

Speech: Tracey Crouch outlines aims and successes of Sport Strategy at UKActive Conference

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak at this year's summit, which from looking at the agenda will be an interesting and thought-provoking event.

I'm especially delighted to see the focus on the positive impact sport and physical activity have on wider society.

As I am sure I don't need to tell you, physical activity brings a number of benefits.

Firstly it can transform people's lives. And secondly it can strengthen both communities and the economy.

Furthermore, as ukactive set out in their "Manifesto for an Active Britain", published in May, physical inactivity costs the UK an estimated £20bn and causes 37,000 deaths every year.

And we can see from the two reports ukactive has launched today – 'Physical Activity – A Social Solution' and 'Moving More, Ageing More' – public leisure provides a vital contribution.

Our sports strategy Sporting Future, published almost two years ago, stressed the importance of getting the inactive active and set out a new vision for a successful and active sporting nation.

It marked a big shift in the way we think about promoting, supporting and investing in sport and physical activity. It emphasised that we as a government, and a country, need to think more broadly about the benefits that getting active can bring.

The strategy encourages relevant departments to work closer together to create a more physically active nation, where children and young people enjoy the best sporting opportunities available and people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy the benefits that sport and physical activity can provide, at every stage in their lives.

We have committed to investing in and supporting sport and physical activity, not simply on the basis of the number of people taking part, but because of the wider value it has for us as individuals and society.

We set out 5 key outcomes that we want to strive towards and that we want to see delivered in return for government support and investment: *physical wellbeing; *mental wellbeing; *individual development; *social and community development; and *economic development.

I'm committed to making sure that these outcomes drive everything we do, and I'm pleased with how the sport and physical activity sector has responded to the challenge so far.

On physical wellbeing Sport England, in their latest strategy, has committed to spending at least a quarter of its total budget on tackling inactivity.

As part of this, they will invest up to £130 million in 10 places across England to trial new and innovative ways of achieving a sustained increase in participation in sport and physical activity.

Sport England will be devoting much of its focus to supporting those groups who have been traditionally underrepresented to get more active.

For example, their Active Ageing Fund will invest up to £10 million into projects that help inactive older people get active.

Their Tackling Inactivity and Economic Disadvantage Fund is investing £3 million to support inactive people from lower socio-economic groups.

And their Tackling Inactivity in Colleges programme will invest £5 million in 49 colleges across England to support their students to be more active.

We've sought to tackle what people often feel is an artificial distinction between sport and physical activity.

We've extended Sport England's role to cover certain types of physical activity to help make this a reality. An example of this is cycling for travel which Sport England didn't used to measure but now do.

What matters is that people are getting active in a way that suits them and that makes them more likely to continue being active in future.

Also Sport England's remit has been extended so that it is now responsible for supporting children aged 5 years and up with their physical activity outside school.

And Sport England's Active Lives Survey seeks to capture information on how active people are overall in their lives, instead of purely in a sporting context.

It's a big improvement on the previous Active People Survey, and will help us understand people's behaviour better, and the barriers they face to getting active.

The first set of results from the survey came through in January this year. They tell us that, while over 60% of adults are meeting the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines on physical activity, over a quarter are currently inactive.

We want to continue to see these figures improve and to encourage those that are currently inactive to take up physical activity.

It's exactly this 25% of people that we have to reach and to nudge towards a more active lifestyle. We know that by supporting these people there are huge benefits to be gained – not only for the individuals themselves, but for wider society.

We also said in Sporting Future that government would be more joined up in its approach to sport and physical activity. We are bringing together ministers in an Inter-Ministerial Group on Healthy Living to help with this.

For the first time this will bring together a range of government departments, including the Department of Health, Department for Education, Department for Transport and Department for Work and Pensions, to look at how sport and physical activity can be made more widely accessible so that it benefits everyone.

We know that collaborative working happens organically in sport, with projects that encompass health, business, community cohesion and economic growth to name just a few. We need to help create more opportunities for this to happen.

And the fact that three Ministers are speaking today is evidence of the cross government commitment to driving this agenda forward.

Mental wellbeing, the second outcome we are aiming to achieve with our strategy, is just as important as physical wellbeing. We are working closely with the Department of Health to explore how sport can improve its offer of mental health support.

I recently hosted two roundtables, one for athletes co-hosted by the Minister for Care and Mental Health, and the other for sports and mental health organisations, to agree an action plan for future work in this area.

This is something that I am passionate about, and I am determined that sport should lead the way in breaking down stigma and raising awareness of mental health issues.

Duty of Care in sport has been another big priority. Baroness Grey-Thompson recently published her Duty of Care in Sport review, which made a number of recommendations about welfare and wellbeing of sports participants.

I am extremely grateful for Baroness Grey-Thompson's hard work and I welcome the contribution her report makes to the debate about the welfare of participants in sport at all levels. This has to be a high priority for the sport sector.

