

**2020/21 SEASON** 

## ANNUAL REPORT

VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND CLG T/A VOLLEYBALL IRELAND

# Volleyball Ireland



## **VISION**

To create a vibrant
Volleyball community that
allows all clubs, players
and officials to reach
their potential



## **MISSION**

Develop, Promote and effectively Govern Volleyball in Ireland



## **CORE BELIEFS**

Clubs should be at the heart of the sport
Volleyball is for everyone, regardless of their age, background or ability
Volleyball is a sport of life long participation



## Our core values underpin everything we do.

## Integrity

demonstrated through honesty, transparency & fair play.

## Inclusivity

welcoming environment that is member focussed with opportunities for everyone to reach their potential.

## **Teamwork**

inherent in all we do, Volleyball is about friendship, loyalty and striving for progress together.

## **Passion**

enthusiastic, energised and committed to improving the sport for everyone at a participation and performance level.

## **Respect**

for everyone that is involved as players, referees, volunteers, coaches or employees.

## **Ambition**

volleyball has unrivalled potential in Ireland. We are unashamedly ambitious. We believe our players, clubs and people can achieve great things



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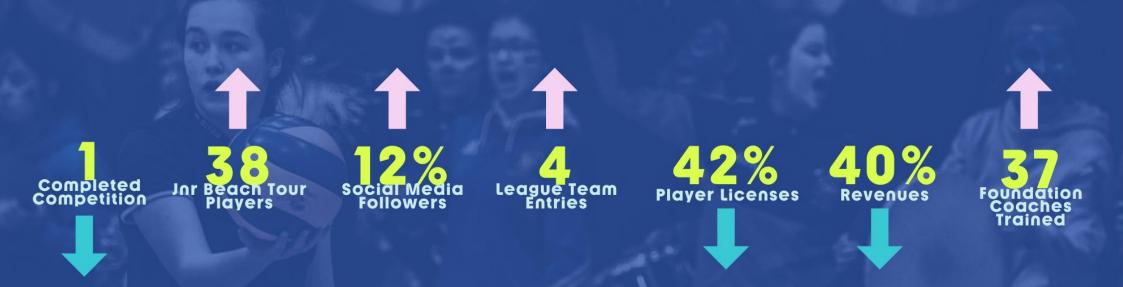
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**2020/21 SEASON SUMMARY** 



## President's Message

It is with a mixture of sadness and excitement, that I am writing my last annual report as National President of Volleyball Ireland. Sadness, as I will be leaving the Board when Volleyball Ireland is riding a building wave, and excitement, as what is to come when this wave crashes to our shores will be thrilling.

I have huge confidence in the continuing Board, and am so impressed by the skill-sets brought together by the various Directors. Appointing Independent Directors to the Board continues to strengthen the focus and decision-making process, whilst bringing more varied experience to our strategy and vision reviews. I congratulate the Board Members that I have had the privilege to work with for some time, and thank Barbara who has recently stepped down as Treasurer, and welcome again the four new Directors that have recently joined.

The last year has been difficult, due to the lack of physical volleyball activities. I commend Gary and his team, Conor, Norma and Mark on the extensive online work that they have done, covering a variety of efforts from player development to engagement though courses to club development work.

There really was something for everyone, along with the opportunity to chat with some of our idols from across the world.

A special call out for the launching of the Long Term Player Development Programme, which has been the culmination of work over many years. I remember Des Currivan speaking about it when he was President, which lets you know how long it has taken to bring this project to fruition.

Norma has relentlessly pushed for the use of our spare time, to work on club development, which should pay back due dividends when clubs re-open.

I also must applaud Gary and his work in building our relationship with Sport Ireland, and securing so much more in funding than we ever have. Project-based applications are such a compliment when successful, as it is also Sport Ireland adding support to our initiatives. The same can be said with the Olympic Federation of Ireland, CEV & FIVB, where we are again, more times than not, having project-based applications favourably met.

The continuing call from the CEV, for Volleyball Ireland to be involved at European level, for example as part of Think-Tanks, and Development Committees, is testament to how we are now perceived outside Ireland.



Our various commissions have also been tirelessly hard at work, and again, used this time to have a lot of engagement with the relevant stakeholders, which is great. Often, we get so busy with the physical side of the sport, that there is not enough time set aside for developing our Referees, Coaches, Players. Therefore, time has been used to bring training and development plans up to date. Thanks to all involved here, it was not easy sending so much online after long days online at work, but we will all reap the rewards of the great work done.

