

## **VICSPORT – COVID-19 Webinar Series**

Transcript of the webinar conducted on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### **Working Together to Support Clubs**

OK. Good morning, everyone, and welcome to our second COVID-19 webinar Working Together to Support Clubs.

My name is Tom. I'm the participation strategy manager at Vicsport.

We'll take things slow for a moment to let everyone to ease in and join the webinar.

Welcome. Now, firstly I'd like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which we all meet today and pay my respects to elders past and present. Just in terms of brief housekeeping for this webinar, we should be displaying slides for the whole time, so you should be able to see slides and then just a small box with whoever speaking as we work through.

You'll have a chat function and also a Q&A function. So in terms of questions for the Q&A later on, if you can put questions into the Q&A box, we can have a look at those later on. We may not get to them all, but we'll try to answer as many as we can and any that we don't, we can try and get back to you by email following the webinar. And there's also a chat function, so if you want to ask us a question, don't put it in the chat. Put it in the Q&A, but you're welcome to use the chat for any other comments or discussion within the group.

All right, let me click through.

So just about Vicsport, Vicsport is the peak body for sport in Victoria.

We represent and advocate on behalf of an estimated 3.25 million participants in sport and recreation, approximately 580,000 volunteers, 100 sport associations, and an estimated 16,000 clubs providing one voice to governments and industry. Vicsport develops programs and policies and we work with our state sport associations and regional sports assembly, local governments, peak sport organisation members to deliver participation opportunities for all Victorians to better health, wellbeing and enjoyment. And we work very closely with our government partners, Sport and Recreation Victoria and state governments and, of course, VicHealth.

So the agenda for today, this webinar is all about working with clubs.

So we're going to look at what clubs are telling us, how we can help clubs to rebuild stronger and more inclusive, and look at some of the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 environments on community sport. We've got a range of speakers with excellent and diverse experience across the sport sector, including Karen Pearce from Football Victoria, Melanie Pratt from Cardinia Shire Council, Michael King from Leisure Networks and Sharin Milner from the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation. Now, one thing I want to mention is you might have seen that there were some national principles for returning to sport released last week by the federal government. So just in case there are any questions people are planning on asking about those principles today, they're not necessarily in effect in Victoria yet. They might require some editing into a Victorian context, and with the current state of emergency lasting until the 11th of May, we'd expect an announcement potentially around that date, around what that return to sport looks like in Victoria. So we don't have any more answers today beyond what you would have seen out there in the media and from the Australian Institute of Sport, but that's something that we're definitely working towards over the next week, in looking at how that's going to look. Vicsport is also developing a checklist for sport and clubs to work through upon the return to sport. Just to help people to consider all of the different things the club might need to look at when getting back into sports participation. I'm going to run through now quickly, what some of those considerations are, but not in an exhaustful way, we'll certainly have the checklist ready, quite soon for people to flick through and use as desired.

So what some of the considerations are, and look there are a lot, and as I mentioned in the previous slide, there's an estimated 16,000 clubs in Victoria.

They're not a homogenous group. They're all different. They all have their different needs and challenges, and the way they need to be supported is always going to vary. But to cover off as briefly as I can on the range of considerations facing sport clubs during this time, from a strategic planning perspective it could be a good chance to do a general strategic review looking at things like mission and purpose and what your club aims to achieve in a strategic sense. It could be looking at any potential season changes or return dates and making sure you've got a strategic plan and approach to getting back into sport. Looking at member attraction and retention and whether there need to be any changes to membership models or flexible payment options that can try and encourage people back and also keep them following this time. And finally, with sponsorship

potentially looking at any risks around sponsors not coming back and having a strong strategic approach to maintaining those relationships into the future. From a financial planning perspective, looking at budget planning, considering cash flow forecasts and applying for the various funding and grants such as jobkeeper that are on offer to support sport organisations. From a compliance perspective, there could be considerations around running AGMS and making sure that the required rules are followed, especially if they're done remotely. Looking at things like responsible service of alcohol and liquor license thing and whether there needs to be any updating certificates or anything in that space. Similarly with child safe standards and working with children checks, could be a good time to review compliance with the various Victorian laws relating to child safeguarding and considering the return to sport and how the club is going to comply with whatever the requirements are. From a stakeholder perspective really about relationships, so members, volunteers, relevant peak state body or local regional sports assembly, local councils, funders, sponsors, maintaining relationships with these groups and building relationships where we can for the betterment of the club.

From a health and safety perspective, we don't know what this looks like, but there could be a lot of new things to consider when sport is back, but when the COVID-19 threat is still very much real, that could include just planning for how social distancing measures can be put in place in the club, what happens if there is a local outbreak that requires some changes, what other risk things might need to be put in place to protect people's safety during that time, and also looking at mental health and how we can support people within the club during what's a tough time for a lot of people? Risk management. So making sure you've got the appropriate insurance in place. Working with state and national bodies on that, if any changes need to be made in the future. Reviewing risk plans and risk registers. Putting a plan around business continuity, if that's been a challenge for clubs. From a human resource perspective, if where there is paid staff members, considering what that return to work phase looks like and how we can reengage volunteers. From a facility perspective, looking at the availability of facilities and I guess with COVID-19 potentially creating some changes to seasons and a potential issue around the change from winter to summer sport, just making sure there's a clear plan in place, an understanding around that. Working with other sports, working with local council and potentially it's time to start some facility funding planning because those processes can take a few years, sometimes at the best of times. And finally, there's the consideration around innovation and doing sport differently. Looking at how we can potentially attract new people down to sport club, continuing to develop welcoming and inclusive cultures as much as possible and looking at the use of modified formats.

Also, I just wanted to touch on a few statistics. So you might have seen that Sport Australia last week released some new data as part of their Ausplay survey.

And there was one particular graphic they've put out which has some trends from 2001 to 2019. It's not a huge surprise, but I just thought it was interesting to reflect on what some of the data were showing. So participation in sport-related activities only has decreased from 32 per cent in 2001 to 19 per cent in the current time last year.

