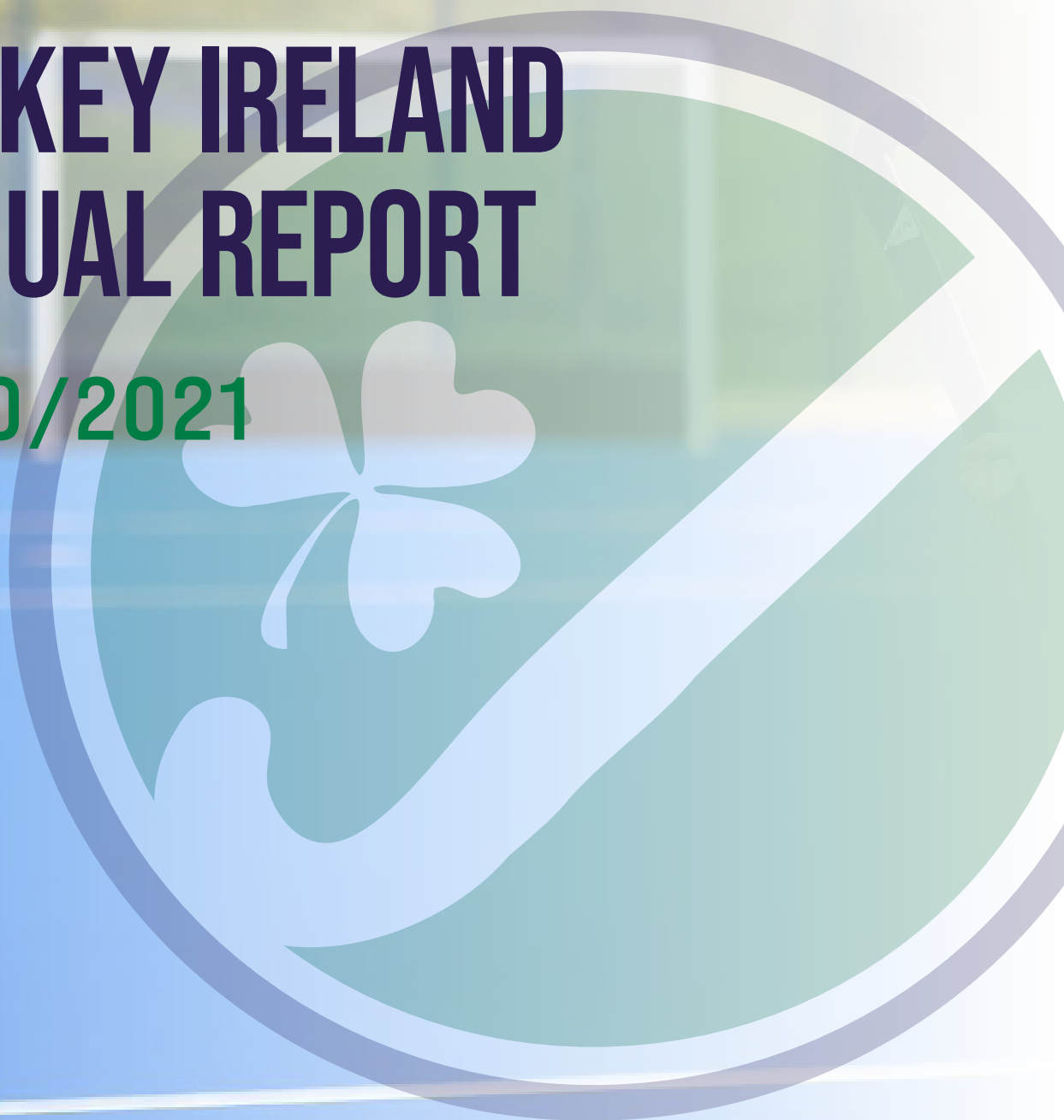


HOCKEY IRELAND ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021





WELCOME TO THE ANNUAL REPORT OF HOCKEY IRELAND FOR THE 2020-2021 SEASON.

The information contained within this report relates to the time period from November 2020 to April 2021. The financials presented are for the financial year 2020.

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Appendix 1: Audited Financials

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



ERIC BRADY

CHAIR HOCKEY IRELAND 2019 - 2021

I am delighted on behalf of the Board and Staff of Hockey Ireland to introduce our latest Annual Report covering the period from November 2020 through to April 2021 .

