

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

9th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6), Tuesday, 14 March 2023

Inquiry into female participation in sport and physical activity

Note by the clerk

Introduction

1. At its meeting today, the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee will begin taking formal evidence as part of its inquiry into female participation in sport and physical activity.
2. [YWCA Scotland - The Young Women's Movement](#) is an organisation that supports the wellbeing and development of girls and young women. Among their projects is [Young Women Lead \(YWL\), a leadership programme](#) intended to encourage young women to engage with local and national democracy and work together to create change. In 2018-19, the Young Women Lead Committee initiative ran in partnership with the Scottish Parliament and [held their own inquiry in the Parliament](#) focusing on issues affecting the participation of young women in sport and physical activity. The Committee [produced a report detailing their findings](#).
3. The witnesses giving evidence to the Committee today were members of the Young Women Lead Committee 2018-19 who led the inquiry, and now work with the Young Women's Movement.

Background

4. At the Committee's business planning day on 7 June the Committee discussed potential priorities to be factored into the Committee's work programme during the second year of Session 6.
5. The Committee's inquiry into the health and wellbeing of children and young people highlighted a significant decline in participation of girls in sport and physical activity as they reach adolescence with a potentially significant negative impact on their physical health and mental wellbeing. Based on these findings, the Committee agreed to undertake an inquiry into sport and physical activity, looking specifically at barriers to female participation.
6. A further discussion on 6 September resulted in the Committee agreeing that the inquiry should focus on female participation in sport and physical activity and the

intersectionality of additional barriers to participation, such as ethnicity and disability.

7. It was agreed the inquiry would focus on participation at both a community and elite level and would consider issues around how female sport is supported, reported and promoted.

Structure of the inquiry

8. The Committee issued a call for evidence on 30 September 2022 which closed on 9 December 2022. The Committee received 220 responses which can be read here: [Published responses for Inquiry into female participation in sport and physical activity - Scottish Parliament - Citizen Space](#).
9. A summary of written responses was produced by research colleagues and can be read here: [Female-participation-summary-of-responses.pdf \(parliament.scot\)](#)
10. The Committee's inquiry currently consists of 8 sessions beginning in March 2023:

14 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Women Lead Committee oral evidence session
21 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community sport and recreational activity oral evidence session
28 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people oral evidence session
18 April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elite sport oral evidence session
25 April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media oral evidence session
Date TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inequalities oral evidence session
Date TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview oral evidence session
Date TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister oral evidence session

11. The Committee also has plans for a programme of informal engagement to support the inquiry, including a visit to Dunfermline in March.

Clerks to the Committee

9 March 2023