

IFRCS34 Simon Roach, Strategic Manager, Weightlifting 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: Simon Roach, Rheolwr Strategol, Codi Pwysau Cymru | Evidence from: Simon Roach, Strategic Manager, Weightlifting Wales

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

Impacts of reduced funding on Weightlifting Wales has been 3 fold

- A reduction in the community support programmes that Weightlifting Wales provides for people with protected characteristics and those of a lower socioeconomic status

Funding dedicated towards the award winning 'Raise the Bar programme' for deprived children aged 11-16 has been cut by half. This is a National programme delivering in many areas throughout Wales. 1000's of children have been supported, along with aiding licensed clubs and academy centres to remain sustainable.

Another community support programme for people aged over 65 has been delayed. The programme is aligned to NHS objectives, keeping people well in the community and focusses on bring people together with similar characteristics for: - social interaction, befriending, working together, health, wellbeing, falls prevention; building stronger and more cohesive communities.

The programme has been piloted with overwhelming success at two of our academy centres, both award winning projects and over subscribed with exceptionally high participation; and achieving wellbeing, health and community successes.

The National programme has been planned and Welsh delivery centres are ready to roll out the programme. However, funding reduction and staff workloads due to funding reduction and possible further reductions has prevented this outstanding project to begin Nationally where it has an exceptional opportunity to support the elder community in Wales.

- Decreased support for talented and developing athletes and those at higher levels, the elite Welsh athletes

Financial planning has led to the performance programme being reduced. Which includes less opportunity for talented and developing athletes to compete internationally and a reduction in the amount of support provided to the elite Welsh athletes.

- Increased staff workloads

There has been recruitment through the period, to replace employed positions where staff have moved onto other organisations. However, the new appointments have been parttime and not fulltime.

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

- A reduction in the community support programmes that Weightlifting Wales provides for people with protected characteristics and those of a lower socioeconomic status

Reduced in the number of weekly sessions available for deprived children to take part in the Raise the Bar programme, along with a reduction in support and education for the coaches based in the community who are delivering this programme.

We have halted new delivery centres from joining the programme.

We are researching other possible funding opportunities which may / may not be available nor successful where there are opportunities.

- Decreased support for talented and developing athletes and those at higher levels, the elite Welsh athletes

The performance programme has been changed with athletes now covering specific performance costs themselves, including medical, physiotherapy,

psychological, nutritional support. Athletes contributing to the cost of international events. Some international events removed from the calendar.

- Increased staff workload

Several projects directly linked to our strategy, especially those linked to community health and wellbeing have delayed, due to high workloads.

- Sector resilience

Along with other governing bodies, Weightlifting Wales is working closely with Sport Wales to explore ways to remain sustainable, although limited possibilities outside of the funding received from Sport Wales

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)?

- A reduction in the community support programmes that Weightlifting Wales provides for people with protected characteristics and those of a lower socioeconomic status

If there are further funding reductions and no alternative funding solutions to support our national community programmes, then we will have to bring these programmes to an end, negatively affecting a high number of children and elderly people; and also the sustainability of licensed clubs and academies, where there are many volunteers and club employees supporting local communities.

- Decreased support for talented and developing athletes and those at higher levels, the elite Welsh athletes

Further funding reductions will have a detrimental effect on long term athlete development and medal success at major competitions

- Increased staff workload

There is a risk of losing well skilled, employed staff to other organisations/companies who pay higher rates of pay and fulltime opportunities with similar responsibilities. Unfortunately, Weightlifting Wales has already lost a member of their employed team due to this factor.

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

 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?
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