Firstly, I would like to compliment all associated with the sport of hockey for their individual and collective resilience and for the professional and stoic manner in which the hockey community have continued to ensure that hockey remains valued and relevant for everyone in Ireland, both within and outside of the sport. Individuals, their clubs, their provinces and the national setup have pushed back and overcome the ongoing challenges

created by the Covid-19. Who would have predicted that the initial two to three week intervention across the island, introduced in March, would have continued for so long and would have led to such an 'annus horribilis'.

Thankfully we are now finally seeing a growing shaft of light emerge in the distance, as we prepare to move beyond a year of lockdowns, cancelled training, abandoned competitions, mandatory quarantine and the worldwide sense of woe and forbearing.

The Annual Report presented at our delayed AGM in November 2020 covered an 18 month period. Now that we have returned to the usual May date for our AGM, this report as a result, only refers to the last six calendar months. Due to Covid-19, the Board and I have had the challenge of presiding over both the longest and shortest terms ever between Hockey Ireland AGM's. Each have brought their own set of unique challenges.

Much has happened during what has felt like a very short six months. The detailed information that follow give a greater insight into the progress that has been made across a range of different areas. Consequently, I will allow you to peruse the various reviews at your leisure and only draw your attention to some important additions included in this year's report.

FORZA

Following feedback from last year's AGM, we have in this year's report, included separate sections for Indoor, Masters and ParaHockey - now HockeyID (adults with Intellectual Disability). These three areas, individually and collectively, play an important role in the broader development of diversity within our sport and also represent significant cohorts of our current and future membership.

The new look report also brings focus to a sometimes overlooked group of individuals essential to the running of our sport and its multitude of competitions; our umpires and officials. The new Umpire Development Pathway, referenced in the Participation & Development Report, is the result of the ever increasing collaboration between the Hockey Ireland National Development Manager and her team, other Hockey Ireland staff and of course the Irish Hockey Umpires Association and Provincial Umpire Associations. The successful launch of this project, which forms part of the recently launched Hockey Ireland Strategic Plan highlights the need for, and benefits of innovation and collaboration within the sport.

The final two additions from last year refer to a section on Governance and also a section on the progress to date implementing the recently launched Hockey Ireland Strategic Plan 2021-2024 'Change the Game'. Both are hugely important and essential to the development of the sport at all levels. They also form a key part of the required criteria for ongoing government funding from Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland. I would particularly like to thank our new Company Secretary, Pamela Bastable who is leading us through the process to become compliant with the new Corporate Governance Code. Since joining the team she, through her expertise and boundless energy brought a new level of rigor and precision to this increasingly important area.

The appointment of a new Commercial Director and the implementation of a new structure for categorising membership of the organisation have also been accelerated in response to the memberships concerns regarding our financial challenges and in keeping with commitments made to our auditors six months ago.

To finish I would like to sympathise with everyone within the hockey community who have lost family, friends, colleagues or acquaintances over the past months. It is always a difficult time but even more so due to the restrictions imposed by Covid-19.

I would particularly like to offer my own personal and the Board's condolences to the families of John McDonough (a former Hockey Ireland Board member) and Vivienne Clarke the Hockey Ireland Office Manager both of whom I worked closely with during my time on the Board.

FORZA

CEO'S REPORT

This has undoubtedly been a difficult year for everyone and as an organisation we have experienced adversity that we could never have anticipated. While we continue to live through Covid-19, we are looking to the future with hope and the anticipation of seeing our members safely back on the pitch both socially and competitively. As we look to the next twelve months, we are aware of the many challenges ahead, but we are equally excited by the opportunities, including our new strategy 2021 – 2024 'Change the Game'. We will continue to closely monitor Covid-19 developments as we prepare for our return to regular activity on the pitch as soon as is allowable .

On 14 February 2021, we received the very unexpected news that we had lost our friend and colleague, Vivienne Clarke. Vivienne was a loyal member of staff who worked in Hockey Ireland for 12 years. As the CEO, I am extreme-

ly grateful for the friendship, advice, support and encouragement I received from Vivienne in our years together at Hockey Ireland. As a team, we will always have fond memories of Vivienne and while we miss her dearly, she leaves a lasting legacy in Hockey Ireland.

