

**DIVERSITY IN**

**GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

**ACTION PLAN 2018 – 2021**

**ABOUT US**

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| Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (SASSOT) is a network of local agencies committed to working together to increase the number of people taking part in physical activity and sport. We are part of an England-wide network of 43 County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) and are funded by national and local partners including Sport England, our Local Authorities and Universities to promote physical activity and sport. More information about us and our work can be found on our website: [www.sportacrossstaffordshire.co.uk](http://www.sportacrossstaffordshire.co.uk) |

**OUR MISSION**

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| Working together to create active places and healthy lives through physical activity and sport |

**OUR VISION**

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|  Everyone More Active More Often |

**OUR VALUES**

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| **Integrity** | This is our foundation; we will work openly, honestly and sincerely, showing respect and sharing our passion for what we do |
| **Purpose** | Having clearly articulated goals underpinned by appropriate insight and action |
| **Accountability** | Owning decisions and delivering on promises individually and collectively |
| **Collaboration** | Drawing on our strengths and those of others, brokering, enabling and influencing for positive results |
| **Objectivity** | Making informed decisions for the benefit of the local population, based on robust evidence  |
| **Inclusivity** | Actively accessible to all, whilst putting the individual at the heart of what we do |
| **Ambition** | Committed to excellence and continually improving our services through innovation and creativity |

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**Message from Our Chair**

“Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent will recruit and engage people with appropriate diversity, independence, skills, experience and knowledge to take effective decisions that help us achieve our vision.

We are committed to ensuring that our Board Membership and Leadership are fully reflective of the diverse communities that we serve, and able to represent the views and needs of these communities. To this end we have adopted the following in our Constitution:

* We will target of a minimum of 30% of each gender on our Board
* We will actively work towards achieving gender parity and greater diversity generally on our Board, including but not limited to Black, Asian, minority ethnic (BAME) diversity and disability

Details of how we plan to do this are outlined in this Action Plan.”



Malcolm R. Armstrong

Chair

Spo**r**t Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

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| **Recruitment**How the organisation will attract an increasingly diverse range of candidates to Board / Senior Leadership positions | **Code for Sports Governance** |
| **Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board** | **Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity on its board** | **Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity generally(including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGB&T and socio-economic) on its board** | **Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Req 2.1** | **The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)** | **The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified in Req 2.2** |
| **Objective:** Embed good diversity and inclusion practiceinto our recruitment activities and decision making processes  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Priorities** | **Actions** | **Person(s) Responsible** | **Completion Date** |
| **Short Term (up to 12 months):**Understand the current diversity of the Board and Senior Management, and how this compares to our area’s demographics | Board and Team to complete Diversity monitoring questionnaire | Insight and Marketing Manager | June 18 |
| Cross-analyse Board and Team demographics with Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent demographics and identify areas which are not representative of our sub-region’s demographic | Communities Manager | July 18 |
| New Board members to complete Diversity monitoring questionnaire as part of induction process | Chief Operating Officer | As needed |
| Ensure the Board and Senior Management can represent the views of our diverse communities | Develop a role outline for ‘Advocates’ – Board members who are responsible for ensuring that the views and needs of a particular under-represented group are taken into account | Governance and Appointments Group | March 19 |
| Identify whether any Board members have experience of working with the groups not currently represented within our Leadership, even if they don’t come from that group themselves. Confirm Advocate roles | Governance and Appointments Group | April 19 |
| Informally audit Advocates ref training needs. Identify appropriate training opportunities (online, conferences etc.) | Governance and Appointments Group | July 19 |
| Where Advocate gaps exist, identify other ways of representing the views of these groups, i.e. identify ‘Advisors’ from outside of the Board who could check and challenge; link to user groups; through partner events etc. | Governance and Appointments Group | March 19 |
| **Medium Term (12-24 months):** Ensure future recruitment aims to address diversity inequalities on the Board / in Senior Management positions***Link to Code 2.4 & 2.6*** | As and when Board vacancies arise, revisit current Board demographics / Advocate gaps and identify target audience for recruitment | Governance and Appointments Group | As needed |
| Develop a formal recruitment plan, i.e. wording on adverts, where to advertise (locally and nationally), individuals to target, partners that can support recruitment process etc. based on identified gaps. Ensure that commitment to champion equality and diversity is scrutinised through the recruitment process | Governance and Appointments Group | As needed |
| Repeat above actions for Senior Management appointments as and when vacancies arise | Governance and Appointments Group | As needed |
| **Long Term (24 months onwards):**Ensure Board membership is representative of the sub-region’s demographic, and that high-quality Board members from under-represented groups are retained  | Review Board and Leadership Team Induction Processes to ensure equality and diversity is fully integrated and any training needs will be clearly identified | Governance and Appointments Group | March 20 |
| Ensure any additional needs of individual Board members are met, through induction and annual review meetings with Chair***Link to Code 2.12*** | Chair | As needed |
| Ensure all Board members are supported and feel valued through, as a minimum:* Well-run Board meetings with opportunities to voice opinions / question decisions
* Annual evaluation of individual and Board performance
* Opportunity to sit on sub-groups matched to interest / skill-set
* Training opportunities
 | Chair | Ongoing |