As you will know, we have launched brand identity (as a result of a competition we won) and our new website. Thanks to Cillian Bracken-Conway & Vine Digital Ireland for his work with Mark on the website, which we hope you find much more User Friendly. Please feel free to feedback any further improvement ideas to Mark in the office.

As ever, Volleyball Ireland is dependent on its volunteers, whether at club level or at Commission and Board level, and we congratulate those involved on what has been achieved during an exceedingly difficult year and join with you in looking forward with excited anticipation to a much better year ahead.

On a personal note, I thank all Board Members, past and present, that I have worked with, and Gary and all the Volleyball Ireland

Staff for their unwavering support over my last 8 1/2 years on the Board of Volleyball Ireland.

There have been some lows for sure, but these are far outweighed by all the superb highs, and whilst I am sad to leave when volleyball is going on to get even better, I leave it in the hands of an amazing team of people.

I truly say that I cannot wait to see where volleyball will be in 3-5 years' time.

As FIVB President Ary Graça said recently at the World Congress, we must continue to "**Dream Big and Aim High**".

Gráinne Culliton | National President



## The Impact of Covid-19

The 2020-21 season has been like no other. We cannot sugar coat the impact that Covid-19 has had on society and our sport. It has been a testing time for everyone and our thoughts are with those that have lost loved ones over the last year.

Throughout this difficult period, one thing that has shone through has been the sheer determination and spirit of our clubs and volunteers. The way in which clubs activated Covid officers and implemented the return to play protocols was inspiring, and I think those efforts really demonstrated the strength of the volleyball community.

We played an active role on the Federation of Irish Sport's Indoor Sport Group with a number of other NGBs putting together a collective proposal to lobby Government for a safe Return to Sport. Whilst this was mainly in vain, regular engagement and sharing resources with our partners was a positive experience and a model for the future.

As you can see from this Annual Report, participation figures have been severely hit with player licenses reduced by 42%. The pandemic has wiped out 95% of our in-person programmes and competitions.

Our progress towards achieving the aims established in the 2019-22 Strategic Plan: *Raising the Game,* has been delayed with the majority of targets and programmes deferred into 2021, and some of our exciting plans such as the hosting of an FIVB World Tour Beach Volleyball event have been postponed.

From a financial perspective our revenues have reduced by 40% versus the previous financial year. However, we're an agile organisation and have managed to maintain a surplus of 7k, which is broadly consistent with previous years.

Sport Ireland have been a consistent support throughout the pandemic, providing €21,500 of funding to help some of our clubs get back on track, with round one support going to:

Galway VC	3024.29
Santry VC	3260.86
Net Force VC	1540.87
Burren VC	2822.15
Dublin VC	1869.13
Kilkenny Spartans	1238.99
Ballymun VC	1294.14

We're expecting to deliver another round of club support funding later in the Summer.



We were also successful with a 50k Innovation fund application to deliver an exciting Park Posts project which will see 20 permanent post systems installed in locations across Ireland. The posts are on track to be delivered in Summer when restrictions permit. We hope this project will help grow social volleyball and feed new players into our member clubs.

Whilst the last year hasn't been easy I'm very proud of the way the organisation, staff, Board and Commissions have adapted developing a range of innovative programmes to do our best to keep the community engaged and involved. We've had to think outside the box and be creative – but that's often when the best stuff happens.

We've also taken the time to work on some notable strategic projects off court including the Long Term Player Development Model, High Performance Framework and of course the new brand identity and website. The new branding really takes the organisation up a level and whilst I am a little biased, I do believe that our logo marque and style is up with the very best in Irish sport.

Looking forward we can now see some progress towards a return to Volleyball action. But we're very much aware that re-engaging clubs, players and volunteers won't be easy. That's why our main focus over the next 12 months will be supporting our clubs to get Volleyball back on track.

We will be launching several key initiatives to support clubs, including participation projects for children and adults, a newly revamped Beach Tour, Park Volley opportunities, the 3-tier Coach Development programme and a new club support and development programme Grow Volley. All these projects have been collaborations between staff and the Commissions, supported by a forward thinking and energetic Board.

So, whilst the season has not been memorable for on-court action, Covid-19 has allowed us to develop off-court and I hope that these strategic developments and new club support programmes will help the sport grow for years to come.

I look forward to seeing you back on court soon.