On a staffing level, Hockey Ireland's Board Secretary Pamela Bastable is currently covering the position of Office Operations Manager, our National Development Manager Sue Haslam is currently on maternity leave with Linda Monaghan deputising as National Development Manager in her absence. Earlier this year Ruth Montgomery (Leaders in Hockey Project Manager) finished up at Hockey Ireland having made good progress in areas including umpire development.

In June 2020, the Irish Government approved an investment programme of up to €70 million to support the sports sector. The funding

programmes were launched by Sport Ireland, and Hockey Ireland provided significant staff resources to clubs around the country through a seminar and direct support to complete their applications.

Hockey benefited from two rounds of funding under the Sport Ireland Covid 19 Grant Scheme with a first-round allocation of €240,500 and second round allocation of €400,000. This funding has been crucial for the sport in absorbing additional costs as a result of Covid-19 and reductions in income. Hockey Ireland, under the guidance of Sport Ireland, embarked on a comprehensive review of the applications and processed the payments as quickly as possible.

Clubs and Branches who benefitted from funding include:

CLUB NAME	TOTAL AMOUNT OF FINIACIAL SUPPORT €	CLUB NAME	TOTAL AMOUNT OF FINIACIAL SUPPORT €
MIDLETON HOCKEY CLUB	1,500	MONKSTOWN HOCKEY CLUB	15,000
BLACKROCK HOCKEY CLUB	6,000	CLONTARF HOCKEY CLUB	15,250
WICKLOW HOCKEY CLUB	7,968	MUNSTER HOCKEY	16,500
ENNISCORTHY HOCKEY CLUB	8,000	GLENANNE HOCKEY CLUB	18,000
NEWBRIDGE HOCKEY CLUB	14,949	NAVAN HOCKEY CLUB	20,000
LEINSTER HOCKEY ASSOCIATION	45,445		

CLUB NAME	TOTAL AMOUNT OF FINIACIAL SUPPORT €	CLUB NAME	TOTAL AMOUNT OF FINIACIAL SUPPORT €	CLUB NAME	TOTAL AMOUNT OF FINIACIAL SUPPORT €
FERMOY HOCKEY CLUB	1,500	KINVARA HOCKEY CLUB	11,096	ASHTON HOCKEY CLUB	13,844
DUBLIN UNIVERSITY HC (TRINITY)	2,500	ATHLONE HOCKEY CLUB	11,154	CORINTHIANS HOCKEY CLUB	14,300
GENESIS HOCKEY CLUB	3,000	RENMORE HOCKEY CLUB	11,319	YMCA HOCKEY CLUB	15,730
KINSALE HOCKEY CLUB	3,630	DUBLIN NORTH HOCKEY CLUB	11,720	RAILWAY UNION HOCKEY CLUB	16,445
NUIG HOCKEY CLUB	4,000	BRAY HOCKEY CLUB	12,000	LORETO HOCKEY CLUB	17,875
GALWAY HOCKEY CLUB	5,386	CONNACHT HOCKEY BRANCH	12,000	THREE ROCK ROVERS HOCKEY CLUB	17,875
PORTLAOISE HOCKEY CLUB	7,000	SKERRIES HOCKEY CLUB	12,000	MUCKROSS HOCKEY CLUB	20,735
TULLAMORE HOCKEY CLUB	8,000	WESTON HOCKEY CLUB	12,000	NORTH KILDARE HOCKEY CLUB	23,595
PORTRANE HOCKEY CLUB	9,000	GOREY HOCKEY CLUB	12,082	CORK HARLEQUINS HOCKEY CLUB	24,310
RATHGAR HOCKEY CLUB	10,000	MULLINGAR HOCKEY CLUB	12,300		
NAAS HOCKEY CLUB	10,021	AVOCA HOCKEY CLUB	13,585		

The Covid-19 funding was in addition to our core grant from Sport Ireland for 2020 of €340,000 which will remain the same for 2021. In addition, Hockey Ireland was awarded €79,550 for projects under the Dormant Accounts scheme and received €150,000 in 2019/2020 under the 'Women in Sport' scheme. In addition, Ulster Hockey received an investment from the Sport Northern Ireland Sports Sustainability Fund of £151,399 for its organisation and 10 clubs.

