

2012 Athletics Facts

ABAC Fact File 12.

Lottery Funding – The Legacy for Track and Field Clubs

Introduction. Since its inception in 1994 The National Lottery has provided more than £3billion of grants for sport.

Sport England is the main distributor of central funds for sport. In recent years – from April 2007 to the end of Dec 2011- it released a total of £1,154,896,078, consisting of contributions totaling £501,616,196 from the Exchequer (tax payers) and £653,279,902 from the National Lottery. ***This Fact File looks at how the Lottery payments have been distributed over the last five years*** to some of the recognized 46 sports and in particular shows that Track and Field clubs have been almost completely unsuccessful in getting Grant Aid funding. In contrast athletics' Governing bodies have been awash with grant funds at a time when track and field clubs have diminished in size and numbers.

Sport England Grants. Sport England's distribution of National lottery funds started in April 2007. For the first two years only two grant types were available – Community and National Programmes. 1124 grants were made in 2007 and 2008. In 2009 Small grants, (mainly for sports clubs) were introduced. Other grants have been added. Brief details follow.

- Community Programmes. For Local Authorities, Universities, Sports Partnerships, Pro-Active Groups and other community groups. Typically involves individual grants of up to £2million.
- National Programmes. For National Governing Bodies, National bodies and other special organization. Typically involves individual grants covering programmes spanning several years. Individual grants up to £22million.
- Small Grants. Predominantly for clubs. Grant level limited to £10,000 per application.
- English Institute of Sport. Annual grants have been made to the EIS to cover deficit funding of High Performance Centres and other facilities. Typically up to £883,459 pa
- Themed Rounds 1-4. Started in Feb 2010 these are mainly for local Council projects with individual grants up to £1.7million.
- Schools Games/Olympics. Started in October 2010 these are grants to the Youth Sport Trust to promote various Youth Games and local school games. The largest single grant was £3,601,259 in August 2011.
- Sustainable Facilities. Commenced in Jan 2011 to help local authorities and NGB's to upgrade facilities. Latest grant awarded in Dec 2011 to the FA was £3million for the National Football Centre.
- Protecting Playing Fields. Latest initiative started in October 2011. Limit of each grant is £100,000. 40 grants totaling around £3million made in 8 weeks.
- Inspired Facilities. Aimed to help clubs upgrade facilities and enhance local community use. The first tranche of grants with a total value of £10million were made in Dec 2011 but no details of receiving clubs have been published to date (April 2012).

Grants for Athletics. We look now at the portioning of Lottery grants between track and field clubs and those controlling organizations responsible for delivering agreed programmes of work and supplying capital projects. Here are the total grants from April 2007 to Dec 2011.

Grants to Athletics excluding Track and Field clubs

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| • Community Programme. | – 26 grants with Total value of £ 5,296,101 |
| • English Institute of Sport | -- 4 grants with Total value of £ 3,048,374 |
| • National Programme | -- 3 grants with Total value of £25,050,550 |
| • Small Grants (2009-2011) | --28 grants with Total value of £ 156,843 |

Total lottery funding for athletics 2007-2011 (Non club) £33,551,868

Grants to Track and Field clubs

- Community Programme -- 1 grant (2007) with value of £39,000
- Small Grants(2009-2011) -- 4 grants with Total value of £25,111

Total track and field club lottery funding 2007-2011 £64,111

Small Grants for other Sports. (2009-2011). While track and field clubs have not benefitted to any great extent from National lottery funds other sports have been considerably more adept at accessing the Sport England Small Grants Fund. Here are some examples for a cross section of sports.

- Cricket 415 grants with a total value of £2,732,179
- Basketball 59 grants with a total value of £404,216
- Boxing 26 grants with a total value of £178,831
- Triathlon 10 grants with a total value of £76,598
- Gliding 7 grants with a total value of £61,310
- Track and Field 4 grants with a total value of £25,111

It is clear that Track and Field clubs (who traditionally have provided the pathway for athlete development) are among the least successful in receiving Lottery monies via the Small Grants fund. Bearing in mind that Track and Field is the most popular Olympic event this state of affairs raises key questions about the support given to grass roots operations.

Reasons for lack of funding success. It is not clear why there is a lack of Lottery funding directly to track and field clubs. A number of possibilities exist. These are:-

1. Clubs are unaware of the funding opportunities.
2. The reducing number of clubs indicates the decline in popularity of track and field. (Athletics is the 16th ranked sport in many surveys). There are now only 200 clubs offering development and competition opportunities for senior men and women.
3. The reducing number of volunteers in clubs means that there are few able to put in the effort needed to prepare high quality funding applications.
- 4** Sport England does not support track and field at club level.
5. Sport England believes the large sums of lottery funding given to National and community programmes trickle down to clubs. They do not.
6. Whereas the NGB's of several sports assist clubs in Grant applications very little help is provided to track and field clubs by UKA or England Athletics.

4 Note.** The discredited 2004 Foster review of athletics contains the statement *“In the athletics context, funding should as far as possible flow through UK Athletics to the home country bodies and the sport in general. The Sports Councils should not fund initiatives which by-pass UK Athletics. This will require some reengineering of funding flows”*.(Page 21-Roles and Relationships.)

At the time he produced his so called Independent Review of athletics Sir Andrew Foster was a main Board member of Sport England.

National Funding Anomalies – Athletics. In addition to Lottery funding for the various Governing bodies of athletics, Sport England have made direct National (strategic) grants to local councils, universities and Limited Companies to develop athletics. For example :

In July 2007 a grant of £1,000,000 was made to Newham Council for an indoor athletics centre.

In 2007 and 2008 grants totaling £450,000 were made to Nuff Respect for a Street Athletics programme. We note that Nuff Respect declared itself dormant in 2006.

In 2007 a contract worth £589,000 was placed with Coachwise Limited to develop a Running Sports Marketing plan. Coachwise Ltd is a subsidiary of UK Coach.

Conclusions. Track and Field is in a dire situation in the UK. Many years of extravagance by Government quangoes has resulted in massive financial support for bloated and ever expanding Governing bodies who have become increasingly remote from clubs and volunteers. The Government imposed re-organisation of athletics over the last decade has been a disaster.

Lottery funding, which had been heralded as a major contributor for the development of athletics has been badly spent. Concentration on funding various 4 year plans and initiatives has encouraged the growth of bureaucracy at the expense of grass root clubs and volunteers. The lack of funding for grass roots track and field - which is the principal and showpiece sport of the Olympic Games - is a disgrace. This should not come as a surprise following the release of earlier ABAC Fact Files which record declining participation levels and performance standards.

All the evidence points to the conclusion that Sport England has “a down” on track and field athletic clubs and their volunteer members.

And sadly there is no evidence that the next DCMS funded 4 year plan for sport, which starts in 2013 will address any of these issues. Once again it appears that monies will be committed without proper consultation. A recipe for further disaster.

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