Best Wishes,

Gary Stewart | General Manager



Independent Directors Scorekeeper Training Kristof de Loose **CPD License** Vanje Grbic Leaders **Covid Grants** Park Posts Wome **Sport Week** New Jnr Beach Jennings 3 Tier Coachingcancelled v New Development League Programme Maja Poljak Volley@Home

**2020/21 ACTIVITY SUMMARY** 



## **Staff Activities Report**

Whilst Covid 19 has clearly impacted participation rates across competitions and programmes, we managed to make use of the opportunity permitted.

### Youth Development & Participation Initiatives

A number of new initiatives were created including the Junior Beach Tour which delivered 4 x events in its first year including competition and training days in Fanore, Co. Clare and Bettystown, Co. Meath. 38 individual players registered with a total attendance of 90 participants.

Staying with Junior Beach Volleyball we developed a fun camp for younger players in partnership with Meath Local Sports Partnership and were delighted when 31 children aged 9-13 signed up.
Unfortunately, the camp fell foul to Covid restrictions at the end of August but demonstrates a clear market for the sport. This model of working with LSPs is something we'll look to build on in the future.

Further work has been developed with LSPs including the facilitation of a Volley@Home project with Cork LSP and the Cork Volleyball Academy which has had great results engaging the local community.

We're all mindful of the drop out risks associated with Teenage participation in sport. Our clubs, development officers and coaches have worked so hard to recruit these youngsters into the sport over the last few years it's absolutely vital we keep engaging them in anyway we can.

With this in mind, the team have been delivering a number of online Virtual Volley courses including a 6-week programme in November and again in February. 78 individuals registered for the various workshops over this time. The programme has been a mix of fitness, yoga, ball skills and Q&A sessions with Volleyball stars including Maria Jones & Gareth Gilmartin from the Youth National teams; these young ambassadors are really great role models and one of our aims is to raise the profile of Volleyball players so they become recognisable and have a profile the next generation wish to aspire to.

Whilst Covid has put the brakes on our school competitions we have re-jigged the CEV School Project somewhat to focus first and foremost on recruiting clubs who will act as the exit route for children to continue participating in the sport. This approach will create really strong school-club links and we're delighted that 10 Volleyball clubs have taken up the offer to take part: Galway VC, Dublin VC, Carlow IT, Kilkenny Spartans, UCD, Cork Academy, Burren, Santry, Munster Thunder & Ballymun Patriots.

The Volleyball Ireland Youth Council is another programme where the organisation is leading from the front. By the end of 2021, a Youth Council for people age 17-23 will become an active sub-



committee of the Board, advising on programme development and providing a representation for young people . Focus groups have been held with potential Youth Council members to gain an understanding of their perspective and ideas. So much of our work is focussed on this age group that it makes sense to give these young players, coaches and officials a voice.

#### **Club Support Activities**

A number of Club support projects have taken place over the season including the Club Management & Training programme which resulted in 55 participants from 15 different clubs taking part in 6 workshops.

New Clubs were established in Athenry and Cork which, when restrictions ease will really aid the growth of the sport in those areas, and add to a number of new club locations established in recent years.

The ClubMark standards programme continues to support member clubs develop the off-court aspects of their clubs and we're delighted that Ballymun Patriots are the latest club to complete the process.

Over 20 Club Support templates have been developed this year and are now available on the website including a range of policies that clubs can adapt to suit their needs. A dedicated funding Page has also been added and is updated regularly with current grants and funding opportunities for member clubs. We're well aware that clubs are now expected to do much more from a governance perspective and we hope these supports will help club volunteers in this area.

We've recently published a new club support programme - GrowVolley which aims to identify the best ways in which Volleyball Ireland can help its clubs. The programme is tailored to each club and will provide specific training in areas such as marketing, fundraising & sponsorship.

This specific support builds on the 5 x lvl club funding workshops we held over the season to best prepare clubs for Capital Grant and Covid Re-Start Grant applications.





## Marketing

A new website was launched in November 2020, which places clubs and leagues at the front and centre of the site. The website designed by our friends Vine Digital Ireland, complements the new brand identity that we launched the same day.

The Monster Block weekly email newsletter has now increased in subscribers to over 1580 people.

