made to Social Inclusion Partnership areas. Clubgolf has run a Social Inclusion pilot, which provided a model for current and future work in socially deprived areas, however this did not include the establishment of clubgolf programmes in community based groups.

Conclusion and recommendations

The provision of clubgolf coaching within community groups is beyond the scope of the new strategy and should not be included.

5.2.5 clubgolf Skill Development

Assessment

Evaluation: MW makes no reference.

Review Group: The Scottish Golf Player Pathway is now agreed and coaching manuals established for every stage of the clubgolf player pathway. The CONGU Unified Handicapping Scheme caters adequately for junior handicaps

Comments

This section of the strategy does not specifically reference the coaching manuals/resources produced by clubgolf or the ongoing development of them.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The resources available to assist the delivery should be regularly reviewed and updated where required.

5.2.6 clubgolf and SLGA/SGU Competition Structures

Assessment

Evaluation: MW makes no reference.

Review Group: A clubgolf development programme was not established. A joint review of competition structures was not done. However, a National Junior Tour has been established and a sponsored junior handicap event for boys and girls is delivered annually. The CONGU Unified handicapping System provides for junior handicaps for those at the pre-handicap stage

Comments

There remains some anecdotal evidence of a need for more structured competition at the national level for 13-15 year olds.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This area should be covered under club development and possibly as one element of the club accreditation process.

5.2.7 clubgolf camps

Assessment

Evaluation: MW makes no reference.

Review group: Such camps have not been delivered but other provision is in place for talent identification.

Comments

The Danish Golf Union has claimed significant success with golf camps.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Such camps should not be included in the new strategy.

5.2.8 clubgolf PGA Education

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports the reliance of the programme on volunteer coaches.

Review Group: During 2008/08, approximately 350 volunteer coaches will have successfully been trained to level 1, bringing the total qualified number of coaches to 1500.

Comment

Perhaps one of the most significant developments in golf in recent years is the appearance of volunteer coaches. There remains a task to promote the value of this concept to some PGA Professionals and demonstrate the benefit to the game and the industry at large.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Coach Education should remain a key focus in the new strategy.

5.2.9 Talent Identification

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports the reliance of the programme on volunteer coaches.

Review Group: Extensive talent Identification systems are in place.

Comments

None.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The new strategy should continue to facilitate the identification and development of talent.

5.2.10 Social Inclusion Partnerships

Assessment

Evaluation: MW makes no reference.

Review Group: Clubgolf has run a Social Inclusion pilot, which provided a model for current and future work in socially deprived areas.

Comments

There are various challenges faced in offering golf to children in these areas. Amongst these is the inability to travel and the lack of money to pay for membership and/or equipment.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The new strategy should not make any special provision in these areas but should make clubgolf available. In addition, efforts should be made to work with appropriate agencies to make clubgolf available whenever possible.

5.2.11 Girls in Golf

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports that girls respond well to clubgolf and the 'Girls in Golf' initiative.

Review Group: The Girls in Golf initiative is now being rolled out following a successful pilot phase.

Comment

All available evidence supports the continuation and development of this initiative and the necessity of positive action to redress the gender imbalance in golf clubs and golf participation generally.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The new strategy must include the ongoing development of the Girls in Golf initiative.

5.2.12 Disability

Assessment

Evaluation: MW makes no reference.

Review Group: *Discuss*

Comments

Whilst much good work has been done to make golf more widely available to people with a disability, more can be done.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This aspect of programme Development must be included in the new strategy.

Conclusion and Recommendations – Programme Development Overall

Consideration should be given to incorporating other suitable junior coaching and development programmes along with clubgolf in a more comprehensive national junior strategy.

We are now beyond the programme development phase as defined (2003-2005) in the original Strategy however it is vital that the need for ongoing programme development is recognised in the new strategy.

5.3 Facilities

Assessment

Evaluation: MW found that one of the reasons why clubs were not involved in clubgolf is that they had a perceived lack of space for providing facilities for juniors. MW states that the targets for the numbers of clubs and facilities delivering clubgolf are achievable and already close to being met. However, he goes on to say that it has been established through practical experience that the target number of facilities is unlikely to be capable of delivering the target number of children. Each of the target number of 250 or so facilities would need to coach about 200 children every year for the annual throughput target of 50,000 children to be met, whereas evidence to date is that facilities delivering clubgolf are coaching no more than about 30 children each on average.

Review Group: Agree with evaluation.

Comments

Physical capacity in terms of junior facilities, practice facilities, access to the golf course etc will also become more of an issue as the programme progresses and further facility development targets, probably devised on an annual basis, will be required.

The strategy states that juniors need appropriate and accessible facilities. The key areas of work under facilities were to:

- Undertake research to inform the development of a Scottish golf facilities strategy
- Develop a facility programme and present a series of common sense design models for clubs and organisations to refer to.

A Scottish Golf Facilities strategy was originally envisaged, but has not been established. The concept outlined in the 2003 strategy as a clubgolf facility programme has largely been developed, however it is not clear from the initial strategy whether a new Junior Specific golf facility refers to a new course, short course, extension/improvement or existing practice area, etc. However clubgolf has been the vehicle for a large number of facility projects, which are listed in appendix E.

Conclusion/recommendations

Participation and facility targets should be compatible, i.e. the target number of facilities should be capable of delivering the target number of participants.