I am considering the recommendations from the report in detail and am working with colleagues across government to look at what more government can do to support this agenda.

In terms of the third and fourth outcomes of our strategy, the impact sport and physical activity can have on individual and community development is significant. I have seen the results of this first hand.

I recently visited a project in Milton Keynes called MK SNAP, which is using sport and physical activity to help those with learning difficulties. Activities like yoga and gardening are really making a difference to improve the quality of the participants' lives.

I also had a tour of facilities at Sir Herbert Leon Academy, a mixed comprehensive in Bletchley. I got to engage with school children during a P.E. lesson to learn about how a swimming pool can support a range of people, including, different faith groups.

I have visited Active Norfolk's Mobile Me project focusing on over 65s. It is designed to address barriers to participation identified by this age group, and take physical activity interventions into sheltered housing and residential care homes.

I also attended the opening of new designated parkour site in school in West London. Earlier this year the UK became the first country to formally recognise Parkour, or free-running as it's sometimes known, as a sport. I'm delighted to see how this activity continues to grow its reach.

I've also been to Crawley Old Girls, a female football development group organised by The Crawley Town Community Foundation and the Football League Trust Female Football Development Programme.

Weekly sessions are held for women aged 40 and over, who have an interest and passion for football and who may not have had the opportunity to participate before.

And in Worcester I met Disability Sport Worcester, who specialise in creating and running sporting events, clubs and activities for children and adults with disabilities.

And so we know there is some good work going on locally to demonstrate the impact of sport and physical activity.

Of course, sport is also a significant contributor to the UK economy – and economic impact is the fifth of our key outcomes I referred to earlier.

In the UK, sport was valued at £35 billion in terms of GVA in 2015.

And as well as major events, grassroots sport contributes hugely too. People who follow sporting trends and buy the latest gear or purchase gym memberships also play their part.

It is important that we continue to build and capitalise on the economic growth of the sector.

A Sports Business Council has now been established which met for the first time in June. It brings government and leading sport sector organisations together to ensure the sector continues to grow and prosper.

Initial areas for focus are: *Intellectual property *Event staging *Skills *and developing the sport economy evidence base.

A representative of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy also attends the Council. I would like to thank Steve Ward from ukactive for agreeing to join the Council and chair its skills working group.

However, there is still some work to do in order to fully implement all of the actions set out in Sporting Future.

For example, we remain committed to establishing a network of employers in line with the recommendation set out in Sporting Future.

We are working with Department of Health and Department for Work and Pensions to move this forward, and hope to be able to make an announcement on this shortly.

The role of employers is vital in encouraging employees to be physically active. It isn't something that employers should see as just a benefit to their staff, as it is of course a benefit to them too. It brings greater levels of staff engagement and commitment to the organisation.

We are already seeing this for ourselves through the take up of our civil service workplace challenge. This is starting to have a real impact. It allows departments and workplaces involved to set up challenges, track progress and compete against each other.

With people spending so much of their day at work, it is vital that employers play a part in helping people to be active.

Another commitment in Sporting Future was to strengthen the sector by introducing a new Code for Sports Governance.

This is now in place. It will help to ensure that organisations receiving public funding are held to the highest standards of governance and conduct.

We've already seen big improvements to the governance of the national governing bodies of sport, and some big steps forward on diversity of leadership and board and council term limits.

The deadline for organisations receiving public money to comply with the Code was yesterday.

I know that Sport England and UK Sport are now working hard to assess the information they have received, and to make important decisions on compliance.

So much has already been achieved – and I'm proud of the efforts that we and the sector have already made. But of course there's much still to do.

I want to see the Code fully embedded, with organisations that we invest in continuing to strive for the highest standards, improving their diversity and decision making.

Looking ahead, I'm looking forward to seeing the sector build on this progress in the coming months and am counting on its support to help to make

the UK an exemplar for good sports governance.

But it is vital that we all do as much as possible to uphold the integrity of sport too. If sport's integrity is ever in doubt, the damage is considerable.

This is an area in which I feel the UK should continue to take the lead.

I've said it before, most recently at the Sports Betting Integrity Forum, and I'll say it again: Protecting the integrity of sport is of paramount importance.

If sport is corrupt, or sport is perceived as being corrupt, the public can very quickly lose faith.

If fans walk away, that is the end – the sponsors and the media would follow – so it is vital that we never underplay the importance of protecting sport's integrity.

By addressing the range of areas that present threats – of which doping is one – we can collectively mitigate those threats.

The Gambling Commission's Sports Betting Intelligence Unit works to ensure Britain maintains its reputation as a safe place for sports betting to take place, through protecting our betting markets and our consumers.

While I'm confident that this is a world leading regulatory system we need to make sure that we are able to assist and share our own industry best practice with other countries who may not even regulate gambling.