A number of promotional activities such as the Women in Volleyball week

Extensive News

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Standings

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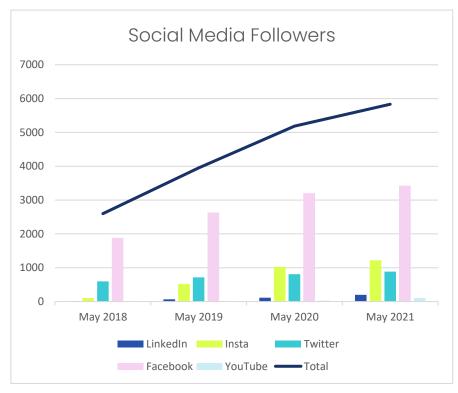
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and the Virtual Volley initiatives have continued to drive an increase in followers of digital channels.

The rate of growth has reduced slightly, which is to be expected without any on court volleyball action; league results and match photography would typically be the biggest source of engagements across our channels. The new brand identity has led to a more consistent approach in the presentation of posts.

We have seen rapid growth on our YouTube channel (+164%) – which is directly linked to the number of online courses and programmes we are now streaming with the page receiving a significant boost after the Kerri Walsh Q&A in particular.

Volleyball's digital presence is a key part of the strategy to raise the profile of the sport and our clubs. Our research has shown that member club's pages have a combined following of 15,041 people across Twitter, Facebook & Instagram platforms, this is something we wish to help clubs grow in the coming year.





## Anti Doping

With a lack of matches or national team competitions our work within the Anti Doping has reduced somewhat versus the previous year. Although educational workshops were delivered for young players as part of the Virtual Volley programme. Volleyball Ireland remains one of the few NGBs that ensure that Anti Doping education is completed as part of the league registration process.

No Anti Doping testing was delivered at Volleyball Ireland events or out of competition.

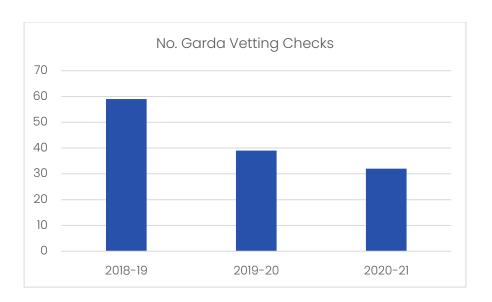
## Safeguarding

38 people took part in Safeguarding training over the last year across four different learning workshops, versus 48 people and six workshops last year. Each Safeguarding qualification lasts for four years, and as we started delivering courses in 2019, the demand last season wasn't as high. As a general rule we will run Safeguarding courses annually and will typically meet the demand of members.

The number of Garda Vetting checks completed reduced from 39 to 32 this season, which is largely down to a lack of Volleyball activity taking place. Reminders have been sent to all registered coaches & referees whose Garda Vetting is due to expire before the start of the new season (80).

Volleyball Ireland remains one of the few NGBs to establish an independent welfare panel to consult on safeguarding matters. A comprehensive Safeguarding and Child Protection policy was updated in 2019.

Looking ahead into 2021, Sport Ireland will be launching a new club audit system; more information and details on the supports available from Volleyball Ireland will be circulated in due course.



## RAISING THE GAME 2019-22 OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



## Raise Participation

More People playing Volleyball



## Raise **Standards**

Stronger clubs & sound governance



## Raise Performance

A vibrant pathway for players, coaches & officials



## Raise The Profile

More followers and more people promoting the sport



## Fund Raise & Finance

Growing revenues to support activity



## **Strategy Update**

This section of the report highlights the progress made against the key metrics established in the 2019-22 strategic plan: Raising the Game.

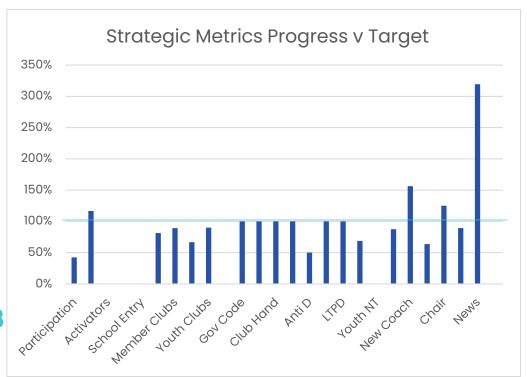
Originally 32 key metrics were established to measure the success of the plan. This has since been reduced to 26 key metrics. Those removed include website hits and school affiliations; both of these targets are now measured in different ways and as such accurately comparing year on year is not possible. A detailed status commentary on each metric is included in the appendix.