Whereas participation in both sports and non sport related activities has gone up from 25 per cent to 40 per cent. And on top of that figure is people who just participate in non sportin, so more recreational things. So I think to me that just emphasises again how important it is to clubs to consider that what they're offering is very much complementary to a lifestyle that is going to include active recreation and things like walking or going to the gym or doing yoga or even swimming, those activities that are really, really popular in Australia. How clubs can not so much try to wrestle people away from those activities, they'd be something that people can do both during a given week is a really important consideration moving forward. And there was some stats coming out from GEMBA last week suggesting that 44 per cent of people have been less active during COVID-19. So I think the impact on participation definitely hasn't been great. Now, some ongoing questions. These are not questions I'm expecting our panelists to necessarily answer right now, just questions that I think all of us are looking at that everyone tuning in today hopefully can continue to consider within your sports and different contexts. How can we retain the existing members that we already had in sport? How might we attract new participants? How can we be more welcoming and inclusive of our local community? How can we better support and celebrate volunteers, that's always more a question for people at peak bodies, but certainly within clubs as well? How can we promote health equity and social cohesion through clubs and how involvement in the sport club complement other fitness activities? So there is a lot for all of us to consider on an ongoing basis. I don't think we need to have all the answers right away because I've been saying during this time I think we needed innovation before. We certainly need it now and we're going to need an new approach to the community sport for many years after this time. Okay, I'm going to throw to the first panelist now. It certainly is weird again talking to over 400 people without being able to see anybody. and I'm sure our panelists are going to do an excellent job this morning. So our first speaker is from Football Victoria, Karen Pearce, who's the executive manager of Growth and Inclusion and was also the 2018 Victorian Sports Administrator of the Year. Many of you know Karen for her long stints at Basketball Victoria as well, running participation and inclusion programs. And before we jump into speakers, what we're asking from each one is just a five minute

update around what they're hearing, what the challenges are from their perspective and sort of, I guess, their comments on how we continue to work together to support clubs. So, Karen, if you're there, we'll unmute your mike and video and throw to you for your five minute update.

Thanks, Tom. I'd also like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and pay my respects to those past, present and emerging. Hello to a huge range of people that I have seen that are on here at the moment that I do know.

Hello to you. And thank you and welcome to those that I haven't met yet, and lovely to e-meet you. So from Football Victoria perspective, how did we keep our clubs engaged through this time? We enacted a work from home precautionary measure back on the 23rd of March for Football Victoria, helped set people up at home with work spaces and we're hoping that it would still be a bit of business as usual. But as we know, with COVID it hit pretty quickly and things were moving quite rapidly in the sporting space. So unfortunately, we had to make the decision on the first of April to stand down about half of our staff and retain a core skeleton staff of people to try to keep the business moving. Part of that skeleton staff was our club ambassadors who work right across the Victorian landscape with football with our 355 clubs. So the main perspective on their behalf was to keep that connection going with our clubs. We knew that our clubs were looking for guidance. They wanted reassurance. They wanted reliable advice. And we had our club ambassadors begin straight away on that 23rd of March to start making contact with our clubs, and we documented all of that evidence, and by the 31st of March, so prior to the skeleton staff stand down, they had reached about 71 per cent about our clubs and we were getting some really good information. A lot of that was direct phone call. Some of the clubs had closed the doors, others were remaining open and trying to see what they could do in the hope that football would come back a lot quicker. So we kept the contact up with them. We listened to what they were saying. We produced factsheets, surveys that went out. The competitions team that were left with three people working were constantly looking and still are on scenario planning to help the clubs, finding out what they needed, how does a season start? When does it start? What does it begin to look like? What can we get it through? And obviously, it probably won't look much like what it should have been. We were on track at that time to have a record number of teams in football this year. So there is an impact across the whole landscape. We had guidelines, we did social media, there were online football skills and drills that the kids could do., and we were communicating from local to state and up as far as federal government.

So we kept our clubs informed of all of that and continue to do so with them. So some of the challenges, we know that generally most of our clubs were valuing the health and safety of their people first and foremost.

But on top of that was what is football going to look like? It has been devastating to many of them. The Gippsland clubs, not just football, but everybody up there with that double whammy of the bushfires from late last year, and how do they actually resurrect themselves coming back into sport? The big question, of course, is when is football back? And we can't give them that answer, we are all reliant on government to tell us that. So that is all part of the scenario planning that we're undertaking to put a date on here we are. They're also asking for a bit of leeway. You know, a lot of kids not training, obviously, unless they're doing some kick to kick in the backyard, but they need at least a three, maybe four week window to get their teams back and to get some level of fitness up so that they can resume football competition. Refunds are a major challenge and fee reduction, what does that look like? And unfortunately, we haven't been able to specify what refunds look like at the moment, cause we're still working through that. They're fearful of their lack of volunteers, even not just those around the club, but from a committee perspective, particularly those clubs that did lock the doors and the impact financially on families, volunteers that have walked away, are they going to come back? Does that community hub still look like it used to? Facility access for us as a winter sport. What does that look like beyond the time that we usually have as some of our clubs have access pretty much sometimes all through the year and sometimes into the summer season, but most of them stop September, October. So we're working through that with the Sport and Recreation Work Group that they've got. That includes the councils, the winter sports, Vicsport and obviously ourselves. Sponsors. Tom, you mentioned that before. Some of them have moved away, particularly those small businesses that have been impacted, there's not that spare dollar anymore. So how do they retain that? The extra hit on the clubs were how they use sponsorship money, for example, to purchase kits and some of those kits are in, I saw one that was in the hundreds of thousands of dollars but we can talk about, tens of thousands of dollars. So if that money has gone, how do they actually pay for that now if sponsors don't come back. The player commitment is a huge challenge. Those that committed at the start of the season with family impact on COVID, will they come back this season? Will they wait for next season? Will they not come back at all? These are questions we don't know. And that financial viability that they once had with social restrictions, even when sport comes back where they're actually not getting a gate taking or limited canteen takings and social membership because of social restrictions, what they might look like. So they will have an absolute financial hit there. However, there are opportunities and we know that there is a light at

the end of the tunnel, we're seeing it apart from the unfortunate news that we heard yesterday of another 22 people in Victoria, impacts us a little bit more down here. But some along the way have been looking at strategic planning. I actually was working with one of our associations yesterday on dates to do some strategy work with them. I've presented my women and girls strategy twice in the last probably three weeks. So people are starting to think about things that they can do. Facilities, we've got a lot of work going on in there still, thank you to all those councils that are out there, so that's been fantastic to be able to keep planning our facilities and our national club development program, which is all around governance, female participation, welfare, volunteers, all of that.

We've got a number of our clubs still regularly, I think it's a star accreditation system and we would have around about two new clubs getting and going up the chain in the NCDP every week.

We've begun work on a Football Victoria resource library, so we've got things that we can help our clubs with when this lifts. And then what does football look like if it's not just coming back wham bam into competition, which in some cases it won't be? How do we actually plan and work with our clubs on social activations and engaging other people that wouldn't necessarily engage in football? I've probably done my five minutes total, so that's football's perspective at the moment. So thank you.

Excellent. Thanks for that, Karen. Sounds like you've been very, very, very busy, and obviously there is certainly a pretty, pretty bad impact on a lot of clubs, but as I said, light at the end of the tunnel and plenty of work to do to help the clubs to get back into playing some football this year.

Yes.

Let me click on to next we have Mel Pratt from the Cardinia Shire Council. Many of you probably know Mel as well.

She's been sport development officer council for many years at Cardinia and also City of Casey, and is very much a guru of local governments sport club developments. So over to you Mel.