There is a need to review the clubgolf facilities strategy in the context of Scottish Golf.

5.4 Marketing & Branding

Assessment

Evaluation: MW recommends that the clubgolf brand name should be promoted and communicated more effectively. It was clear in the case study work that some clubs, children and parents did not recognise the clubgolf name; they simply knew that they were involved in a junior coaching programme. On the other hand, MW states found it encouraging that there is an ongoing section in the Scottish Clubgolfer publication and that the new junior Convenor's handbook being issued to clubs by the SGU will have a specific section on clubgolf – though it appears that it is often someone other than the junior convenor who takes on the role of the clubgolf organiser at club level.

Review Group: The clubgolf website has been much improved, but it is difficult to find any reference to clubgolf, or any link to the clubgolf website on the websites of the Partners. A part time contract is in place for marketing and PR support. The clubgolf brand is confusing in that it does not convey what the programme is. However, it is well established.

Comments

The original strategy cites marketing and branding as an important part of developing any of programme to help development awareness of the structure and its opportunities.

Consistency in the way that programmes were presented was important and therefore the umbrella brand 'clubgolf' was seen as an appropriate brand for the programme. Qualitative research was undertaken which aided the design of the clubgolf logo.

The 2003 strategy envisaged a clear marketing plan based on research currently provided by the clubgolf evaluation effort (finishing in 2007). It also relied on staff, originally housed within sportscotland, to implement the plan, and centred around development of the clubgolf brand.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Continued effort is required to maintain and deliver a plan which will utilise the existing clubgolf brand to maintain/increase awareness of the programme and of any new developments.

5.5. Partnerships

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports significant progress during the two years of the evaluation. He cites the appointment of a project Manager, the expansion of the team of regional Managers from 6 to 8 and the establishment of clubgolf Scotland Ltd as evidence of this progress. The evaluation suggests that the clubgolf partners should consider to what extent to which other junior programmes are included in a truly national programme.

Review Group: Much has been achieved in terms of establishing partnerships at every level from national to local. However, as previously reported, there has been wide variation between Local Authorities in how they have committed to the delivery of Firstclubgolf. The CSL Board established soon after its inception that the programme resources could not provide support for organisations wishing to employ local golf development officers.

Comments

The commitment of Local Authorities is key to achieving the target of providing an opportunity to every 9 year old. Significant progress has been made but much more remains to be done.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The new strategy, as recommended earlier in this document, must consider how influence over Local Authorities can be maximised and also what actions the partners in clubgolf can take to achieve the objective of providing the opportunity to every 9 year old.

5.6 Infrastructure

Assessment

Evaluation: As stated above, MW reports the increase in the number of regional Managers as allowing a more rational geographical allocation of staff resources.

Review Group: The officer network was modified in 2006 to increase from 6 to 8 the number of Regional Managers. The role of the Regional Managers has evolved at differing rates, influenced by the commitment of Local Authorities in the region, the take up from local clubs and the geographical constraints and/or opportunities inherent to that region.

The current strategy details other posts to cover Marketing, Facilities, Research and Public relations. A PR consultant is engaged on a part time basis. The programme has enjoyed a very significant contribution in the area of facility development from sportscotland but this resource has now been withdrawn and leaves a void. The research function has been conducted by MW Associates, commissioned by sportscotland. And this piece of work has now come to a conclusion. A Marketing role became vacant during 2006 and was not replaced. The SGU provide marketing support to clubgolf.

Comments

As the project gathers pace, we must not assume that programme development is complete. There will be a constant need to re-evaluate the programme and its delivery mechanisms. However, as roll out gathers pace, the new strategy should consider the role of the Regional Manager as maturity approaches and to what extent the programme can continue on a sustainable basis. Cognisance must also be taken of the wider Scottish Golf ambitions to increase overall participation rates at all age levels. Consideration should be given to a greater focus on club development to ensure sufficient and suitable exit points are available to children involved in the core skills programme.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The new strategy should highlight the importance of club development work as part of the evolving role of a Regional Manager and consider how this role might broaden as clubgolf develops and how it might relate to other Scottish Golf initiatives.

6. Funding

Assessment

Evaluation: MW reports that the Scottish Government's contribution through sportscotland of £500,000 was approximately matched by the partner agencies.

Review Group: The overall project budget is in excess of £1million. This consists of coaching subsidy provided by sportscotland, contributions from each of the partners, contributions from sports partnerships and payments made by parents for coaching. Unpaid volunteer time has not been included in these figures.

Comments

Unconfirmed indications from Government are that the appetite remains to continue funding at current levels. These indications also suggest a tapering of funding beyond 2014. The challenge for the new strategy is therefore to find a sustainable basis on which to maintain the programme.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The new strategy should consider how the legacy created by clubgolf can continue indefinitely whilst government support tapers. Consideration should be given to commercial exploitation and also to what extent the programme can be delivered on a self sufficient basis.

Appendices

- A** firstclubgolf participation by Local Authority Area in 2007.
- B** breakdown of clubgolf participation within golf clubs by Local Authority Area in 2007
- C** list of the clubs / facilities which delivered coaching in 2007
- D** clubgolf Evaluation (Full report) – attached separately
- E** Review Group
- F** Current clubgolf Strategy

Appendix E

Members of the review group:

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Craig Burn (Sportscotland)
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Katie Oman (clubgolf Regional Manager)
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