It is no surprise that Covid 19 has severely impacted our progress. At the end of the 2020–21 season, eleven metrics have been achieved or are on track to be completed. Two are significantly behind, and 13 have been delayed but are expected to catch up by the end of the 2021–22 season, when restrictions ease.

The move to online programmes has fast tracked some objectives including the training of new coaches – where demand has been high. The Chair Volley programme outperformed expectations in 2019, and the popularity of the weekly Monster Block newsletter means those programmes have achieved their aims already.

A number of objectives have been completed including adoption of the Governance Code, appointing a General Manager (2018) and publishing of a club development handbook.







Two key measures: number of affiliated clubs and the number of cubs completing ClubMark Bronze are significantly behind target. We will be focussing some new supports in this area to encourage new club affiliations from existing recreational teams and we aim to increase the awareness of the Club Mark programme, which has proven to be very beneficial and rewarding for those clubs that have completed the Bronze level.

Looking forward the focus of our strategic objectives for 2021 & 22 are clear: *Re-Start the Game.* To do this our efforts will be focused on helping clubs re-engage players through a Social Volley initiative both indoors, on grass and on sand.

Club Development work will increase through *Grow Volley* and a new youth participation project that will kick off in the Autumn that complements our existing Schools work.

Conor is working hard plotting the introduction of the Development Centres initiative which is a key part of the HP Framework and Performance Pathway. This project will help develop our players and coaches, of which clubs will benefit from.

Likewise, the new three tier Coach Development programme and a Referee Mentor scheme will directly build capacity in our clubs and schools.

On the sand the re-launched Beach Tour will provide a clear pathway from participation to performance and aims to showcase our top athletes. A Beach Coaching Course and Referee qualification will also be introduced which is a great step forward for the format.

So much of our efforts will be focussed on youth, so it makes sense young people have a voice. As mentioned earlier, Norma is developing one of the first NGB Youth Council's in Ireland that will be a direct sub-committee of the Board. The Youth Council will be consulted on programmes, policies and create projects of their own to grow the sport.

Off the court, Mark will be increasing visibility of the sport and the brand, as well as supporting clubs enhance their own digital marketing footprints.

These projects wouldn't be possible without appropriate financial resources, that's why the development of a commercial strategy for the organisation is key – the more money we have coming in means the more we can invest in programmes and projects. The *Patrons of Development* scheme will be re-launched with a specific focus on helping youth development activities.

## **RE-STARTING THE GAME**

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2021-22



## Raise Participation

Launch a new Youth
participation
programme in
partnership with clubs

Launch a Social Volley
participation
programme for member
clubs and the Beach
community

Introduce a Park Volley
Tour Programme



## Raise Standards

Integrate Grow Volley; a new Club Development and support programme

> Develop a Facilities Improvement plan

Introduce the first Volleyball Ireland Youth Council



## Raise Performance

Launch the
Development Centres
Programme

Publish and deliver the actions within the High Performance Framework

Re-Launch the National
Beach Tour

Deliver the 3-Tier Coach
Development System

Implement the new
Coach License System

Introduce Beach Volleyball Coach & Referee qualifications



## Raise The Profile

Ensure VLY. events are vibrant, exciting and represent our brand

Develop partnerships
with online and TV
broadcasters to
showcase Volleyball to
wider audience

Better support the promotion of club events and activities



## Fund Raise & Finance

Re-Launch the Patrons of Development Scheme

Develop a Commercial Strategy

Continue to support clubs to acquire grants and fundraise



## **Key Project Case Study: LTPD**

In November 2020, Volleyball Ireland published our first Long Term Player Development Model. This model will provide a framework for all stakeholders involved with Volleyball Ireland and players of all ages and abilities.

It is a training, competition and recovery framework for individuals at all stages of life. Once adopted the LTPD plan will be the policy framework for how volleyball will be developed across Ireland in partnership with our clubs, schools, players, officials and coaches.

This document provides an overview of the key principles of the LTPD model, based on the needs of our club players, underpinned by international standards and best practices. Resources for coaches, players, parents and officials will be developed with a goal to support the implementation of the model across the sport.

This pathway model alongside coaching and refereeing pathway plans will provide a clear route for all players, referees and coaches to reach their potential with life-long opportunities to be involved in sport.

Successful implementation of the model will lead to a thriving game of more skilful players supported by quality coaches, officials, volunteers at all levels of the game, placing Volleyball as one of the fastest growing and developing sports in Ireland.

