

Speaking Notes for Thomas Byrne T.D.

Minister of State for Sport & Physical Education

Select Committee Appearance - REV 2024 for Programme Areas A, B, D, & E

Thursday, 8 February at 1.30pm

Thank you, Chair.

And I wish to thank members of the Committee for this opportunity to address you regarding the 2024 Revised Estimates in relation to Sport.

The 2024 allocation for **Sports and Recreational** services amounts to **€209m** which represents an increase of 12% from 2023. This increase in ongoing investment by the State, combined with the achievements of our athletes, have positioned Ireland as a significant global player in the Sport area, both in terms of participation and also in terms of a capacity to host globally important events.

Within this overall allocation, **Sport Ireland**, as the organisation tasked by Government with responsibility for the development of sport in Ireland, will have an increased allocation of **€108.7m in 2024**. This funding **allocation** will allow for measures such as:

- Increased funding specifically targeted at increasing female participation in sport, including areas such as participation, coaching & officiating, and leadership;
- Additional core funding for the National Governing Bodies of Sport;

- Ongoing support for the implementation the National Sports Policy and associated Action Plan; and
- Increased support for our high performance athletes as we head towards the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In relation to the **Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund**, significant funding of **€42.6m** has been allocated for 2024. This will enable “top-up” grants for projects already approved, in response to delays experienced by grantees arising from the pandemic and construction inflation, thereby facilitating successful completion of these projects.

I can inform the Committee that I hope to announce a new round of the LSSIF in the first half of the year, having regard to the built-up demand for a new round.

In terms of the **Sports Capital and Equipment Programme**, an allocation of **€34.5m** has been allocated for 2024 to meet existing project commitments. Work continues within the Department in terms of processing the record number of applications received under the 2023 round of this very successful programme.

Funding support will continue to be provided in 2024 in respect of Major Sports Events, such as the UEFA Europa League Final in May, the Ryder Cup in 2027, the UEFA Euro 2028 championships and other efforts to attract high profile large scale sporting events to Ireland.

In conclusion, I believe that the increased funding for Sport in 2024 will boost participation in sport, at all levels of ability, and across all sporting activities. It will support Ireland's position on the international stage, both in terms of hosting major international sporting events and supporting our high-performance athletes. We will continue to develop sporting facilities in communities across the country in recognition of local community and volunteers, which are the foundation of all our sporting participation and success.

Thank you and I look forward to engaging with members of the Committee on these matters.

ENDS