Thanks, Tom, and thanks for the introduction. I think talking me up a little bit too much that I hope I don't disappoint the audience. Thank you for having me on board.

I just wanted to pre-cursor this, that obviously there's 79 Victorian local governments and Cardinia is one in the south east corridor and obviously with varying populations across local governments. I'm going to focus a little bit today on some of the words around local government. and also wanted to mention that most local governments, or there are quite a number of local governments getting together weekly through Zoom chat. Some rec people are hosting a weekly Zoom chat where we're actually collaborating a little bit more and getting examples from each other, and what challenges each of us are facing. So I'm actually going to not just leverage off what Cardinia are doing at the moment, but what some of the other councils are also doing. So obviously when COVID hit, the main, I guess, response from local government in the first instance was around the traditional side of what local government do, and that was around our facilities. So ensuring that facilities were safe, sending out the communication to our sporting clubs and what that actually looks like and restrictions, so following the guidelines obviously of the federal government restrictions and as they continue to change about, you know, whether they could participate in small groups or larger groups and access to pavilions. So the initial correspondence with clubs from the majority of councils was about facilities and how that would be impacted. From then I guess a lot of councils looked at similarly to what Karen has mentioned, but putting it out to all our sporting clubs around how they actually are. What's the wellness factor? What are some of the challenges initially that they're facing? So councils were quite concerned about whole of community perspective and where in it, I guess, the hierarchy of needs sport fit into that. So obviously, as most people are aware, council are made up of a whole lot of different work groups and some targeting different cohorts across communities. So the initial response was around what is our wellness, where our factors, you know, are people receiving meals, where's the vulnerability and community, and that extended to sporting clubs. Obviously, we know sporting clubs are hubs for social communication, connection, engagement, participation. So initial wellness ratings in different ways.

Actually some councils sent out a survey, others have done it through phone calls and starting to call sporting clubs as well. So initially, also the feedback and the concern from most sporting clubs is similar to what Karen said, it was around financial vulnerability. How are we going to pay our face? How are we going to pay council for facility usage? And will our volunteers return and will our members return. In response to that, a number of councils are quite quick to react and looked at their fees and charges for grounds and maintenance and to the clubs and what they actually charge. At Cardinia we don't charge a whole lot to our sporting clubs and some of our sporting clubs don't actually pay either. We have a little bit of a different model as a section 86 model. So that challenge also means at Cardinia that we don't have contact initially with all our sporting clubs because



we don't allocate all our facilities, so that threw in a little bit of a spanner of how to actually look at the wellness factors of our sporting clubs. So as I mentioned, financial vulnerability. So the initial response is around support packages to clubs. That's been included in a number of councils in a whole of council support package, whether it fits in a business element or a sporting club element. So most councils will have responded through a budgeting process to look at that. Darebin was one of the first councils to actually put that into practice and come up with a figure as well. The next stage was a little bit around still the wellness, but digging a little bit deeper into the clubs and putting out a bit of a checklist. And I know, Tom, you mentioned Vicsport will also be working on this, which will be handy. One of the resources that has been put out is Manningham Council actually did a really positive document that they sent out to clubs. Now, it was aiming a little bit of a checklist like, have you turned off your fridges, have you considered responses, what are some of the positive things you can do, make sure you're checking in with your members, so real basic level working through that process as well. Now, many have shared that with a number of other councils, so I'm sure they'll be happy to continually share that with other local governments as well. It was highlighted that the document wasn't an essential you have to do this, it was just highlighted around what are some of the steps you can take for your club. Now, that did include some positive actions, because we know some clubs will have that time to develop strategically, look at their policies and processes with lots of links and, you know, shout out to Mike who I know is next up, but lots of links to club help in Play by the Rules and and those things that are available to clubs as well. Like I said initially, it's financial vulnerability and now it's moving into a little bit about strategic development and the proactive side of things. Again, we're very conscious of our wellness of our clubs and what the feelings may be around anxiety, getting back to play, you know, it's not just switching on a button and everything returns to normal. So that will be an ongoing relationship. One of our cricket leagues have, you know, obviously cricket season ended a little bit abruptly, so a lot of the cricket clubs were quite disappointed. And in that fact, the association was already planning strategic development, but they've stopped, paused and have actually done on welfare calls to all their clubs just to see where the pinch points are : do they think they can have a digital AGM. if not, you know how to support them through that process as well.

So we're actually, you know, six, five, six weeks in moving into the productivity space and looking at some of the doing sport differently, looking at some of the activations, the things that are happening or aren't happening or, you know, I know, Tom, you mentioned that the participation is down, but there's also people out in the streets doing things a little bit differently. So how do we capture that post-COVID and are they the people that

are doing it because it's something to do to get out of the house, to be physically active, or are they people that are a little bit lost without their sporting clubs, so that's really important. Again, there's some really positive cross-council collaborations that have come out of this, not saying council don't collaborate internally, but some of the really great initiatives is Dandenong is actually using their sporting clubs to host active things and how to stay active and posting that through their youth department and through their Facebook pages, so giving the sporting clubs a little bit of exposure, keeping them engaged as well. Frankston Council have actually linked with their economic development department and are creating a bit of a business-sport link as well. So linking up those sporting clubs with businesses both for a little bit of a comradery, but also mentorship in relation to a business might have some skills to offer a sporting club or encouraging them how to look at a marketing plan or a strategic plan as well. Cardinia-specific, we've got a connecting kit in your page and residents are posting things around the things that are happening on Facebook, the Rainbow trails, the Anzac trails and those type of things as well, but we're localising it and bringing it back to Cardinia. Again, Cardinia will leverage of our Monash Health Partnership through our healthy sports clubs and as well as Casey and Dandenong and use that as a platform to support our clubs through different, areas. So, and one one of the final things, I know there's a lot of questions around anxiety and returning to sport and what that may do to local level communities. Cardinia is working with Richmond Football Club and [00:30:44]RISAL [0.0s] in looking at mental health first aid and that was something that we were doing preCOVID, and as soon as it hit, we had to look at what is the appropriate timing and sensitivities of community as well. So using some of the things that people are already doing out there as well is looking at placemaking and where placemaking fits and how to engage communities back into making and helping them look at their communities. And what are the important needs when you sort of look at hierarchy of needs that falls back into the obviously sporting club. So the hubs is hubs of activities. Is it actually doing sport differently in someone's court? So is it proactively taking participation to the people rather than taking them back to a sporting venue as well? So there are, I guess, lots of challenges, as everyone has mentioned. But the other thing that's really important and the biggest challenge that we're obviously facing is, as Karen mentioned, we know a lot of our state bodies have reduced staff or reduced time in staff, and what that actually means in local level delivery and when sport does pick up how council actually supports those local perspectives, knowing the resourcing from a state, different state bodies will be at different level. So the challenges is really around that communication. What the clubs are hearing, who they're getting the information from, as well as ncil and council offices also getting that information. So we're on the same page to deliver the solutions together, so in collaboration. So with the number of staff, I guess from varying state

bodies, it's looking at what the databases exist at the state bodies to who is receiving the information.

