
STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2017



**THE
IRISH SPORTS
COUNCIL**



AN CHOMHAIRLE SPÓIRT

*PROMOTING PARTICIPATION IN SPORT, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, AND
WELLNESS IN CORK*

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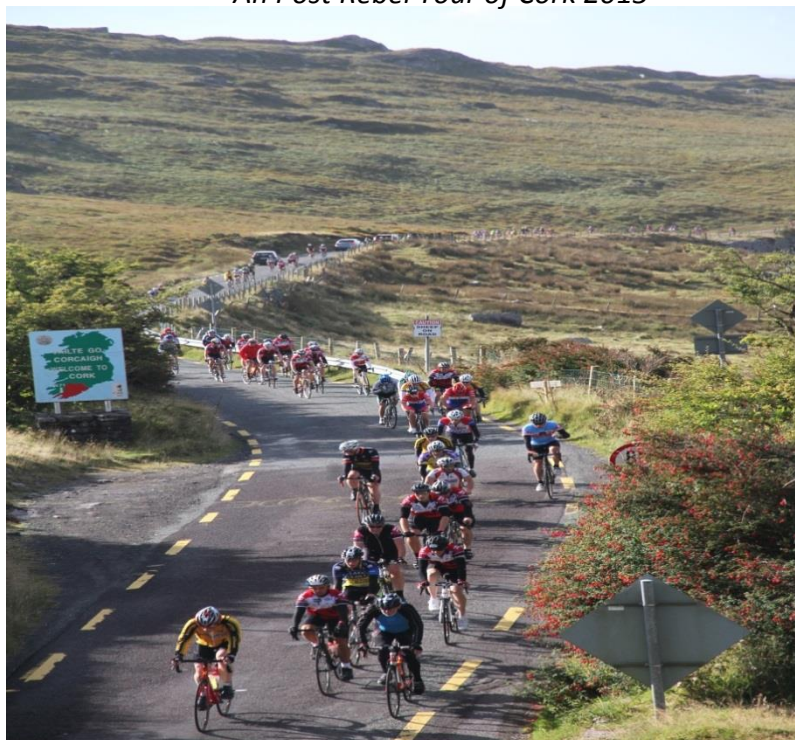
1. Introduction

This strategic plan outlines the vision, objectives and actions of the Cork Sports Partnership (CSP) (2014-2017). The plan is in effect a road map which will determine the focus and activities of the Board, Partners and staff of the CSP.

While the CSP will largely continue to function as it has in the past, there will also be change. The CSP will respond to the needs and opportunities of the changing economic and social environment, as well as the opportunities provided by the growing expertise of its staff, board and partners. In particular there is a growing leadership role for the CSP in the provision of non-competitive sport and physical activity participation opportunities in the County.

The following document outlines both the continuity and change challenges for the CSP over the next three years.

An Post Rebel Tour of Cork 2013



1.1 *Message from the Irish Sports Council Chief Executive*



Message from John Treacy, Chief Executive, Irish Sports Council

The Irish Sports Council is currently implementing its fifth strategy. Central to our strategy has been the importance of establishing a sustainable national structure for local sports development to increase and then maintain levels of sports participation

The Irish Sports Council considers the strategic planning process to be an essential step in the development of Local Sports Partnerships. This step can bring many benefits such as matching the needs of the local communities to the priorities of the partnership. It is then possible to quantify the resources required effectively to achieve these priorities and answer local needs. This ensures that the plan can be a working document, which will show results over its lifetime.

This is the first strategy of the Cork Sports Partnership under its new structure. It aims to build on the excellent work of the Cork County and Cork City Partnerships over the last decade and will help to ensure that Cork Sports Partnership grows in strength and continues to be the key agency in providing opportunities for more people to become involved in sport and physical activity in the next few years and beyond.

This document is the final product of an intensive process of examination, evaluation, consultation and discussion in the future direction of the Partnership. I would like to thank all those who contributed to the strategy process and I wish everybody involved in the Cork Sports Partnership all the best for the future.

John Treacy

Chief Executive, Irish Sports Council.

