

Navigating the playing field

# Unravelling the challenges and opportunities in UK sports governance

18 April 2024

In September 2023, insurance brokers Howden and law firm Browne Jacobson hosted representatives of some of the UK's leading sport national governing and representative bodies, Sport England and legal experts to discuss issues around governance in sport. We would like to extend our thanks to all those who contributed.

The round table discussion focused on the governance issues of sport both centrally and at a grass roots level. In particular, the agenda covered:

- the impact that governance has on sport delivery
- the barriers to good governance
- potential solutions.

With over 150,000 sports clubs operating in the UK, a nuanced understanding of the challenges across the sector is crucial for drafting effective policies that work in the real world. These need to resonate across the spectrum from professional sports to the grassroots, where the volunteer burden bears the weight of a broad- spectrum stakeholder engagement - from simple enjoyment to the highest sporting aspirations.

On the following pages we set out the key findings and recommendations whilst acknowledging the tension between the perceived wealth of the sports sector and the reality of grassroots reliance on volunteers and their goodwill.

The goal is to assist the sector whilst unravelling opportunities for governance to flourish at all levels through inclusivity, volunteer empowerment and strategic diversity.

To this end an enormous amount of very helpful guidance can already be found in the [Sport England Code for Sport Governance](#).

*"In the world of sports governance, a nuanced understanding of the challenges across the sector is crucial for drafting effective policies that work in the real world."*

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