So from my perspective, there's lots of research going on, lots of looking at different websites: the Vicsport website, the AIS website or Sport Australia website, different state body websites as well. So in saying that my final takeaway is that local government are really aware of the facility challenges that may come up with season changes and the impact that has on participation in regards to winter and summer season changeover and transfer and getting facilities ready, but also around community wellness and wellbeing and what rating and what scale that looks like for sport and participation and how participation supports mental wellbeing as well. Communicating, so what are the messages coming across, as I just mentioned? What are some of the changes and challenges and how we get through that and also be proactive in thinking differently? So, you know, for want of a better term, is doing that pivot and having those switches that also enable us to look at the whole of community with a whole lot of lenses as well around inclusion, participation and not just doing things because that's how it's always been done. So taking an opportunity and being proactive in that space and allowing that to also occur and getting back to grassroots and talking to our community about what they want and need, so rather than we think this is a great idea.

So again, it's the increase of partnerships collaboration, and that's wholly important. And I'm sure everyone, both on the panel and all the people that are engaged today will agree. So they're just a few things. We know that there'll be a proactive phase. Each club will be at a different level. But it's how we make that personalised in some sense and utilise some of the resources, the workshops, the engagement tools that are happening as well. So that's in a nutshell, all the challenges that we're looking at, but also the the exciting space of being able to plan differently. I know you said it Tom, it is taking this innovation and challenge and doing sport differently. So that's where we all fit in that space as well. And again, the collaboration out of everything is probably the key highlight the fact that there is a number number of local governments actually coming together in and weekly talking about challenges and finding solutions and actions together has been a really, really positive thing across the industry.

Awesomeness! Thanks for that Mel, that's an excellent summary of all the considerations from a local government perspective. I think you're definitely right that communication and collaboration are just extremely important at this time and when it comes to when we're with clubs just speaking to them directly and understanding where they're at and what they're hoping to achieve.

The innovation stuff's interesting. I think that a lot of the stuff that's happening, it's at home in terms of virtual work apps and activities that different sports and councils are putting out is really coming back to the idea of just people having fun and almost just replicating games you play as a kid in primary school. How can we bring some of that fun into the sporting environment in the future to make things more accessible and inclusive is a good question. But we also know for a lot of clubs, you know, that might sound cool to us, but they want to get back to playing the sport they know, and perhaps that wellness piece really is the number one consideration for all of us, and just trying to support people through this, especially as we learn more about the economic impacts of COVID-19.

Our next speaker is Michael King, the manager of business development at Leisure Networks. Michael has recently put on a few webinars for small clubs and Vicsport was happy to assist with delivering some content.

He's had a lot of insights from engagement with clubs over the past few weeks and so Michael's going to bring their perspective of leisure networks and from regional sport assemblies simply as well. Over to Michael.

Oh, thank you very much, Tom. Thank you, everyone, for jumping on today.

And it's a hard act to follow after Karen and Mel there. I'll try and provide a little bit on top of that the clubs and council and sport might be able to pick up. But if I'm duplicating information, I'll get Tom to give me a little tap through the screen, so that'll be good. So just firstly, leisure networks. So we're a regional sports assembly based in Geelong, but we also service Metro Melbourne. A big part of our service is the NDIS, which is disability. And the other side is our club support through networks, so working with sport, working with local government, working with grassroots as well. So I quickly just want to acknowledge we know that sport, national and state sports are really hurting at the moment, staff wise, resource wise, and delivery wise, and I just want to really give a shout out to local government, the peak bodies and regional sports assemblies to really picking up the weight to really support our sports. I know regionally a lot of our staff that we work with locally are down to minimum hours [00:38:19] a day and [0.4s] all the rest of it, and they've really relied on regional sports to step up and support their clubs through a tough time while they really focus on just holding their jobs. So really credit to everyone out there that's pulling together. I just want to really give a recap. I've recently delivered a number of Metro Melbourne forums to really just provide support as quick as we could. We got these off the ground in a week pulling together some legal support and financial

support and obviously peak body support. These are actually going to be rolled out through the RSV network over the next few weeks as well. That were quite a success. So I've just got some findings from those forums that I'd like to share with [00:39:02] what government sport, [0.6s] but before I do that, I just want to quote a colleague of mine that I was chatting with yesterday. We were talking about what is COVID-19 done to the to the really strong clubs and the clubs that really are struggling. And we almost thought like a really successful business to us, business that's really trying to stay afloat, that the gap potentially could widen, strong clubs could get stronger, other weaker clubs could actually find resource-wise and strategy-wise could really go the other way. So just a quote from Fi Bennett. She may be listening or she might be on a horse at the moment, but the current situation will probably expose clubs who struggle and really shine on stronger clubs.

We all want to be competitive. This is an opportunity to instil some initiatives that will equalise the competition you're in. So a really good opportunity for us to come together and really support those clubs that need the help and obviously the leverage from clubs that are doing really well. So I'll just start off with that - next slide thanks Tom.

Just some key things from the forums and we're actually going to, we've got a list of the clubs, sports that actually attended our forums and we're going to circulate these to the state bodies and to local government to pretty much say in your local government you had 35 clubs that attended these forums. There was 8 from tennis, 6 from basketball, blah, blah, blah. And I think that gives you a true reflection and a true identification of the engagement within your local government and obviously from the sport as well for sport to actually look at those numbers and say, okay, these clubs have actually reached out for some help and can provide that moving forward. So just some key themes: managing finance with focus on sponsorship, it's been covered already today, so I won't go into that. But sponsorship, when you talk about workshop series, sponsorships haven't really been looked at in the last few years, but it feels like sponsorship may be the number one topic moving forward. How do we retain, how do we look after them and how do we diversify within that. Member engagement. I've just put [00:41:11] me [0.0s] around is the chance to recruit and it's really harsh, but clubs that are doing things really well and engaging members really, really well, it potentially is an opportunity to recruit members, recruit committee members, recruit president and recruit players. And it really sounds harsh, but it goes back to my point of there may be a bigger divide between stronger clubs and clubs that have less volunteers, less members, less resources. So we need to really, as a sector, think about how we to band together to ensure clubs do not fold and stronger clubs do not get stronger. So it's a hard one to think about, but I'm just rolling a

carrot out for us to really consider moving forward. Contracts and legalities - clubs, I believe and we had a legal firm talk about this, clubs have full control - or not full control, control of their destiny. So we're talking about player contracts, your bar contracts, your catering contracts, those sort of things. Clubs actually have control within the COVID-19, there's a clause because of the pandemic that you can make changes to contracts. And at the end of the day, we're finding we've been advised from our legal firms that clubs can make decisions that are in the best interests of themselves and not the individual consumer. Membership categories.