1.2 *Message from the Chairman of the Board of the Sports Partnership*



As Chairperson of the Cork Sports Partnership, I am delighted to present this strategy as an important feature of the work already underway and also that which lies ahead. The members of the Board of Directors have always taken their role very seriously and at every opportunity supported the development and continuation of sport, recreation and physical activity in Cork. Tasked with increasing this participation we are extremely lucky to have a dedicated hardworking and committed staff team, who have continued to be creative and unrelenting in these past few years, which have been extremely difficult.

It has been very satisfying and rewarding for all of us on the Board of Directors to watch the position of the Sports Partnership in Cork move from a direct delivery to now a more focused leadership role, encouraging many more clubs, communities, agencies and organisations to open up the possibilities for participation and engagement. This is the main activity which we will continue to support and grow with your help and support, making Cork even a more vibrant hub for sport and physical activity.

I would like to sincerely thank Mr. Humphrey Murphy for his guidance throughout this process and the members of the Board for taking the time to engage and be part of this strategy. In particular the staff of the Sports Partnership for their insight and input in this document and of course, Mr. John Treacy CEO and all the staff at the Irish Sports Council for their continued support and encouragement.

Ted Owens,

Chairperson, Cork Sports Partnership.

1.3 *Message from the Coordinator of the Cork Sports Partnership*



The Cork Sports Partnership has in the last 5 years been a focus of change and development, particularly with the successful merger of the Cork City and County Sports Partnership and the rebranding of the new entity “Cork Sports Partnership”. This single development has enhanced the relevance and priority of the Sports partnership across all of our sports, communities, agencies and partners, and enabled the Partnership to have a more significant impact on the task of increasing participation in sport, recreation and physical activity.

This new strategy clearly demonstrates the evolving role of the Cork Sports Partnership, moving from a direct delivery to coordination of programmes and activities and more recently a significant leadership role in the efforts to increase participation. This development has been possible through the involvement and support of so many partners, agencies, clubs and communities who support the work we carry out on a weekly basis. Together we can make a difference and continue to lead out on making Cork City and County a much healthier active place to work, live and play.

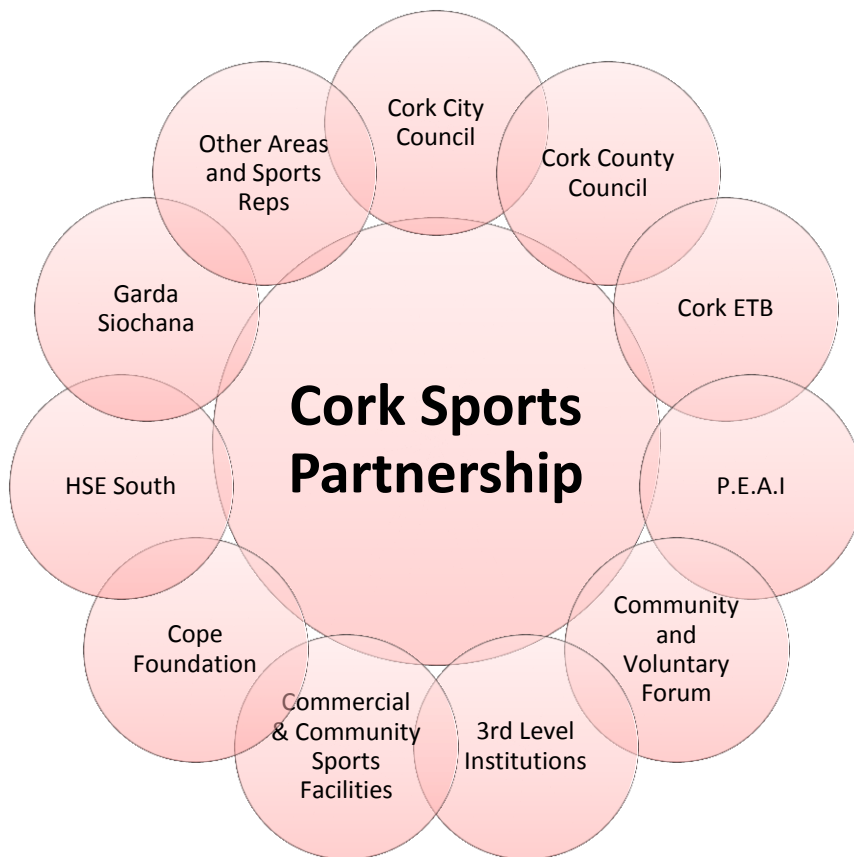
I would like to acknowledge the support of John Treacy and all of the team at the Irish Sports Council, who consistently ensure that we have the necessary resources and supports to carry out this work. Humphrey Murphy for his excellent guidance and expertise in the development of this new strategy and of course in particular the members of the Board of the Cork Sports Partnership who provide the strategic direction and support required on an on-going basis throughout the year. Finally, I would like to acknowledge all of our staff here in the office for their professional approach and dedication to whatever project or programme is underway and in particular their innovation and creativity ensuring we all enjoy our sport, recreation and physical activity in Cork.