This year was also important for funding opportunities under the Sports Capital Grant Scheme. The Irish Government launched the Sports Capital and Equipment Programme in November 2020, providing an opportunity for clubs, schools, and branches to apply for grant funding to cover equipment and capital expenditure.

Hockey Ireland hosted two webinars which were very well attended by clubs. We engaged consultants '2into3' to present the first webinar on December 1st 2020 with the aim to help clubs and schools with the process. This was followed by a webinar delivered by Hockey Ireland personnel in February to help clubs 'maximise' their application. All clubs received a 1:1 zoom meeting and/or phone calls from development staff to give them advice and encouragement on their respective applications.

We continue to operate under the Covid-19 working guidelines and our staff for the most part have been working remotely. We are looking forward to returning to our UCD headquarters when we can, but also recognise that we can be flexible and efficient on how and when we work.

We would like to thank the continued support from the Irish Government through Sport Ireland, Sport Northern Ireland, all our sponsors, staff and volunteers.

Five applications were submitted to the Sports Capital Grant and Equipment Programme for new build hockey pitches, all are 2G sand dressed pitches and will accommodate multi- sports:

1. DOMINICAN COLLEGE WICKLOW IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WICKLOW HC (ON AN OLD GRIT PITCH)

2. ST LEO'S COLLEGE CARLOW IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CARLOW HC (ON AN OLD GRIT PITCH)

3. PRESENTATION COLLEGE CLONMEL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CLONMEL HC (ON AN OLD GRIT PITCH)

4. DUNAMASE COLLEGE PORTLAOISE, LAOIS OFFALY EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ABBEYLEIX HC AND PORTLAOISE HC (GREENFIELD SITE ON SITE OF A NEW SCHOOL)

5. MILLER'S LANE GALWAY CITY COUNCIL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CONNACHT BRANCH

Other applications covered new LED floodlights, pitch resurfacing and equipment improvements such as new goalposts, scoreboards, mini training goals, balls, goalkeeper equipment, indoor hockey boards and storage sheds. Leinster, Munster and Connacht branches submitted their respective applications, and Hockey Ireland applied for equipment for our Junior Age Grade teams,

Indoor, Masters, Primary school and junior club development programmes.

Our international partners, the International Hockey Federation and European Hockey Federation also give us continued support. An interesting project was launched by the European Hockey Federation under their 'Equally Amazing' banner - a Forum for current and future leaders in hockey which was due to take place in Amsterdam - alongside the European Championships in June 2021. Unfortunately, this has been postponed to a later date due to Covid-19. Hockey Ireland reached out to members requesting nominations for candidates to attend the Forum on behalf of Hockey Ireland. Candidates were selected by our President Ann Rosa, Chairperson Eric Brady and myself and we were delighted to nominate Emma Buckley (Cork Harlequins) and Kenny Carroll (Hockey Ireland office).

In addition, a lot of work is being done behind the scenes to support our international participation, most notably the Euro Hockey Championships in June and the Tokyo Olympics starting at the end of July. These will be followed by the European Hockey Championships for the Senior Men and World Cup Qualification tournaments later this year.

JEROME PELS
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

GOVERNANCE

Irish Hockey Company Limited by Guarantee, trading as Hockey Ireland, is a National Governing Body for hockey on the island of Ireland. Hockey Ireland is affiliated to the International Hockey Federation and the European Hockey Federation. On a national level, it is the recognised governing body for hockey by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media through Sport Ireland for the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland through Sport Northern Ireland.

The organisation is overseen by a 12-person board of directors made up entirely of volunteers. The role of the board is defined under the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Company's Byelaws which are supplemented by a range of policy and procedural documents which underpin the work of the Board to provide strategic direction and oversight. The responsibility of the day-to-day operations rests with the Chief Executive Officer and staff.

Directors receive annual training & development and new incoming directors receive robust induction training upon joining the board. The board undergo an internal annual review of performance and in 2021 Hockey Ireland has engaged an external firm to undertake a governance audit of the organisation.

The Board have met 5 times since the last AGM which was held, for the first time, via teleconference in November 2020. Meetings currently take place every month and the board papers are circulated at least 5 days in advance of each board meeting. The CEO, President, Vice President and Company Secretary attend board meetings on the invitation of the Board but are not Directors.