Education of the health impact of doping in sport is also an area that I feel strongly needs addressing.

That is why I was pleased to see that one of the recommendations in the recently published Review of the Criminalisation of Doping in Sport was for Image & Performance Enhancing Drugs to be integrated into drug information and education.

And, as has been highlighted several times over recent months, sports need to ensure they have robust whistle-blowing procedures in place and take appropriate action when people report concerns.

Turning to facilities, one of the main points that we made in our Sporting Future strategy was that the customer, and their experience of sport and physical activity, is absolutely vital.

One of the key determinants of whether or not someone will continue to take part in physical activity on a regular and enduring basis is whether they have an appealing, attractive, accessible space to do this in.

Baroness Grey-Thompson's call for a national network of Community Wellness Hubs that would co-locate community services with leisure facilities, speaks to this point.

I absolutely agree with the Baroness that we need to do more to support people to get more active, and am passionate about the role that physical activity and sport can play.

With partnership working, I am pleased to see that ukactive and Sport England are working closely together to deliver against Sporting Future, and are in the process of developing a Memorandum of Understanding to set out how they can best work together in future.

This MOU will strengthen the partnership between the two organisations across a range of priorities, to ensure an efficient approach to delivery and to maximise the impact of their investment.

I understand the aim is to have this formal partnership agreement in place by the end of 2017.

Finally, a brief word about Brexit. As we move closer to leaving the European Union in 2019, I am determined that the needs of the sport sector should be fully brought into government thinking around the challenges and opportunities our EU exit will bring.

My officials are working closely with representatives from the sport sector, including ukactive, to that end.

To conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to thank ukactive and everybody here today for the contribution you have made in implementing Sporting Future and improving the health of the nation.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with you.

Thank you for listening and enjoy the rest of the day.

Press release: Bishop's review of Hillsborough families' experiences published

The review, entitled 'The Patronising Disposition of Unaccountable Power', is aimed at ensuring the pain and suffering of the Hillsborough families is not repeated.

It was commissioned by the now-Prime Minister following the conclusions of the fresh Hillsborough inquests in April 2016 so that the families' perspective was not lost.

Bishop James, who is the Home Secretary's advisor on Hillsborough, met the families in both group sessions and one-to-one as he compiled his report.

In the review, he urges the Home Secretary to help ensure that those responsible for national institutions listen to what the experiences of the Hillsborough families say about how they should conduct themselves when faced by families bereaved by public tragedy.

Bishop James' review – which includes numerous first-hand accounts of the Hillsborough families' encounters with private and public authorities – has 25 points of learning.

They include:

- the creation of a “Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy”, made up a series of commitments by public bodies to change, each related to transparency and acting in the public interest
- “proper participation” of bereaved families at inquests, including publicly funded legal representation for bereaved families at inquests at which public bodies are legally represented; an end to public bodies spending limitless sums; and a change in the way in which public bodies approach inquests so they treat them not as a reputational threat but as an opportunity to learn
- the establishment of a “duty of candour” for police officers which addresses the “unacceptable behaviour” of serving or retired police officers who fail to cooperate fully with investigations into alleged criminal offences or misconduct

Bishop James also welcomes the commitment in the Queen's Speech to create an independent public advocate to act for bereaved families after a public disaster and to support them at public inquests. He stands ready to assist in this important work.

The Right Reverend Bishop James Jones KBE said:

Over the last two decades as I have listened to what the families have endured, a phrase has formed in my mind to describe what they have come up against whenever they have sought to challenge those in authority – ‘the patronising disposition of unaccountable power’. Those authorities have been in both the public and private sectors.

The Hillsborough families know that there are others who have found that when in all innocence and with a good conscience they have asked questions of those in authority on behalf of those they love, the institution has closed ranks, refused to disclose information, used public money to defend its interests and acted in a way that was both intimidating and oppressive.

And so the Hillsborough families' struggle to gain justice for the 96 has a vicarious quality to it so that whatever they can achieve in calling to account those in authority is of value to the whole nation.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

I am grateful to Bishop James Jones for undertaking this important piece of work. His thoughtful and considered report raises important points.

The government will now carefully study the 25 points of learning and we will provide a full response in due course.

You can [read Bishop James' review, which was laid before Parliament today.](#)

Press release: James Brokenshire statement: Northern Ireland talks update

Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland said:

“While important progress has been made in discussions between the DUP and Sinn Fein towards the establishment of an Executive, it has not yet been possible for the parties to reach agreement.

“I am not therefore in a position to introduce the legislation necessary for an Executive to be formed this week though I must stress we are continuing to work with the parties as they proceed with ongoing talks.

“As I have outlined previously there are consequences to not being able to bring forward this legislation this week. It is responsibility of the parties to form an Executive to take forward its own Budget, but it is now very unlikely that an Executive will be in place within a timetable to pass a budget by the end of November, which is the point at which we and the Northern Ireland Civil Service assess that Northern Ireland will begin to run out of resources.