Michael Crowley Coordinator, Cork Sports Partnership.

2. CSP Structure

2.1 Board Partners

The Cork Sports Partnership is a limited company with a board of 15 Directors and a staff of 7. Each director on our board represents an organization or group that has a vested interest in achieving the aims and objectives of the Cork Sports Partnership. Representation of these organisations is illustrated below.



2.2 Staff Profile

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3. Defining Sport

The definition of sport is complex. For some it is about competition, for others it is about exercise or health and for most people it involves social interaction.

Sport can be played as part of a team or as an individual, played indoors or outdoors on a prepared surface, or in a natural environment with or without equipment.

From the CSP perspective sport is about encouraging the maximum number of people to participate in physical activity in a safe recreational environment. Increasing the numbers of people participating in sport and physical activity is the focus of the CSP, success at competition is the responsibility of others.

The CSP's particular responsibility is to encourage and support participation in sport, recreation and physical activity amongst those who rarely or never take part. This latter, low or no participation group, are the CSP's principal target audience.

For these individuals, CSP will support involvement through mainstream sports, or alternatively through a range of less mainstream activities such as running, cycling or walking.

CSP's perspective is that sport includes mainstream activities such as football, athletics and basketball, as well as more diverse exercise and physical activities such as indoor walking, dance, boccia or baton twirling.



Munster Boccia League,
2013.

3.1 Sports Events

CSP stimulates and supports participation through a variety of sports events such as:

- 3.1.1 *Mass participation*: Large scale events which encourage participation at a recreation level and which generate future goals for participants.
- 3.1.2 *Local Events*: Small scale sports events where people take part through local sports providers.
- 3.1.3 *Programmes*: Sport and physical activity projects/ programmes which encourage participation.



Operation Transformation 5k Run 2013



SportsAbility Day 2011

4. The Challenges

There are many challenges facing Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity both at a national and local context. The following are the main challenges that are likely to face Cork Sports Partnership over the next few years:

- Managing our limited resources.
- Supporting the role of sport, recreation and physical activity as a solution to lifestyle diseases such as type-two diabetes, cardiovascular disease and obesity.
- Responding to the continued growth in the demand for sport, recreation and physical activity.



Go For Life Sportsfest 2012,
Leisureworld Bishopstown.



Fit4Youth Launch with Sonia O
Sullivan, Mardyke Arena UCC.

5. The Nature of the Environment

Cork Sports Partnership must attract and manage the limited resources which are available for its activities. Such a prudent approach requires that CSP adheres to the following operating principles:

5.1 Provide Alternatives: Time, finances, staff and facility limitations prevent CSP's direct involvement with all of the sports programme opportunities in Cork. In the event of CSP not being able to directly support a sports participation proposal, CSP staff may identify alternative approaches or other actions which can assist the proposer to realise their programme.



5.2 Empowering: When those who benefit from participation take part in the preparation and delivery of the sport and physical activity programmes, the impact of the programme is more likely to be sustained. There are significant numbers of people in communities and clubs with great organisation and communication skills. CSP works best when it links with these individuals and organisations to identify and deliver a sport and physical activity programme.



5.3 Identify the Exit: CSP staff actively engages with individuals and communities and they value the interaction and impact of CSP programmes. However, CSP's limited resources require that it step away from the significant majority of programmes at some point. Hence CSP staff will at the outset identify the content, start, and the end point of CSP's commitment to each sport and physical activity programme.

6. Strategic Direction

CSP's role has grown from the direct delivery of sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities, to the generation of new innovative programmes, the co-ordination of sports participation and leading out sports initiatives.

