



Extraordinary General Meeting – October 2024 - Board Motion

Background

Following the general meeting in July 2024 both the membership and board of Hoci Cymru agreed that further information was required for members to make an informed decision, and therefore an EGM should be called to review the proposed membership price increase and overall risk to the future of the sport.

Between April 2023 and March 2025, Hoci Cymru is facing a significant reduction in central funding from Sport Wales, amounting to nearly £120,000. Furthermore, an additional reduction of £200,000 is planned for the 2025/26 season.

This £200k reduction represents a 61% reduction in development and participation funding and a 12% reduction in performance funding.

Sport Wales has reallocated these funds to support other sports deemed to have greater latent demand than hockey. This reduction in grant funding is specifically targeted at the development and participation aspects of our sport, directly impacting the resources available to support clubs, schools, and wider community groups.

In addition to this funding cut Hoci Cymru has also had to manage the inflation, energy, and cost of living increase that face all of us, making budget management extremely challenging as we tried to maintain levels of engagement and delivery.

Proposed Objectives

To address the funding gap, Hoci Cymru is proposing the implementation of five main objectives:

1. **Reduce Operating Budgets and Resources:** Align operating budgets and resources with the new grant allocation. In 2024 this relates to £70k.
2. **Diversify Income-Generating Opportunities:** Continuously identify and explore new avenues for generating income.
3. **Adjust Membership Fees:** Reduce the subsidy on membership fees, leading to an increase in fees as outlined below.
4. **Challenge the UK Sport & GB Hockey Funding Model:** Advocate for equitable funding, as Wales currently receives no support.

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5. **Develop Shared Services:** Collaborate with other National Governing Bodies to develop shared services and collaborative income-generating opportunities.

All these proposed changes have been taken into account when compiling the 3-year budget presented within appendix 2.

As part of the shared services work, Sport Wales commissioned BDO (<https://www.bdo.co.uk/en-gb/home>) to review the financial position of 18 National Governing Bodies of Sport in Wales (NGBs) and bench marking their findings. The scope was to conduct a review of the financial information of participating NGBs with the specific focus on purchasing activities and spend analysis. Throughout the review, BDO endeavoured to keep in line with the initial aims of the project, to identify cost savings and efficiencies within the NGB group. Focus was placed on the FY23/24 financial information provided as this was the most complete and accurate. Cost and vendor information was compared across the group of sports.

The information can be found in Appendix 1. Key points from the review

- Hoci Cymru is heavily reliant on Sport Wales Grant
- Hoci Cymru have protected membership fees with only 10% of income coming from members, matching the average for sports.
- Our direct Costs are average for NGB's.
- Employment salaries are below average for the sector.
- Motor and travel cost are high due to the nature of team sport and overseas competitions. These fees are covered by player contributions.

Hardship Fund

Recognising the potential financial strain on our members, Hoci Cymru is committed to collaborating with stakeholders to establish a hardship fund. This fund will aid club members who face genuine financial difficulties in affiliating to the new fee structure. This fund is built into the figures in Appendix 2.

Proposed Motion

Considering the current economic situation, rising costs, and the additional £200,000 reduction in funding anticipated in 2025, Hoci Cymru proposes the following motion:

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Motion: To raise all membership fees at the start of the 2025/26 season to accommodate the reduction in grant funding from Sport Wales. This price increase will apply across all membership categories. The new membership prices are detailed in the table below.

Table 1: Fee Increase

Proposals (Membership Categories)	24 / 25 Fee	Proposed Increase	25/26 Fee
Coaches/Umpires	15	5	20
Initiatives	5	15	20
Hoci Family	0	10	10
Age 13 and Under	18	7	25
14 and over	18	17	35
Adult	39	20	59
Uni Player	33	17	50
Clubs (Members)			
All Clubs	50	25	75
Adult Teams	21	49	70
Youth Teams	0	0	0
Uni Teams	21	39	60

Hoci Cymru has listened to member feedback and made the following changes to the membership fee from the original proposal in July:

- Removed the tiered club fees. One set club fee for all.
- Reduced the proposed increase for team fees.
- Reduced the proposed increase for university player fees.
- Minimum Fee increase is £5 and maximum increase for some members is £24 per year. approx. £3 per month or less than 1 Costa coffee per month.

Hoci Cymru fully appreciates the pressure that this will add to families with multiple memberships, so in addition to the hardship fund, Hoci Cymru commits to providing a payment option that will enable families to spread the cost of multiple memberships.

Implementation: If approved, this motion will take effect in August 2025, with any subsequent changes kept in line with articles and bye laws and a full review carried out in 3 years.

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3 Year budget proposals

As requested by members Hoci Cymru, has provided detailed 3-year P&L Budgets. These can be found in the following appendices.

- Appendix 2 - Budget with membership fees increased.
- Appendix 3 – Budget with no membership fee increase

Key assumptions to accompany Appendix 2 – Membership Fee Increase.

- Sport Wales Grant reduced by £200k
- Sport Wales future income not guaranteed – highlighted by boxed items.
- Hoci Cymru operating costs reduced across departments.
- Non-Grant Income increased.
- Membership Fees increased.
- Both the charity and commercial income lines still pose a substantial risk to overall income and are far from guaranteed – highlighted by the boxed items.
- New Hardship fund included within costs by making use of reserves.

Key assumptions to accompany Appendix 3 - No Fee Increase

- Sport Wales Grant reduced by £200k.
- Sport Wales future income not guaranteed.
- Membership fees remain at same rate.
- Staff reduced by 50% - reduction in club support, school engagements, reduced club governance and advocacy.
- No club or school competitions.
- No holiday activity.
- Organisational governance costs remain due to Sport Wales Capability Criteria.
- No payment for club entry fees to European competitions.
- No payment in advance facility for Masters competitions
- No charity offset due to lack of staff.
- Limited commercial income due to lack of staff.
- Performance ring fenced by grant criteria and athlete contributions.

The significant reduction in hockey activity will be the beginning of the downward spiral for the sport. As young people choose to play other sports overall engagement declines and

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therefore negatively affecting membership numbers, placing further risk on the sports ability to be awarded Sport Wales funding.

Impact to the Sport and the membership

Should members decide not to pass this motion then it leaves Hoci Cymru with some very tough decisions and truly little option other than the following:

- **Reduction in staff** - With only ten staff at the organisation. This will have serious impact on the support for clubs and the development of the sport across Wales which in turn will inevitably lead to further funding cuts.
- **Development and Promotion** – The implementation of various programmes and initiatives to increase participation, develop talent, and foster a lifelong passion for our sport, will be significantly reduced.
- **Grassroots Competitions** - Currently Hoci Cymru delivers twenty-seven competitions for schools and clubs. The number and level of competition will be drastically reduced or even removed from 2025 and beyond.
- **Governance and welfare of the sport** – Key governance matters such as safeguarding, finance, rules and regulations and stakeholder engagement could be significantly affected and consequently risk jeopardising all future Sport Wales funding.

The reduction in staffing and the organisation's ability to deliver key programmes and engagement will no doubt place extra pressure on clubs to increase the delivery activity to attract young people to the sport.

Appendix 4 highlights the impact to the sport and members in more detail.

Hoci Cymru appreciates the understanding and support of our members during this challenging period. We are committed to ensuring the continued growth and development of hockey in Wales, and your support is crucial in achieving this goal.