A Director's term of office is 3 years from appointment and subject to re-appointment for a term of up to 6 years. The maximum term limit a director may serve on the board is 6 years. The President and Vice President are elected for a term of 2 years; both were elected in November 2020.

Hockey Ireland committees are appointed by the Board under Byelaws 11 & 12. There are two board committees; Governance and Finance, Risk & Audit. These committees assist the executive in the management and governance of the organisation.

The operating committees of Hockey Ireland include: High Performance; Coach Education; Participation and Development; Welfare; Masters; Marketing & Communications; and Competitions all of whom provide a link in supporting the executive in operational aspects of the organisation

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CODE – SPORT IRELAND

Sport Ireland has issued a directive to all National Governing Bodies to have fully adopted the corporate governance code by the end of 2021. Hockey Ireland is striving towards this target with compliance expected in quarter three 2021. The organisation identifies itself under 'Type C' where the main characteristics of the organisation include individuals sitting on the board and focusing solely on a governance/oversight role, delegating management and operational duties to staff. There is a clear division between the governance role of the board and the management role of the staff.

The governance code contains 5 principles and 15 sub principles, each of which outlines the minimum standard of practice in corporate governance for National Governing Bodies' such as Hockey Ireland. The governance code provides volunteer board members with high quality information about how to ensure Hockey Ireland is run professionally, with integrity and with high impact. Sport Ireland believes the code will allow National Governing Bodies' continue the journey to embed the highest standards of good governance across sporting bodies. Compliance with the Corporate Governance Code will also meet the governance requirements of Sport Northern Ireland.

The Competitions Committee would also like to acknowledge the work of the clubs that went into hosting games during this season. The support of volunteers to follow the protocols and keep our players safe has been phenomenal.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CODE – SPORT IRELAND

The governance committee has engaged with members of the hockey community to undertake a comprehensive review of the organisation’s constitution and byelaws to update and improve their content to ensure Hockey Ireland has robust governing documents.

BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE NOVEMBER 2020 – APRIL 2021						
		16 DECEMBER 2020 (VIRTUAL)	03 FEBRUARY 2021 (VIRTUAL)	10 MARCH 2021 (VIRTUAL)	14 APRIL 2021 VIRTUAL	22 APRIL 2021 (VIRTUAL)
ERIC BRADY	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
KEITH MORROW	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
PAULA CUNNIFFE	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
SHARON HUTCHINSON	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
TREVOR WATKINS	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
JONATHAN STEVEN HILES	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
IAIN KELLY	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
WILLIAM POLLOCK	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
AISLING KEOGH	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
ROSITA WOLFE	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
EDWARD SIMPSON	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
<i>OTHER ATTENDEES</i>						
ANN ROSA PRESIDENT	4 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
JOHN DENNIS VICE PRESIDENT	3 / 5	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO
JEROME PELS CEO	4 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
PAMELA BASTABLE COMPANY SECRETARY	5 / 5	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEMBER	ROLE	DURATION ON BOARD	SKILLS/QUALIFICATIONS
Eric Brady	Chairperson	Appointed Director in November 2016, ratified May 2017, reappointed under rotation of Directors in May 2018. Appointed Chairperson June 2019	Professional & Academic background in HR, finance, governance, psychology. Senior civil servant in Dept of Justice. Large public body and NGB board level experience. Competed internationally in Athletics, Olympic Handball and Archery. Engaged by the OFI to work with high performance athletes, coaches and managers across a range of summer and winter sports through four Olympic Games cycles (1988-2000). Universities Track & Field Manager for 5 years including at the XVIII Universiade in Japan in 1995.
Keith Morrow	Finance Officer	Appointed Director in May 2016, reappointed under rotation of Directors in May 2018.	Professional background as a Chartered Accountant. Auditing, ethics and governance experience as a Senior Finance professional.
Paula Cunniffe	Director	Appointed Director in August 2018, ratified May 2019.	Professional background as a communications specialist and CEO; has worked in TV & Radio Production, as a communications specialist with Department of the Taoiseach, and now CEO of a non-profit managing Mark Pollock's professional speaking business and global running event called Run in the Dark
Sharon Hutchinson	Director	Appointed Director at AGM May 2019	Professional background in pharmaceutical business, research & welfare. Member & Club Manager of Cork Harlequins.
Trevor Watkins	Director	Appointed Director at AGM May 2019	Professional background as a Chartered Accountant. Significant charity, NGB and private sector board level experience.
Jonathan Steven Hiles	Director	Appointed Director in December 2019, ratified at AGM November 2020.	Professional background in finance and banking. Former umpire and international squad manager with High Performance experience.
Aisling Keogh	Director	Appointed Director August 2020, ratified at AGM November 2020	Professional background in Administration. Experience in management, communications, logistics and public relations. Former provincial, national and international FIH umpire. National Umpire Coach and Assessor.
Iain Kelly	Director	Appointed Director August 2020, ratified at AGM November 2020	Professional background in banking and finance. Experience in corporate and relationship banking. Represents Ireland at Ulster and Masters level.
William Pollock	Director	Appointed Director August 2020, ratified at AGM November 2020	Professional background in business and portfolio management. Experience in the defence and aerospace industry. Also board governance, change and risk management.
Rosita Wolfe	Director	Appointed Director August 2020, ratified at AGM November 2020	Professional background in sports marketing and communications. Significant charity and private sector board experience.
Edward Simpson	Director	Appointed Director at AGM November 2020	Professional background in strategic communications and marketing. Experience in distribution and advisory services in financial industry. Significant private sector board experience.
Pamela Bastable	Company Secretary	Appointed October 2020, reappointed December 2020.	Professional background in compliance and corporate secretarial. Experience in private sector board governance and