Both Karen and Mel touched on that. We're focused on playing at the moment.

Is there an opportunity - we talked about [00:42:39] adding a prize, about adding a jumper, [1.1s] adding an online forum, an online membership. At the moment, people are paying for memberships to play. Is it a chance for us, the sector, to come together and think of, or sport, to think of what else can we offer moving forward. Playing is not an option. What are things that people may want that may not include playing. You know, access to an online training package that the club purchases, that athletes can get access to. Social media. We all know that clubs are doing it really well. We're well and truly seeing them at leisure networks. We followed a lot of clubs and we know the clubs that are really, really engaging to their clubs well. We talk about volunteering. Some clubs that are doing it well are just echoing volunteers after volunteers and thanking them through social media. It is a chance right now where we have time to have daily posts about different things that you don't normally get to do during the season. And the last thing is in diversifying income. So a lot of clubs that really focus their income on specific phases at the moment when it's sponsorship, events and membership, are hurting big time. Is there an opportunity for us now as a sport and as a local government collective to really invest in our clubs to look at diversifying incomes into different ways that if, moving forward, we have pandemics and it impacts membership or in fact, impacts functions, impacts sponsorship, then they still be an income source for the club moving forward.

Challenges and opportunities. This is my last slide, so challenges continue engaging with no clear line in sight. Karen talked about that. When are we playing?

All right. Hard to keep engaging people when there is no light at the end of the tunnel. So not having a membership strategy for unforeseen circumstances. We've got a lot of clubs telling us through the forums that they receive their membership. They went and paid for all their guernseys and all their outfits and all their equipment. And now families are asking for money back. They've got no money left. They've got nothing to put back. So

what do they do? So that's really a chance, when we're talking strategic planning, I believe membership categories and sponsorships should be two pillars the clubs are looking at moving forward of our innovation and how do we plan for future potential mitigation and risk management. Coaches, committee members - how are they using their time. What I'm seeing at the moment is committees are still as engaged and busy as ever. But I am seeing a lot of coaches, particularly, moving into other spaces. I'm going to work more. I'm looking after my kids. I'm using that time in different spaces. I'm not seeing coaches maximising engagement with players. And we're not hearing that they're having regular Zoom meetings half an hour on a Wednesday night. This is the session plan. I'll see you next Wednesday. Not seeing a lot of that. I'm not hearing a lot of that from the club forums that we're doing. And we do know the number one key focus of any club in engagement that the people that people want to hear from is not the parents. They want to hear from the coach. They want the coach of the person that mentors them and gives them that information, providing consistent support to members.

How do you prioritise families that are doing it hard and families that are doing it harder and even harder again?

How do we prioritise how that looks as a club? Where volunteers, clubs that they volunteer people, and how are they being able to prioritise? What's the most important thing for families at the moment? Just some quick opportunities. A great time to be writing new strategic plans, which is already being talked about and potentially maybe not a strategic plan, maybe a short term 12 month action plan about what can be done here and now. The shutdown has surfaced clear gaps and needs within clubs. What we're hearing and seeing at a national level is we've looked at, rugby league and Rugby Australia have both lost their CEOs. The pandemic has really opened up Pandora's box to the real issues within some sports, and it's doing it at clubland. So let's look at those areas and let's prioritise them. Membership, sponsorship, that sort of stuff. Chance to rework committee roles, responsibilities. Committees are tired. They are exhausted. What a great opportunity to bring some new innovation to look at bringing in some new membership. We're talking members are tired. What I do find is sometimes a good chance to move out the old wood because the new opportunity has been waiting for that to happen. How does that look? Are two hour meetings needed any more face to face - how good is technology, let's start using it in the comfort of your own home. It's winter. It's cold. Let's talk from home.

Less travel. More innovation supports mums that are looking after kids at home as well at times. [00:47:15]xxxxxxxxxxxx [0.0s] club commit and those that are loyal. Great

opportunity to take the finance out of paying for things and actually seeing who's loyal and who's committed to our club. And it's a great opportunity to engage or reengage with local regional sports assemblies that are there, that are funded and that have staff that are there to support you while the sports are less active, you know, a less [00:47:37] EFT [0.0s] time. So they're probably the biggest things for me. And that is across both metro and regional communities. The difference probably with regional is you've got sports hubs where there's multiple sports based out of the same facility that are all feeding from different information from their sport body. Whereas at metro clubs, bigger clubs are potentially just a football club or just a netball club. So they are really focused on the individual sport and what their needs are at the moment. So they're just some insights. And I hope that I've helped a little bit.

Thanks, Michael. That's an excellent summary of all the recent work that Leisure Networks have done and you obviously had a great response to those webinars and now you've got a lot more plans in the pipeline.

So keep up the great work. Let me get back on to my slides to click through. Our fourth speaker is Sharin Milner, the senior preventions partnership advisor at the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, who run the Love the Game initiative, something Sharin will touch on is we had a meeting last year of different organisations that try to do health promotion work and support with clubs, including like a Good Sports, VicHealth, Valley Sport from Shepparton, Vicsport, [00:48:55] sponsored Going [0.3s] Foundation, and Sharin made an excellent point that even where we simplify these various things that we're trying to help clubs to do, even when we make it easy for them, there was so many things that we keep throwing at them to consider. So many goals we try and work with clubs to achieve. And no matter how much we simplify, it can still be tough on the volunteers. And it's probably even going to be harder in this environment so anyway without further ado, over to you Sharin.

Thanks for that, Tom. You steal a little bit of my thunder there. Thanks to you and the Vicsport team and hi everyone.

[00:49:32] Before I start, I'd also like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land that I'm on and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. So as Tom mentioned, I'm from Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, we're a statutory body of the Victorian state government, and I'm we're about trying to prevent and reduce harm from gambling. So our key initiative that you see there is the Love of the Game program and we've got over 400 clubs on board who all refuse to take sports betting revenue. And



that includes all 10 AFL clubs in Victoria and several state sporting bodies who I believe are on the line today. And it's been a really interesting time for gambling over COVID-19. In many ways, it's almost the perfect storm for harm, given some of the biggest drivers around why people gamble are financial pressures, isolation, loneliness, boredom, escapism. And that's why it's so strongly connected to mental health. And the research will lag, of course, behind what we know is happening in real time, but some of the signals we're seeing so far that I wanted to share, so we've had closure of pokies venues, casinos, TABs obviously, and very little sport to bet on. So we've seen a bit of a surge in the number of online betting accounts that have been opened. Horse race betting seems to have increased, we've seen a rise in the amount of novelty betting promotions. So you've probably seen these, but betting on the weather, Mastechef, the colour of