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| **Engagement**How the organisation will ensure that its commitment to Diversity in Leadership and Governance is communicated through internal practices and externally | **Code for Sports Governance** |
| **Adopt a target of, and take all appropriate actions to encourage, a minimum of 30% of each gender on its board** | **Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards gender parity and greater diversity generally on its board** | **Demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater diversity generally(including but not limited to BAME, disability, LGB&T and socio-economic) on its board** | **Each organisation shall identify proportionate and appropriate actions to be taken to support and/or maintain (as appropriate) the diversity targets set out in Req 2.1** | **The board shall ensure that the organisation prepared and publish on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity with its leadership and decision making)** | **The board shall ensure the organisation prepared and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) including an annual update on progress against actions identified in Req 2.2** |
| **Objective:** Ensure that all Board members are fully committed to diversity, and that all partners and the public can find out about this commitment |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Priorities** | **Actions** | **Person(s) Responsible** | **Completion Date** |
| **Short Term (up to 12 months):**Ensure SASSOT’s commitment to Diversity in Governance and Leadership is publicly visible | Ensure Chair’s formal commitment to Diversity in Governance and Leadership remains easily visible on our website | Chief Operating Officer | June 18 |
| Ensure current version of this plan is published on our website | Chief Operating Officer | July 18 |
| Review current diversity targets in Constitution and amend as appropriate | Board | December 18 as part of review of Constitution |
| **Medium Term (12-24 months):** Ensure individual Board members are fully committed to diversity in Governance and Leadership and possess the required skills to implement this | All Board members to receive a copy of the current full Equality and Diversity Policy and formally sign up to it by signing a declaration stating they have read and understood it and will implement it to the best of their ability | Communities Manager | April 19 |
| Ensure expectations regarding Diversity are explicit within Board role descriptions / person specifications | Governance and Appointments Group | April 19 |
| Include more detailed criteria regarding Diversity in next version of Board Skills Matrix***Link to Code 1.10*** | Chief Operating Officer | April 19 |
| In revised Board Effectiveness survey, include assessment of the Board’s diversity in membership, and also of the Board’s ability to consider the needs of, and challenge decisions on behalf of, underrepresented groups***Link to Code 4.1 & 4.3*** | Chief Operating Officer | September 19 |
| Provide an annual briefing to Board Members on the CSP’s equality and diversity work | Communities Manager / Chief Operating Officer | July 19 |
| Following the above, arrange training for the Board / individuals as appropriate*NB training needs of the team, including Senior Management, will be covered within the full Equality Action Plan (currently being updated)* | Communities Manager | December 19 |
| Ensure SASSOT’s progress towards achieving full Diversity in Governance and Leadership is publicly visible | Produce an annual update on progress against this plan. Publish in full on website and summary within Annual Report | Chief Operating Officer | April 19 |
| **Long Term (24 months onwards):**Work with appropriate partner organisations to ensure they are committed to Diversity in Governance and Leadership | Review Funding Agreements for programmes etc. and expand on the equality requirements to ensure organisations have a formal commitment to Diversity within their governance structure. Provide advice and guidance as appropriate | Chief Operating Officer, Youth Sport Manager,Communities Manager | March 21 |