WELFARE

GARDA VETTING:

All applications must be processed to the National Vetting Bureau with all vetted members receiving an automated reminder eight weeks before their vetting is due to expire. Any new clubs that are affiliated with Hockey Ireland are added to the National Vetting Bureau database. All clubs must be aware that anyone stepping onto a training ground as a coach or volunteer working with underage players must be vetted.

Safeguarding:

The following courses have been run in 2021

4 X SAFEGUARDING LEVEL 1 (INCLUDING HP STAFF) 50 MEMBERS IN TOTAL

1 X SAFEGUARDING LEVEL 2: 12 PARTICIPANTS

The Sport Ireland database shows in total, 36 Hockey Ireland members have completed Safeguarding level 3. Safeguarding Level 3 will soon be available online, proposed for the end of May, and we would encourage all club Designated Children's Officers to sign up to this workshop once its online content has been rolled out. Each club is required to have a Club Designate of which the safeguarding level 3 is a minimum requirement.

Up until now, U18s doing a coaching course were not required to complete Safeguarding 1. In consultation with the Coaching Committee, it has been recommended that all 16 and 17 year olds must do Safeguarding 1 in conjunction with their Coaching Course and will be required to complete both elements prior to receiving certification.

Hockey Ireland is committed to increasing its number of trained Safeguarding tutors in the coming year.

WELFARE COMMITTEE:

The welfare committee has been reactivated, with the group reviewing the Code of Ethics this year. The aim will be to break this document into smaller, standalone documents. Shirley Moore is the National Designated Person for Hockey Ireland in a voluntary capacity, and sits as Chair of this committee, with representatives from each of the provinces also forming part of this group.

GOVERNANCE

A review is being undertaken of all welfare policies. Once approved these will be displayed on our website, <https://hockey.ie/>. The improved membership system will assist the National Children's Officer to monitor members' safeguarding & vetting needs while ensuring clubs continue to be compliant with the Children's First Act.

Our sincere thanks to Laura Cullen, who spent 3 years as National Children's Officer before finishing in 2020, for her hard work in bringing the policies and procedures in line with the Children's First Act 2015.

National Children's Officer Report 2021

GARDA VETTING: 94 APPLICANTS

SAFEGUARDING LEVEL 1: 64 PARTICIPANTS

SAFEGUARDING LEVEL 2: 12 PARTICIPANTS

Since the last AGM, Dwyne Hill has moved to National Children's Officer (details for both Dwyne Hill and Shirley Moore can be found on our website <https://hockey.ie/>).