While the demand for sport, recreation and physical activity programmes has grown significantly in Cork, funding for these activities is more limited and people's ability to pay has declined.

In the midst of this increased demand and limited resources, CSP must be astute in how it continues to deliver, coordinate and lead recreation sports participation in Cork.

Focus:

CSP will structure and deliver its responsibilities across three strategic areas:

- Support and Target
- Communicate & Inform
- Governance and Structures



Operation Transformation Walk,
Blarney 2013.



Parkrun Launch Macroom, May
2013.

6.1 Support and Target

Sport: there are those who do take part, those who don't and those who might.

Part of CSP's responsibility is to assist current participants on their pathway, by supporting sports provider's quality events and programmes.

Sports providers include:

- Communities
- Sports Clubs/ NGB's
- The Leisure and Recreation Industry
- Commercial and Community Sports Facilities

CSP will work with these providers to reach out to new members and participants and also to grow the quality of their sports events and programmes.



Cork Safer Cycling Programme
2013



GAA Fun Blitz 2010

6.1.1 Target Participants

The majority of people know that participation in sport and physical activity benefits an individual's physical, mental and social well-being. There are however various reasons and constraints which limit some people's engagement with sport and physical activity.

CSP has a particular responsibility towards those who do not take part in sports and physical activity. Target groups for increased participation include:

- Disadvantaged Communities
- Young People
- People with a Disability
- Women
- Older Adults



Rebel Run, 2013.



Cork Walking Month 2012.



Get Active Challenge Doneraile, Summer 2013.

CSP will prioritise these groups so that sport and physical activity can become an important part of their lifestyle. CSP will be guided in this approach through the principles of:

- *Working Closely*: Identify the specific needs of non-participants.
- *Appropriate Opportunities*: Sport and physical activity at an appropriate place, time and format.
- *Diversity*: beyond the obvious, identifying new or different sports; dance, outdoor recreation, skipping, wheelchair basketball and bowling for example.

Success in this area will be measured by the depth of participation change CSP supports amongst target participants.



Cork Safer Cycling Programme.



An Post Rebel Tour, Glengarriff 2013.

6.2 Communicate and Inform

CSP must continue to do more than just support the converted participant. CSP's role is to encourage others to recognise and realise the benefits of sport, recreation and physical activity for themselves, their community and their organisation/agency.

The conversation about participation is also important, CSP will communicate the benefits, opportunities and pathways for sustainable sport, recreation and physical activity amongst the following:

- *Internal Audience:* Strategic partners and agencies with responsibilities in the sport, exercise and physical activity arena.
- *External Audience:* the inactive, occasional participants and local sports, exercise and physical activity providers.

Traditional, new and social media outlets provide effective channels of communications for this participation message; however the scale and complexity of these channels requires that CSP prioritises and structures the message.

In addition to communicating the sports development and participation opportunities, the impact of participation must also be measured. By identifying and measuring the impact of CSP activities, there will be a sharper focus on those activities which are effective and changes to those which are not.

Success in this area will be measured by the level at which the sports participation concept, message and participation opportunities are promoted and how well the CSP researches and responds to the voice of its partners and programme participants.

6.3 Governance and Structures

CSP has a range of corporate and management responsibilities such as financial management, administration, staff development and programme development. The management of these internal responsibilities impacts on our ability to act and our cost effectiveness.

In particular CSP must:

- Maintain an effective structure and strategic oversight via the CSP Board
- Be financially prudent
- Operate to appropriate procedures
- Challenge and support staff

Success in this area will be measured by the level of challenge we undertake and the smoothness of our operations.