Scomo's tie, and even [00:50:59] COVID [0.0s] fatalities, we've seen social betting circles move virtually online, which I think is relevant for a lot of sporting clubs, where they seem to connect, and also we're watching the online casino space closely as we are with the sports, which I'm sure a lot of you guys are and seen increases in that space around the virtual sport offerings such as NBA 2K and Formula One. But for the next couple of minutes, I just want to very briefly talk about what Tom mentioned there, and I refer to that as the health sport sector. So the organisations or programs that are trying to use sport as a setting or vehicle for health and social change, and there's no denying that that's arrived, as Tom mentioned you guys would know you're being hit with offer after offer to participate in these things and as are the clubs. And most of these are prevention programs. So we're usually trying to stop an issue before it happens or reduce the risk or minimise the harm, and it's a really hard sell for clubs. And I think what we're seeing play out at the moment is a really beautiful example of prevention in action. So what I've noticed recently is a bit of narrative that we feel like we're being punished by lockdown, and I'm not saying that's not a valid view, but when I hear that backed with things like the hospitals are empty, it does rattle my kind of health promotion nerd brain, because I just think what kind of upside down reality are we in where we think empty hospitals are a cause of complaint. But I get it. Empty means invisible. And that's what prevention in action looks like. And that's why our initiatives can be a hard sell. And I acknowledge that we do tend to, I guess, want to act when we can see or experience harm from an issue. So, Tom, I might just get you to pop the next slide up. And look, I'm not going to labour on these things because they're things everyone out there knows already, but it is so critical for our sector to really make sure these our truths we live by. We call it affective context, so essentially, if what we're offering isn't meeting or bumping into something in that column with a tick in it, we're unlikely to get buy in from clubs and on the flip, if it threatens something on the right hand side with a cross, we can almost forget about it.

And without wanting to insult our sport sector colleagues on the line, I'll only saying it's my view, but I think we do over promise a little bit. So a lot of our brochures will say the benefits are enhance your club's reputation, increase your membership, you'll get more support, more sponsors. And so, you know, poor our mate goes and does help program and patiently waits and none of these things happen. But what I have consistently noticed, where clubs do seem to shift and they shift really well, and I think is relevant for the time we're in, it seems to be around four key triggers. So the first one is there could be a trauma.

So someone at the club has a personal connection to an issue, or there might be, you know, a tragic incident around death or illness of a member that really harnesses a club. There's crisis, so a club desperately needs new members and then they decide to diversify where they would usually recruit from, attract new arrivals from the community and realise the beautiful benefits of cultural diversity. The third one is sometimes there's a health champion that emerges. So some new gungho member decides to take over the canteen, for example, or it's enforced. So, you know, a club might be fined for breaching its liquor license or a state body or council tells their clubs, if you don't field X number of female teens, there'll be a sanction. And from these shifts we see really amazing outcomes and they're the kind of outcomes that a lot of our programs are looking for. But unfortunately, they don't actually have a lot directly correlated with how we design them. So Tom, I'll get you to go to the last slide to pull this all together. When you consider those four triggers, they're generally quite organic around planned events. And I think it tells us, and what's really relevant for what we're in at the moment, is that I find clubs are highly adaptive and highly effective when they force into a space of response. So I guess just to wrap up on some of that sector work that Tom mentioned. So Matt Cameron from VicHealth and I co-hosted that session and there was about nine or 10 organisations in the room, all who were very well aware of that previous slide and the challenges and were all saying, Oh we stripped out programs right back like, you know, three or four things were only asking clubs to do. But then we looked around and look at the hands up who was saying that, and that's nearly 30 or 40 actions that we're asking of a club, and generally one person at that club is taking all that on. So I think as a sector, we're starting to try and find that alignment and come together and understand that we're generally addressing a lot of the same underlying factors. So sometimes it's risk taking normalised behaviours that, you know, sometimes underpinned by various things like gendered stereotypes, attitudes, stigma. But in the prevention space, I think we can burrow right down to quite a simple premise that I think everyone on this line can contribute to that does help our outcomes and that's getting people to participate in sport and giving them that positive experience, so they obviously stay and continue to develop and evolve

those life skills. We know them: teamwork, resilience, respect, goal setting, friendship, structure, decision making, that all actually help protect against a lot of these harms. So I think for me going forward, it's really our challenge is to let go of ego as a sector, like we talk about a lot do we want people to remember 'love the game, not the odds' tagline or gambling harm to reduce. And, you know, philosophically, that's a pretty easy one to answer, but the reality is that sometimes we feel that we need to show a thing and it's very seductive to do so. So I think at the end of the day is a health support sector, and as a broader sector, we're sharing the same challenge, but we're not sharing the solution. So I really think that this time and coming out of this time will force us to a much more coordinated response that I think really helps clubs and communities, therefore, thrive. So I'll leave it there. But thanks again for the opportunity to share that Tom.

Excellent. Thanks, Sharin. I think that little table is really, really useful for anyone that's planning to approach clubs to get them to work on really anything. So, yeah. Thanks for sharing your excellent insights and obviously look forward to continue to work with you and the group in the [00:57:35] **Sport Promotion Health** [0.7s] section at work or whatever we had titled it. Great, so thank you again for everyone's excellent insights. That was fantastic. I definitely learnt a lot myself and got a lot of new things to think about. We're going to throw it open to Q&A now. So what people can do is use the Q&A function in Zoom to throw in some questions. We've got five at the moment, so feel free to throw a few more in and see where we can get to in the next .25 minutes. There was one question around how do we find out who the local regional sports assembly is from Kylie, so you can Google Regional Sport Victoria, which is the peak body and find out. Have a look at that website. If anyone's on the chat from an RSA they might be able to post a link to that website or if you Kylie, can post in the chat where you live, then we can try and work out the exact regional sports assembly for you.

I might go back to the very first question, which is coming back to, I guess, anxiety at clubs and this is really for anyone can have a go at answering this from the panel.

What might be some of the ways that we can support clubs to manage anxiety around COVID-19 and returning to play.

I might jump in. Hi, Andy. Obviously, we've met before being down at Peninsula Health. I guess it is quite common that we're facing across all local government and it really is the conversations. It's really understanding that giving some some resource and advice, but not creating too much expectation. Again, it's going back, know, I know, Andy, you particularly work with a lot of your clubs in the Mornington Peninsula region. But it is

looking at what the sports are doing themselves and what resources are out there. But it's really about the conversations and understanding and creating a bit of a plan and a bit of a pathway of what is looking like it's going to happen with obviously being flexible and agile.

So for me and from my perspective, it's definitely the conversation settings and the reassurance that there is support mechanisms out there through different health avenues, different sport avenues as well.

Excellent, thanks for that, Mel. We've got a question here for Karen from [01:00:12] **Nat Nolan**. [0.2s]

Karen, can you think of any examples of clubs combining, I guess, sort of activations around engaging people socially along with their institutional support offerings to attract more diverse population groups?