The Welfare Committee is actively working on a range of welfare/safeguarding matters to make sure the most vulnerable are protected. In 2019, all members were asked to complete a Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment, which is a legislative requirement under the Children's First Act. This must be reviewed every two years so all clubs in the Republic must ensure this review is undertaken.

In addition, this year, in partnership with Sport Ireland, Hockey Ireland will be conducting a Safeguarding Audit of all clubs. Webinars will be held to assist clubs to complete the Audit and the National Children's Officer and Development Officers will be on hand to assist clubs with any gaps that are identified.

ANTI-DOPING REPORT 2021

Anti-Doping Programmes around the world continue to face scrutiny, as an adverse finding in samples of athletes can have a profound effect on a sporting career and reputational damage to a nation. It is imperative that governing bodies and their members continue their efforts to ensure that sport is fair and clean for all from grassroots to high performance.

During the year Hockey Ireland has worked closely with Sport Ireland & Pure Winner Sport Northern Ireland to deliver Anti-Doping Education Workshops for all athletes on our Senior and Junior Age Grade squads. Our athletes competing at major international competitions are also required to complete the Sport Ireland Anti-Doping eLearning module every two years.

At the beginning of 2021, World Anti Doping Association (WADA) introduced a new standard of education that must be adhered to and Hockey Ireland is preparing to roll out an Anti-Doping Education Programme for Senior Teams, Junior Age Grade Squads and Masters players with a view to developing an updated CPD module in partnership with WADA. Coaches, teachers, team managers and parents can avail of this CPD module once it has been rolled out



TESTS

FIH IN COMPETITION	0
FIH OUT OF COMPETITION	0
SPORT IRELAND IN COMPETITION	0
SPORT IRELAND OUT OF COMPETITION	3
(2 FEMALE & 1 MALE)	

OPERATIONS AND STRATEGY

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications is a key pillar identified in the 2021 - 2024 Hockey Ireland Strategy, with objectives to engage proactively with stakeholders and build the Hockey Ireland brand. Communications is managed within the Hockey Ireland office by a two-person team, and is overseen by the Communications Committee.

Since being constituted after the 2020 AGM in November, the Communications Committee has provided ongoing support to the Communications team in Hockey Ireland in the following areas:

1. SYSTEMS-BUILDING & RESOURCING IN COMMUNICATIONS TEAM
2. COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING AND CAMPAIGN IMPLEMENTATION AND ANALYSIS
3. PROACTIVE STAKEHOLDER AND SPONSOR ENGAGEMENT
4. FOCUS ON MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL TEAM COMPETING AT TOKYO 2021

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

An annual strategy has been developed which is aligned with the Hockey Ireland four-year Strategic Plan. Its objectives are:

- PRODUCE AND PUBLISH COMMUNICATIONS CONSISTENTLY AND PROACTIVELY FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS.
- CREATE HIGH-QUALITY ENGAGING CONTENT CONSISTENT WITH BRAND MESSAGE, TONE, AND VISUAL IDENTITY FOR USE ACROSS ALL HOCKEY IRELAND COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS.
- PLAN, EXECUTE AND ANALYSE STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGNS
- DEVELOP POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH IRISH AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA.
- CREATE POSITIVE BRAND ASSOCIATION FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE IRISH HOCKEY COMMUNITY THROUGH PROACTIVE HIGH-QUALITY COMMUNICATIONS.

The Committee meets bi-monthly, and as required, provides support and analyses progress of outputs.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Hockey Ireland communicates with the hockey community and its followers on social media via Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. In 2020, the number of followers grew to



16,572
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



16,951
INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS



25,869
TWITTER FOLLOWERS

Although we saw a modest increase in followers from the previous year (between 1% and 3% increase across channels), engagement with our social media channels was consistently strong throughout the year. Engagement is a valuable metric of performance and is welcome during a period with limited hockey being played.

Due to Covid-19 and sporting events being curtailed, focus shifted to engaging our followers during lockdown which included social media Q&As with international players, sharing hockey skills and drills, and colouring book downloads for our younger followers. The Hockey Ireland Communications team also endeavoured to provide some form of on-pitch excitement by streaming previously recorded EYHL matches to our audience on YouTube.



20,000
MEMBERS

The Hockey Ireland Newsletter, issued monthly to over 20,000 members, has also seen substantial engagement rates highlighting the increasing interest of the membership in hockey news. The average open rate of the newsletter, not including Covid-19 specific updates, is 41.92%, which is double the industry average..