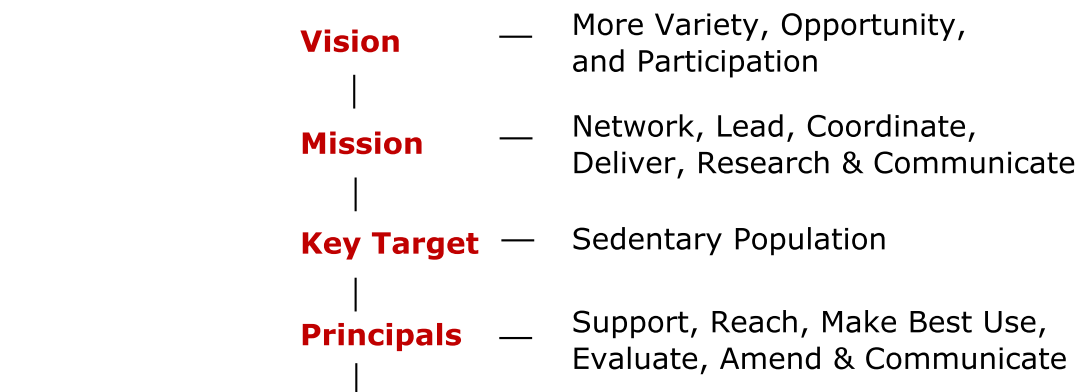
Awards Launch 2011 (L-R Cork City Manager, CSP Coordinator, City Mayor, CSP Chairperson, CSP Programmes Manager, County Mayor and County Manager)

7. Strategic Areas

CSP will focus its resources and activities across the following three strategic areas:

1. Support and Target
2. Communicate and Inform
3. Governance and Structures

These areas will be explored in more detail throughout the remainder of this strategic plan.



Support & Target

- ◆ Community & Local Projects
- ◆ The Leisure Industry
- ◆ Sports Club Development
- ◆ Mass Participation Events
- ◆ Local Events
- ◆ CSP & ISC Programmes
- ◆ Sports Ability

Communicate & Inform

- ◆ Brand
- ◆ Communications
- ◆ Leadership & Dialogue
- ◆ Research
- ◆ Database & IT

Governance & Structures

- ◆ Finance
- ◆ Operations Management
- ◆ Agency Partner Links
- ◆ Board
- ◆ Staff

8. CSP Vision

More Variety, Opportunity and Participation.

CSP Mission

CSP will in conjunction with partner organisations, advocate, network, lead, coordinate, deliver, research and communicate the opportunities for sport, recreation and physical activity development and participation in Cork.

Specific Target

While all of the community are included in CSP activities, the CSP has specific responsibility for the sedentary population of Cork.

Guiding Principals

In order to achieve the CSP vision, CSP will Support, Target, Guide, Enable, Amend and Communitate.

CSP will:

- **Support** a broad range of sport and physical activity participation opportunities.
- Work with our partners, organisations, communities and individuals to **target** all sectors of the Cork community.
- Utilise the available resources to **enable** and support those working closest to the participant at local level.
- **Evaluate** and **amend** our actions and **communicate** our impact through an effective research and analysis process.

1. SUPPORT AND TARGET

No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
1.1	Community and local projects	Community driven and supported sport, recreation and physical activity.	<p>Sustainable sport, recreation and physical activity initiatives across individual Cork communities.</p> <p>Increased CSP programme reach into communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote an annual community sports drive which encourages the individual communities to apply for a range of CSP initiatives such as volunteer training, programme delivery and community facility management support. Respond to the annual sports drive via a timetabled and structured CSP community sports support programme. Respond to community sports initiative requests for support as resources allow.

Project Weightloss, September 2012.



Project Weightloss Group, September 2012.

OT Run 2013.

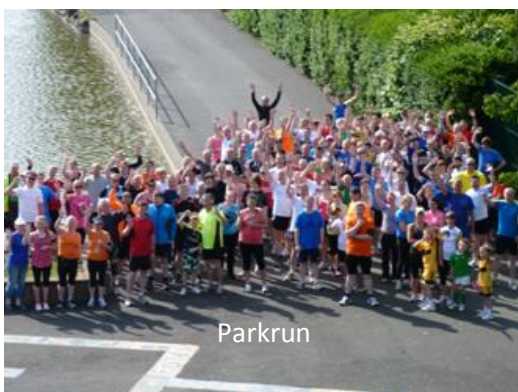


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No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
1.2	The Leisure Industry (as identified by Ireland Active) ¹	Continued engagement with the Cork Leisure Industry.	Enhanced awareness of “on the ground” sports resources in the County. Increased engagement between CSP and providers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update sports provider database and map. • On-going identification of local providers to pair with emerging CSP programmes and events. • Formal provider communications and support materials for CSP programmes and events.
1.3	NGB’s and Sports Club Development	<p>Involvement with and the support of new/existing sports clubs through NGB’s and county boards.</p> <p>Support the development of additional sports clubs.</p>	<p>Quality sports club participation pathways.</p> <p>Additional club volunteer training and education opportunities.</p> <p>Increased links between sports clubs and schools.</p> <p>An increase in the number of sports clubs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and promote club management and volunteer best practice guidelines. • Identify and pursue opportunities for clubs to support community activity programmes. • Coordinate a club school link initiative in priority areas in conjunction with NGB’s. • Continue to deliver Code of Ethics and Children’s Officer training. • Identify and support the development of minority sports. • Promote awareness of sports clubs and participation opportunities in Cork. • Support the development of sports participation through a series of training and education initiatives for volunteers in conjunction with NGB’s.

