

PE1848/H

Scottish Snooker submission of 4 March 2021

Jeanne Freeman Cabinet Secretary for Health & Sport indicates that the framework was based on the assessment and analysis of professionals and presented to the government. She further states the government will ensure the points provided as part of this petition in favour of snooker regarding comparison to other non-contact sports and also the operation of snooker / pool halls will be looked at 'to ensure these points are considered in a further review of the Strategic Framework.' We have been consistently told that the Strategic Framework is constantly under review and our points would be 'looked at' but to our knowledge no levels or businesses or sports were 'reviewed' in the sense of changing levels within this framework since October 2020. Indeed, sportscotland have indicated that since the statement appears within the leisure and entertainment section of the framework it is actually not within their remit to review our position and it requires a government review of this for change to be effected.

We are aware that the route map out of the current lockdown will follow the already established strategic framework and the levels which currently exists but with amendments to suit our current national situation.

I remind the committee that the decision to restrict the opening of this sport / facilities was based on a document categorically stating it was a higher risk activity. We reiterate that the BRIA information re snooker / pool halls is simply not true, ill-informed, indeed entirely misleading. The main reasons stated for this decision being ventilation and physical distancing – as the information provided to the committee shows good ventilation exists, and physical distancing is actually difficult to avoid due to the nature of the sport and the 12ft x 6ft table between players.

We would urge the committee to ensure all of its resources available are employed with the government to ensure snooker is placed in line with other indoor non - contact sports at this juncture as the framework is being amended, on the grounds of all the information previously stated. In the Strategic Framework - October 2020 update, Annex 1: Protection Levels Framework, P65 Snooker / Pool Halls is specifically named as being unable to open within level 2 and within the leisure / entertainment section - we would like this to be removed within the newly updated document to be released as we emerge from this lockdown and be permitted within levels 0-3 inclusive as any other indoor non-contact sport.

We would simply like equity for our sport and parity of opportunity to be accessed, as other indoor non-contact sports and we require the snooker halls, the facilities utilised for the sport, to be open for this to happen.

We believe we have brought enough information forward in previous submissions to have this decision overturned. At the previous committee it was discussed that sometimes mistakes can be made based on the information provided at a particular time but what is important is that it is rectified moving forward, we could not agree more. We cannot get back the lost time in the sport due to the levels imposed but we can look forward to exiting the current lockdown knowing we are being fairly treated. As Anne Frank said, "What is done cannot be undone but at least one can keep it from happening again."