Example of clubs that are doing it, or just so we've got a number of associations that a city in regional Victoria and metropolitan clubs are predominantly stand alone.

So I think the absolute thing that we need to think about now is that social activation and [01:00:54] **ways**, [0.0s] how do we actually engage hubs along the way? So hubs of, you know, whether it doesn't have to be competition, but good fun kick arounds on a either football pitch or, you know, whatever environment your sport belongs to, to actually start to reactivate engagement, particularly when we've got kids out there that are also a little bit disengaged from school because of the home schooling that's, you know, putting the other pressures on families and things like that. They're gonna be busting to get out there. We know social restrictions are going to stop it, so how do we actually look at that and engage those other community groups that we haven't engaged before. So when I spoke before about us starting to prepare a Football Victoria resource library, part of that is inclusion training that we will take out to clubs to ensure that they are assisted in bringing in communities that they may not necessarily have. So that will help grow football out there. Did I answer the question. I think I did.

So it was good. Can I throw another one your way? Any ideas or suggestions around increasing participation by women and girls?

How might clubs really jump on that opportunity coming out of COVID-19?

I'm sorry. The dog's about to bark. Benefit of working from home. Sorry.

Yes, so my help women and girls strategy is got a whole base around social activation. So I see football as very competitive focus. And yes, obviously a lot of clubs do engage in [01:02:42] various [0.0s] social activation, but my women and girls strategy is all based around #footballherway, which is enabling a woman or a girl to actually participate in football whichever way she wants. So she doesn't have to be an elite referee unless she wants to be. She can be the little girl that likes to just have a kick around with her friends.

She might be the soccer mum that likes to get down there with a bunch of other mums and just laugh at the way they are engaging in football and enjoying that activation. It's bringing in other community groups as well. It's just supporting any way that that woman or girl wants to engage in football. So, yeah, I think the social space is the biggest space of all, particularly for football. And how do we activate that?

Excellent. Thanks, Karen.

Got a question here that we might be able to throw Michael's way. Any ideas on strategies to engage teenagers? And I guess, you know, how we can motivate them to train at home.

Yeah, it's a really good question, and we know that teenagers pretty much are the drop off age in a lot of sports, so we're talking about an age group that potentially exits sport and we're trying to engage them during this time.

What I've found has worked really well with my position within the local club and what I've seen, is the use of online videos and development of online videos. So rather than a coach or a sport putting out 'do these session run this session', here's an hour here, this is how you do it in social isolation at home, one on one. I've seen some innovation from clubs where they've actually spoken to the group you're talking about.

What is a way that you can stay engaged and how can you do that, and a lot of the time it's actually putting it back on the kids to actually develop the schedule, develop the function of what I want to achieve and actually putting it to them.

For example, a captain of a sporting club or whatever. This week I want the group to really focus on some touch or some agility sort of work. Can you put together a quick one minute video, which we're actually going to circulate amongst the group to actually

create that engagement? And then you're going to call on someone else in the group to actually lead that next time. So you're putting the ownership back on the youth group rather than as a parent or as a coach saying, hey, guys, this is the session plan. I want you to go ahead and do it. Put it back on the group and actually get them to develop their own content, because the reality is right now people are keeping fit and healthy. But at the same time, how many kids are in the backyard doing a training session for an hour that they read online? It's just not happening to get any advantage.

We're all in the same position. We're all gonna be delayed. We're all going to have four weeks to train together before we get back to sport. So I'm thinking less around the actual skill acquisition and more around the engagement. How are we keeping these guys engaged? So when the curtain's raised and we can play again, 35 kids that left all come back at the same time. That's what I'll be looking at.

Does anyone else on the panel will want to add to that one?

All good if not. Touching on that, actually as a question from Adam around that window that we potentially enter of being allowed to have smaller gatherings of potentially less than 10 and not going back to full sport yet, what suggestions might anyone have on what clubs can do specifically in that time to try and engage people and just get them back participating at a club?

I think it's got to remain the support that we've sort of a little bit spoken about is, yes, does ten people help equate to a certain number of kids, for example, in a team, and if so, are they if it's ten, are they able to get down to another facility and actually have a kick around and re-engage that way. It is going to be extremely difficult. It's not the sport that we knew the other day. It has changed, and as we've said, we also need to think of new ways to actually get that up and going and connect and re-engage and sustain and get our members back. So I think it's just smart thinking, There's a whole lot of empty spaces out there, so how do we get a group of kids down there. Can a coach go and take 10 down? Parents can move themselves around the perimeter of the football ground or the basketball court or whatever it is, so is that the way that we can do it in the interim until restrictions begin to start to lift.

Thanks, Karen. Question has just come through around managing the winter/summer sport change over.

I know that the CEOs of those state sport associations are discussing. So in some respects, you know, it depends on the outcome of those discussions, but maybe Mel.

I mean, what are your thoughts from the council on how sport needs to communicate and manage any potential issues around that transition?

Yeah, great question. I think the question on a lot of local governments' lips at the moment, it's one that keeps coming up weekly. At the moment as well, Sport and Rec Victoria have a local government group made up of regional interface and metro councils that are discussing exactly that.

So they did actually go out and survey all local governments around the challenges, the impacts. We all know that local governments manage their facilities a little bit differently. So with your wickets and your turf wickets, your synthetic wickets you cover over, plus joint use facilities for summer and winter. So there's no easy answer, but the questions are going back to, as you said, Tom, the sports themselves and then coming right down to the local level leagues. And that's where we need that guidance from the overarching sport bodies to provide that information to the leagues and continue to have that open communication, because there will be some challenges, but that's all being fed back up to Sport and Rec Victoria to hopefully also liaise with the state bodies and councils as a whole. So lots of information transfer. So there will be challenges, but it's something that we need to all be mindful of, and as Karen said, sport probably won't return as is. And what that modified sport looks like, whether it's season changes and how that that might impact if we move a winter season slightly and the impact when we start summer season and some of the summer sports being washed out. So lots of considerations. So there's no easy solution in that one either. But communication and collaboration being the key.

Yeah, yeah, for sure.

Couple of questions coming through around the AIS Resume to Play document. Just letting people know who put those in that I'm not going to try to answer those at this point in time because we probably don't have the right answers for you, but that's something that we're definitely looking at and could potentially be part of future updates or webinars from Vicsport. Sharon, I might put a question to you.

How do you think, I guess the way your organisation works with clubs or the other organisations in our network, how might that potentially change or be adapted over the next 12 months?

It's a good question.