¹ Ireland Active is a not for profit company limited by guarantee to provide support and services to create the platforms to professionalise our industry through standards and best practice whilst simultaneously developing the synergies to engage more people to be more active more often – thus providing for a healthier nation..

No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
1.4	Mass Participation Events	Encourage the development and sustainability of mass participation sports events.	The effective use of mass participation events for sustained participation, cross agency and partner involvement and increased awareness of the CSP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support an annual flagship participation sport event. Review the CSP involvement in mass participation events to-date and act on the review's recommendations.
1.5	Local Events	Support small scale local sports participation events.	A year round timetable of sports participation events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to demands for support from event organisers. Formalise best practise guidelines for events. Link Meet and Train groups and providers to the events.



No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
1.6	CSP Programmes & ISC National Programmes	Coordinate a range of appropriate sports and physical activity participation programmes.	<p>Continued availability of existing sports and physical activity programmes.</p> <p>The development, pilot and roll out of new sports and physical activity programmes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver a range of appropriate sports, recreation and physical activity programmes. • Review the existing CSP sport and physical activity programmes and identify any required amendments. • Identify any gaps in existing CSP programmes and determine an appropriate programme response. • Monitor the emergence of new programmes or trends in the marketplace and adopt/adapt these as appropriate.



No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
1.7	SportsAbility	Sustainable participation opportunities for people with a disability	<p>The strategic development of sustainable participation opportunities for people with a disability.</p> <p>Increased awareness and involvement of providers in the provision of quality sports-ability participation opportunities.</p> <p>Increased volume and diversity of sustainable quality sportsability participation opportunities for people with a disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to an agreed strategic and operational plan for the provision of sports-ability programmes. • Create effective partnerships to underpin the sustainable participation of people with a disability in sports and physical activity. • Continued two way engagement with individuals with a disability and the agencies and organisations tasked with supporting their needs. • Continue to build capacity to engage with existing clubs and the wider community to maintain and grow the sports inclusion disability programme in Cork, • Provide practical expertise and sports ability programming, directly and indirectly to people with a disability. • Provide information and promote all opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in sustainable sport, fitness and physical activity at a local, regional and national level.



Rebel Wheelers at the Operation Transformation Walk
January 2014

2. COMMUNICATE AND INFORM

No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
2.1	Brand	Continue to develop and maintain a meaningful CSP brand.	A shared and coherent CSP personality and identity amongst the Staff, Board and Partners of the CSP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the brand ideal of CSP. • Review and amend as appropriate, the current “brand essence” of the CSP. • Identify and roll out an appropriate sub brand strategy for CSP programmes.
2.2	Communications	A coherent and consistent range and volume of CSP communications.	<p>A communications strategy which meets the needs of the CSP’s internal and external markets.</p> <p>Increase the visibility of the CSP amongst its internal and external audiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and prioritise the range of traditional and new media communication channels available to CSP. • Generate an annual communications plan with monthly objectives. • Adhere to a brand presence policy at CSP supported events and programmes. • Encourage and support the use of CSP promotional materials for third party sports events.

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No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
2.3	Leadership & Dialogue	<p>Clarify the leadership role of the CSP.</p> <p>Lead the advocacy of sport, recreation and physical activity and the role of CSP among local agencies.</p>	<p>Greater advocacy for the multi-dimensional role of sport across a wide range of local sports organisations and agencies.</p> <p>Greater CSP leadership and driving of partner and multi partner sports initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the leadership gaps in recreational sports and physical activity in Cork. • Identify relevant Agencies and Sports organisations which have a limited engagement with the CSP approach. • Generate and respond to informed sports dialogue across the Partners • Involve appropriate Partners in shared initiatives.