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The President and Vice President of Hockey Ireland Ann Rosa and John Dennis have established a communication and outreach project to hear from smaller clubs around the country. This pilot project invited representatives from clubs within each Branch to take part. Criteria includes clubs that have a maximum number of three adult teams, are not involved in EYHL and have a developing youth section.

In normal times representatives from Hockey Ireland would be present at matches and functions but, since the President and Vice President took up office in late November, lockdown conditions have continued and there has been no on-pitch activity to date. This project provides an opportunity to engage with these clubs and learn more about their experiences and any concerns they may have. A meeting was held in March with 13 clubs representing all four provinces. The Hockey Ireland President Ann Rosa, Vice President John Dennis, the Chairperson of the Board Eric Brady and Linda Monaghan as National Development Officer were in attendance. The next meeting is scheduled for April 29th and there will be meetings held throughout 2021.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Commercial Advisory Working Group, met during 2020 via Zoom and comprised of experts working in sport, business, sponsorship, and communications, made several recommendations to the Hockey Ireland Board.

Hockey Ireland has since made significant progress in implementing these recommendations by hiring John Foley as Interim Commercial Director to build long-term commercial success outside of Government funding. This role has reviewed current and potential sponsorship opportunities, engaged the services of a market research company to further enhance sponsorship properties, and is strengthening communication planning in Hockey Ireland, specifically in the run-up to Tokyo 2021.

Additional sponsorship opportunities are being pursued and will be announced throughout 2021. Work will also be undertaken on the Hockey Ireland Trust and sponsorship opportunities for the Junior Age Grade teams.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS MAY 2021

The Hockey Ireland Strategic Plan was launched in March 2021 and has received positive feedback from the hockey community. Despite the challenges caused by Covid-19, a flying start has been made with the plan's implementation. Progress updates include:

GOAL 1 SECURING THE FUTURE

A NEW MEMBERSHIP SCHEME HAS BEEN DEVELOPED AND WAS APPROVED BY THE BOARD WITH A NEW FEE STRUCTURE WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT THE AGM IN MAY 2021.

ADDITIONAL COMMERCIAL REVENUE HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY TARGETED AND ADDITIONAL MARKETING RESOURCES (INTERIM COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR AND ARRANGEMENT WITH ONSIDE MARKETING) ARE NOW IN PLACE.

INCREASED INTEREST FROM SPONSORS AND NEW DEALS ARE IN THE FINAL STAGES OF COMPLETION.

FINANCIAL PROCESSES AND POLICIES ARE BEING UPDATED AND NEW IT SOLUTIONS HAVE BEEN PUT INTO PLACE TO COMPLIMENT A MORE ROBUST FINANCIAL APPROVALS PROCEDURE.

GOAL 2 GROWING THE HOCKEY COMMUNITY

THE REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE FUNDAMENTALS, LEVEL 1 AND 2 COURSES, IS WELL UNDERWAY AND WILL BE IMPLEMENTED BY Q3 2021.

THE COACH EDUCATION COMMITTEE IS ACTIVE AND HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED. THE COACH'S DATABASE IS BEING REVIEWED AND THE FIRST PHASE OF COACH MEMBERSHIP WILL BE INTRODUCED IN THE UPCOMING 2021/2022 SEASON.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF 'HOOKED FOR LIFE' AND THE ASSOCIATED COACHING RESOURCES ARE BEING UPDATED AND A ROLL OUT IS SCHEDULED FOR THE SECOND HALF OF 2021.

THE YOUNG UMPIRES PROGRAMME, UMPIRING FUNDAMENTALS AND ONLINE RULES TEST PROGRAMMES HAVE BEEN LAUNCHED. DISCUSSIONS ARE ONGOING WITH THE IRISH HOCKEY UMPIRES ASSOCIATION REGARDING STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE OF AN UMPIRING DATABASE.

A 'YOUNG LEADERS' PANEL HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED.

HOCKEY IRELAND OFFICE HAS PROVIDED EXTENSIVE SUPPORT TO CLUBS FOR APPLICATIONS THROUGH THE SPORTS CAPITAL FUNDING SCHEME.