“No Government could simply stand by and allow that to happen.

“I am, therefore, now taking forward the necessary steps that would enable a Budget Bill to be introduced at Westminster at the appropriate moment in order to protect the delivery of public services in Northern Ireland.

"I would expect the Budget Bill to be considered in Parliament after the short November recess, but I will be returning to Westminster to update MPs.

"Subject of course to Parliamentary approval, the effect of this would be to give the Northern Ireland Civil Service certainty to plan for the rest of this financial year by giving the necessary legal authority to spend to existing plans.

"The Budget Bill will deal only with 2017-18 and would incorporate figures provided by the Northern Ireland Civil Service reflecting their assessment of the outgoing priorities of the previous Executive.

"I also want to be clear that passing a Budget in Westminster does not mean a move to direct rule ... any more than the passing of legislation to set a Regional Rate did in April.

"Let me be clear, this is not a barrier to continued political negotiations and the Government will continue to work with the Parties with that intent.

"And indeed, however unlikely, should an Executive be formed speedily enough and a means could be created to provide an exceptional procedure to enable the budget to be passed by the end of November I would be prepared to withdraw the Budget Bill in order for Assembly to legislate for itself.

"I will also be seeking independent advice on what steps should be taken to reflect the current circumstances in MLA pay.

"The Government remains steadfast in our commitment to the 1998 Belfast Agreement and its successors and to the institutions that they establish.

"I therefore urge the parties to resolve their outstanding differences to see the restoration of devolved government quickly.

"Together with the Irish government, in accordance with the three stranded approach, we will continue to work with them and support them in their efforts.

"But in the end it is only the parties themselves that can reach that agreement.

"It remains firmly in the interests of Northern Ireland to see devolved government restored, to see locally elected politicians making decisions for the people of Northern Ireland.

"With goodwill and compromise on all sides the parties can still achieve this and it is what needs to happen."

Press release: Number of children in long-term workless households at lowest level in a decade

There are over half a million fewer children living in long-term workless households since 2010. The number of children in lone parent households that are long-term workless has fallen 349,000 since 2010.

The number of children in long-term workless households has fallen to its lowest level in a decade, according to new statistics out today (1 November 2017). This is down 505,000 since 2010.

Data from the Office for National Statistics shows that 9.3% of children, around 1.1 million, are in long-term workless households. This is the first time in at least a decade that the percentage figure has fallen below 10%.

The number of children living in lone parent households which are long-term workless has fallen 73,000 on the year. Around 9 in 10 children live in households with at least one working adult.

Minister for Employment, Damian Hinds said:

With more than 3 million people in work since 2010, we're giving people the chance to find work and to achieve a regular household income.

We know that children growing up in working households do better in school and are more likely to be in work in adult life.

We will continue to build on this success and break the cycle of worklessness. At the heart of our welfare reforms is the goal to help people improve their lives.

More than 17.6 million households have at least one working adult. Less than 15% of households are classed as workless, with the number having fallen by 89,000 since last year.

Recent employment figures show that there are a near-record 32.1 million people in work, and the unemployment rate (4.3%) is the lowest since 1975.

Estimates for overall workless households are taken from the Office for National Statistics [‘Working and Workless Households in the UK: April to June 2017’](#), published in August.

Children who grow up in workless families are almost twice as likely as children in working families to not reach the expected attainment level at all stages of their education – research has shown that three-quarters of

children in workless families fail to reach 5 full GCSEs at grade C or above, including English and maths.

Compared to children from working families, those from workless families are also more likely to be workless in adult life. The [Improving Lives: Helping Workless Families](#) policy paper includes research on the impact of children being in a working household.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

Follow DWP on:

[News story: Civil news: funding in international child rights of access cases](#)

New guidance is available to help you with funding applications concerning international disputes about rights access to a child.

The new 'Quick Guide' is available online on the CCMS training website. It will help you with the application process.

This is for non-means/non-merits tested applications in relation to article 21 of the 1980 Hague Convention. Here are 3 of the most important points highlighted in the new guidance:

Document upload

Remember to use the document upload facility to attach a copy of the International Child Abduction and Contact Unit (ICACU) letter before submitting the application.

Substantive applications only

The application can only be submitted as a substantive application. No work can be carried out until the certificate has been granted.

Urgent applications

In urgent cases, applications can be prioritised. If you would like to request an urgent consideration of your application for an article 21 case, you can notify the Legal Aid Agency of the urgency.

You can do this by emailing:

Peter.Reed@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk

Stephen.Spittlehouse@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk

Pamela.Read@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk

Further information

[CCMS training website](#) – see ‘Article 21 1980 Hague Convention Applications’ under ‘making an initial application’.