No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
2.4	Research	Measure and communicate the impact of CSP.	<p>A range of objective and subjective data on CSP activities.</p> <p>Clarity regarding the impact of CSP activities.</p> <p>Opportunity to reinforce high impact activities and amend low impact ones.</p> <p>Opportunity to communicate the benefits and cost effectiveness of the CSP to its internal and external markets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually identify research priorities. • Secure supporting research resources. • Agree on a pilot research process • Initiate and review the pilot research process. • Communicate the research findings. • Continue use of the SPEAK system for year-end reports and activity analysis.
2.5	Database and Information Technology	Maintain, update and use the CSP network of contacts and CSP IT resources.	<p>An integrated CSP IT network and file management system.</p> <p>A current and complete database of participants, partners and suppliers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to arrange and update the CSP internal computer network and file sharing system. • Continue to update the CSP database. • Continued integration of the database with CSP communications.

3. Governance and Structures

No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
3.1	Finance	The prudent management of CSP finances.	Sustained direct and indirect resourcing of the CSP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the annual financial operating targets of the CSP. • Undertake annual and opportunity funding applications as appropriate. • Secure indirect funding for the CSP from Agency Partners. • Complete annual accounts as per the CSP financial operating procedures.
3.2	Operations Management	Structured operating practises.	An up to date set of operating procedures for the CSP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and develop the standard operating procedures for the CSP • Review and amend the CSP programme commencement and exit policy. • Develop and implement an annual CSP programme portfolio review. • Continued use of the CSP project cost benefit process.

No.	Title	Objective	Sought Outcomes	Action
3.3	Agency Partner Links (Cork- Towards a Healthier City, November 2013)	Identify the existing roles and expectations between the CSP and our Partners. To support objectives of the healthy cities action plan	An enhanced CSP Partner network. A shared understanding of the relationship between the CSP and individual Agencies, NGB's and other Partners. Targeted sports development initiatives amongst our Sports Partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a review of the CSP and its Partner relationships using an appropriate template. • Discuss the review outcomes with individual Partners. • Identify the roles and relationship between the CSP and each Partner. • Identify shared strategic and operational opportunities between the CLSP and Sports Partners. • Support the development of sustainable transport, active travel, walkability and active commuting in line with healthy cities
3.4	Board	The continued strategic direction and oversight of CSP by its Board of Directors.	A suitably representative Board of directors with a span and depth of experience to strategically drive the CSP. Regular informed contact, direction and oversight of the CSP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the membership of the Board annually and appoint new directors to the Board as appropriate. • Co-opt new Board members as required. • Develop and support Board subgroups as required. • Agree on an annual Board meeting timetable at the end of each calendar year.

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			Increased critical perspectives within the CSP Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued application and updating of the CSP Board induction process. Undertake an annual strategic review Board meeting.
3.5	Staff	The continued employment direction and support of the CSP staff.	A range of qualified, experienced and motivated staff with the capacity to interpret, communicate, coordinate, lead and deliver the CSP objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued direct and indirect resourcing of CSP staff. An annual staff review and training needs programme. Monthly staff group meetings. Continued application of the staff induction and communications process. Annual staff year review and direction meeting.



9. Annual Operational Planning

The three strategic areas outlined in this document will provide the focus for Cork Sports Partnership over the next three years. In order to manage the delivery of this strategic plan, annual operational plans will be drawn up at the beginning of each year outlining measurable actions, lead agencies responsible and performance indicators.

Each year as per guidelines set out in this plan, extensive monitoring and evaluation will take place to ensure the impacts programmes create in attaining lifelong participation as set out by the yearly operational plans.



Operation Transformation Fun
Run, 2013.

10. Appendices

As part of this strategy a number of consultations took place with key stake holders as well as staff and board members. The strategic direction of Cork Sports Partnership over the next three years and indeed the foundations of this plan have also been greatly influenced by key points outlined in the following research documents:

- *Appendix A*: Irish Sports Monitor 2013.
- *Appendix B*: ERSI Report- Sport and Recreational Exercise Among Adults (Aged 16+) in Cork, 2007-2009. Dr Elish Kelly & Dr Pete Lunn.

These reports have been included as appendices in this strategic plan.

Appendix A

Appendix B