

IMFRCS07 David Evans, Head of Performance, Squash Wales

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Effaith Gostyngiadau Cyllid ar Ddiwylliant a Chwaraeon | Impact of Funding Reductions for Culture and Sport

Ymateb gan: David Evans, Pennaeth Perfformiad, Sboncen Cymru | Evidence from: David Evans, Head of Performance, Squash Wales

1. What impacts has reduced funding had on your organisation and sector so far?

Reduced funding has impacted our sport as a whole, from elite level to grassroots. We are not in a position to send a team to the Mens & Women World Team Championships even though we have a player in the top 10 in the world rankings. This will seriously impact these players especially in light of Squash being included in the 2028 Olympic Games. We have also had to reduce the amount of programmes we run for junior players as we cannot afford the personnel to run them safely. Redundancies will be inevitable due to the amount of reduced funding even though we are already working with a skeleton staff base of 4 full time staff members. Another area is the health and mental well-being of our members. Due to us running a limited programme they are missing out on their regular workout sessions along with the opportunity to interact socially with their peers.

2. What measures have you taken in light of it, such as changing what you do and how you do it.

Measures to combat the reduced funding were touched upon above but...

Redundancies, unable to send teams to Major events, membership price increase to our members, contribution costs to parents to rise, bare bones programme for our players

3. To what extent will these impacts be irreversible (e.g. venues closing, or specialist skills being lost rather than a temporary restriction in activities)?

We are already seeing facilities closing both in the private sector and local authority. Many places are closing due to the lack of courts being used due to the lack of use primarily down to not running the programmes due to staff costs. Many places are also using courts as other options, spin bikes etc to maximise their costs.

4. What interventions would you like to see from the Welsh Government, beyond increased funding?

Obviously I would like to see Welsh Government invest more as a whole in Welsh Sport as the health and social well being benefits are huge. I would also like them to safeguard sporting facilities in all the LAS- Many Leisure Centres now operate on reduced hours with a serious lack of quality facilities

5. To what extent do the impacts you describe fall differently on people with protected characteristics and people of a lower socioeconomic status?

6. Do you have any other points you wish to raise within the scope of this inquiry?