I think I can answer from our organisation what we feel is something that does work well and it builds on, I think, something Michael was saying about who owns the message. So the kids aren't necessarily picking up something online and doing it, but if it's someone they know and trust giving them that message, they will go and do it. So for us, we partner with probably close to 30 different sport partners who are the voice and face of our message. I think that's a good starting point for a lot of our programs because then we are seen a bit closer to being part of the offering as opposed to a bolt on or something that sits aside. But you know, as I was saying at the end there, I think a lot of it really comes back to, and I believe it was on one of your opening slides, Tom, about social cohesion. And that's, I think, the cry that a lot of us have been hearing around missing sport. You know, people are missing that connection and that sense of purpose and belonging, and I think the more that we can step away from necessarily having to be overtly talking about our issue and understand that the more people in a space where that is achieved, the better off we are in preventing our issues and getting the outcome that we want. So I think for us, it'll be possibly sitting together more and, like I said, trying to present something that we all know is a key to unlocking some really good outcomes for the issue we're addressing. And that's going to have to come through more simplified ways of presenting, you know, what we want the club to hopefully do as part of it. And then I think it's also surrendering, like I said, I called it ego, call it what you want, that we might not necessarily be the voice that delivers that message into the club.

Excellent. Thanks for that, Sharin. I do want to start wrapping up fairly soon. What I'm might actually do, and this is going to put the presenters on the spot, which we always love doing.

But if anyone is a fan of the ABC Insiders program or maybe you watched the last five minutes before the Offsiders comes on to talk about sport, everyone just giving their sort of final insight or tip, so give everyone a quick two seconds to quickly think what are they going to say? But we might do a quick little sort of final recommendation from each panelist and then we'll look towards wrapping this one up. Karen, would you like to start? Any final words of advice or wisdom?



Yes. Put us on the spot, Tom, good on you matey. No, I just want to say the great thing about sport, and it's been going on for a number of years now, but being in the game a long, long time, it never used to. And that's that sport is very willing to help each other. So I'm quite happy to always be out there and not just be helping our football clubs, but if anybody would like to have a chat or anything like that, I'm more than happy to be available for that. As we've mentioned, it's totally different. No one wrote this book on COVID-19. No one. So it was a whole new fluid environment that we've heard for so long of things that we just had to be actually quite reactive to in the very beginning. And I remember looking back just those six weeks ago, eight weeks ago, when this all hit whenever that we were meeting daily, in fact, the executive team was sitting in the boardroom together because things were coming at us at a rate of knots. We are starting to see that there is change. I did remember a couple of weeks ago going, how will sport look? What is the role that all of us that are here today. what role do we play in sport moving forward? But how that actually comes out is how we choose for that to be, so.

I think that is sort of winding that back is how do we all work together to make sure we know the health and wellbeing outcomes. We know that research has told us that now for a number of years, we used to guess that sport was good for you because you had a run around and you felt good after it. But we actually know these days that it is. So how do we collectively make sure that sport doesn't go down that gurgler and that we all work really hard to reengage and get kids and families back, because for those particularly that are hurting really badly out there, they need that connectivity, they need a place to go, a place that they can belong, a place that they can form friendships and be there for the long term. So there's a lot of work to do. I've never been busier and life at football's extremely busy, but it is crazy. And I actually find it extremely exciting that there is a new world emerging and I do call it the new [01:15:54] side. [0.0s] So, yeah, I think if we look forward and look towards that light at the end of that tunnel will all come out OK.

Thanks, Karen. That's an excellent message, Mel?

Is it easy to say what Karen said?

But I guess reiterating that as well is it is about learning from each other, continually using each other's resources, leveraging off people we know throughout the sector and the industry to gain information, to support. But from a local government perspective, it's yes, it's using that buzzword. It's being agile, it's being flexible, it's being able to look at how we do things differently, how sitting on some of the things we've always wanted to do, but been a little bit risk averse, using this time to actually implement some of those

are ideas and strategies. But the first and foremost is community wellbeing and where our community sits in this space and just acknowledging that what might work in one local government may not work in the other local governments, depending on your cohorts, your challenges. So being really mindful that everything won't look the same and cookie cutter across all different areas, but how we can be flexible in those spaces. But yeah, I'm a little bit like Karen, I'm getting the best learning from having, yes I'm busy, I'm busier than normal. But having the opportunity to read, learn from others, listen to different perspectives and really triggering those things that are important and how we ... sometimes it's not always gonna work and that's okay as well. It's being able to step out of that space and try something as well, but first and foremost, collaboration, communication and community. So a couple of three Cs.

Awesome, thanks Mel. Michael?

Yeah, echo that. But I guess from our perspective, we all stopped. Like when when this hit, we stopped. We were shocked and we didn't know what was next, and I think now we've all gathered our thoughts, we've had a recharge. And I think whilst the future is unclear, I think it's an opportunity for sport, local government associations and clubs to really start putting those things on the backburner, putting them in place. So putting the development time in the things we didn't get the chance to, and so when things clear up, it's an opportunity, why not take a risk. When things open up, why not take a risk and try that new thing? And I guess the biggest thing that I've picked up along the way is that the organisations that over communicate are the ones that are going to get out of this in a really good space. The ones that under communicating are the ones that Chinese whispers has started and people can create their own story when Chinese whispers start. So let's over communicate and ensure that the people that need to hear know what they know, and just share that story right across the right across the state.

Thanks, Michael. And Sharin?

Yeah, look, I think for us, we're a little bit different because we're basically relying on the sport sector for a lot of our outcomes. So for me it would be because I guess we've all stopped, it would I guess be a bit of a plea for if you are seeing things around disparate offerings that we could do better as a health sport sector to come together and better serve clubs or the sport sector, please reach out because we're in the same space and really open to that. And I think probably one element that's well realised around healthy clubs, healthy communities, is how we start to demonstrate that kind of social return on investment because, you know, addressing some of these issues that we're trying to do

through sport returns genuine economic benefit back to communities. So I think if we can work together as well in assisting through our resources for you to demonstrate that, then that would be a really good outcome as well.

Great. And I could definitely echo all of those comments to just add that, I just think what people should definitely do at some point as we start getting back to, not so much normal, but potentially going back to the office and doing things the way we used to, take the time to write down the things that you've done or new things or new ways to approach work.

Write that down and think about how you can keep it. There's definitely a lot of things I've done that, I think, you know, we need to keep doing that certain process or type of communication moving forward so we can learn a lot from all this. Thank you again to all of our panelists. I'll give a little sort of clap from my end and I'm sure I'm everyone will be clapping at home and appreciate all of your insights and input. So thanks again very much for being part of the webinar today. Finally, just letting everyone know, that our third and final series, sorry, webinar of this series is next Tuesday, the 12th of May. That's going to have three speakers from local governments and looking at participation and inclusion initiatives that local governments lead, so if you're interested in learning more about that, make sure you jump on again next week. I also did notice that Play by the Rules are hosting a short webinar this Friday with Paul Kennedy and Bridie O'Donnell, so that would be worth jumping on. You can head to the Play by the Rules website to look at that. But apart from that, it is a nice sunny blue sky day today, so I'll let everyone go and enjoy the sunshine. Thanks very much for taking part in this morning's webinar.