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| **Progressing talent from Within**How the organisation will develop a strong internal pipeline of diverse talent to populate decision making and other structures. | **Code for Sports Governance** |
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| **Objective:** Individuals from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to progress within the organisation |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Priorities** | **Actions** | **Person(s) Responsible** | **Completion Date** |
| **Short Term (up to 12 months):**Ensure the working practices of the organisation are flexible to encourage a diverse Board and staff team  | Use the annual Board Effectiveness survey to assess whether the Board’s operations are flexible enough. Assess findings and implement where appropriate | Chair | Annually |
| Continue to offer flexible working to staff, and use staff satisfaction survey / PDRs to identify further support to enable individuals to work effectively | Director | Ongoing(Annual Surveys / PDRs) |
| Continue to offer internal opportunities for progression, i.e. internally-advertised posts, opportunities to ‘act up’ when necessary etc. | Director | As appropriate |
| **Medium Term (12-24 months):** Ensure Board members from under-represented groups are able to progress to key positions on the Board***Link to Code 2.7*** | Encourage a diverse membership of sub-groups and other task-and-finish groups, so that individuals can gain experience through additional responsibilities. | Chair and Sub Group Chairs | March 20 |
| Encourage Board and Team members to identify potential new Board members on an ongoing basis and, if there are no current vacancies, encourage these individuals to sit on sub groups, working groups or provide support to the team in order to build their knowledge of the organisation and ensure there are strong candidates applying for any future vacancies | Board / TeamChair and Sub Group Chairs | Ongoing |
| Where recruitment to Board or Team positions takes place, review unsuccessful candidates and, where potential is identified, discuss with the individual opportunities for them to work with SASSOT to gain the necessary skills and experience to make a successful application in the future | Chair, Director | As needed |
| As part of the organisation’s succession planning, provide opportunities for appropriate Board members from underrepresented groups to shadow key Board positions with a view to taking on these roles in future | Chair and Senior Independent Director | March 20 |
| Review the Succession Plan on an annual basis | Chief Operating Officer | July 19 |
| **Long Term (24 months onwards):** As above | Review the current Succession Plan | Chief Operating Officer | Dec 20 |

Key Questions

**How does this feed into our broader governance plan?**

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| SASSOT has recently transitioned from a representative to a skills-based Board, and as part of this we have been working to ensure that the membership contains the broad range of skills and experience that the Board needs to operate effectively. Ensuring the diversity of Board membership is a key element of this ongoing work. |

**Who are the key people responsible for the delivery of this plan?**

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| The Chief Operating Officer (COO), as the organisational lead for Tier Three compliance, has overall responsibility for ensuring the plan is delivered. The COO will work closely with the Chair, Senior Independent Director and the Governance and Appointments Group (a sub-group of the Board) to ensure the plan’s outcomes are achieved and that these outcomes contribute to the overall continuous improvement of the Board and Senior Leadership.The COO will also work closely with the Communities Manager, who is the organisation’s Equality and Diversity Lead, to ensure the plan complements SASSOT’s wider Equality Action Plan. |

**How will we measure overall success?**

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| Overall success will be measured by:* The diversity of Board membership and Senior Management (measured against the annual targets adopted by the Board and the sub-region’s demographics)
* The Board’s self-evaluation of how effectively it considers the needs of, and challenges decisions on behalf of, underrepresented groups (as measured via the annual Board Effectiveness survey)
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**How does your Diversity Action Plan (DAP) cross-reference other parts of the code or other relevant equality or diversity monitoring standards/framework?**

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| The actions and outcomes within this plan will contribute towards various elements of compliance with Tier Three of A Code for Sports Governance (beyond requirements 2.1-2.3). These are identified within the plan above.As an example, the above plan links to Criteria 2.6 (open recruitment) – we will go beyond this requirement and actively target under-represented groups (or individuals from these groups) as part of our recruitment process, ensuring a diverse range of candidates for any vacanciesSASSOT is currently in the process of re-accrediting for the Foundation Level of the Equality Standard for Sport. There are close links between the content of this plan and our full Equality Action Plan, particularly around staff recruitment, training and opportunities to progress internally. The Communities Manager is the organisation’s overall Equality Lead, and this plan has been produced in full consultation with them to ensure parity across the two Plans. In general, this plan focuses on the Board and the Senior Management (Director and Chief Operating Officer roles) whereas the full Plan focuses on the whole staff team. Additionally the work within this plan, such as demonstrating the Board’s commitment to diversity, will contribute towards the evidence required for the Equality Standard. |