LTPD or LTAD models are common in many major sports and Federations with high participation rates. Typically, they focus on an elite pathway that provides a route from grassroots to World Championships or Olympic Games.

Our model is based on this concept but adapted to represent the inclusive values of the Volleyball Ireland community, and our current level of play. This model provides opportunities for the most talented to reach their potential, whilst creating a clear development pathway for all young players to progress, with learning objectives and skill competencies created for all stages in the programme. This will help everyone enjoy volleyball to the best of their personal ability, whilst maximising retention and keeping people active for life.

Supporting the model is a comprehensive coach education programme with age appropriate courses, workshops and learning opportunities for teachers and club coaches alike.

Ireland's LTPD model consists of an 8-stage development pathway, beginning with an introduction to physical activity and sport all the way through to elite participation in volleyball.

Although the model is structured around chronological age, its principles and specific content are based on the player's developmental age.



	TERM PLAYE L OVERVIEW	R DEVELOPM	ENT		VOLLEYBALL FOR LIFE			
	EXPLORE	DISCOVER	PLAY	PROGRESS	APPLY	REFINE	EXCEL	<b>L</b>
	ACTIVE START	FUNDAMENTALS	LEARN TO TRAIN	TRAIN TO TRAIN	LEARN TO COMPETE	TRAIN TO COMPETE	TRAIN TO WIN	
	PHYSICAL LITERACY			DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY		PERFORMANCE PATHWAY		PARTICIPATION 6
AGE GUIDE ONLY	0-6	6-10	9-13	12-17	16-18	17-21	19+	12+
ENTRY CRITERIA	THIS STAGE IS FOR EVERYONE. PLAYERS ENTER AT BIRTH	THIS STAGE IS FOR EVERYONE.	ACQUIRED A WIDE RANGE OF FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS	PHYSICALLY LITERATE AND COMPETENT IN THE LEARN TO TRAIN STAGE	PROFICIENT IN THE VOLLEYBALL SPECIFIC TRAIN TO TRAIN STAGE	JNR NATIONAL TEAM SQUAD	SNR NATIONAL TEAM SQUAD, PREMIER DIVISION PLAYERS	PLAYERS ENTER WHEN NOT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OR PERFORMANCE PATHWAY
OVERALL OBJECTIVE	EXPLORE BODY MOVEMENTS	LEARN FUNDAMENTAL MOVEMENT SKILLS	LEARN OVERALL SPORTS SKILLS & INTRODUCE BASIC VOLLEYBALL SKILLS	INTRODUCE S&C, CONSOLIDATE VOLLEYBALL SPECIFIC SKILLS	PREPARE PLAYERS FOR COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENTS	REFINE VOLLEYBALL SKILLS, OPTIMISE THE BODY & PREPARE TO COMPETE	PERFORMANCE ON DEMAND	CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN COMPETITION, COACH, REFEREE & VOLUNTEER
CORE GOALS	FUN PARTICIPATION EXPLORE BODY MOVEMENTS	FUN PARTICIPATION INTRODUCTION TO SIMPLE RULES & SPORT ETHICS	FUN PARTICIPATION, DEVELOP ABCS OF ATHLETICISM, AGILITY, BALANCE & COORDINATION	FUN & PARTICIPATION, FURTHER DEVELOP THE ABCS, IMPROVE PHYSICAL FITNESS	FURTHER ENHANCE THE ABCS & PHYSICAL FITNESS, MENTAL COGNITIVE & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	POSITION SPECIFIC TECHNICAL SKILLS, EVENT PREPARATION. ADVANCED MENTAL PREPARATION	MAINTENANCE OR IMPROVEMNT OF TECHNICAL, TACTICAL & PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES	LEAVE A LEGACY. BE COMPETITIVE, LIFELONG INVOLVEMENT. FRIENDSHIPS FOREVER
GAME FORMAT	IVI FREE PLAY	2V2 > 3V3 (FUNDA VOLLEY)	3V3 (FUNDA)> 4V4 VOLLEY	4V4 VOLLEY > 6V6 VOLLEY	6V6 VOLLEYBALL	6V6 VOLLEYBALL	6V6 VOLLEYBALL	VARIOUS
BALL	MVG230	MVG230	V200W	V200W	V200W	V200W	V200W	VARIOUS
CLUB COMPETITION	NONE	FUNDA BLITZ TOUR	4V4 VOLLEY TOUR	YOUTH NATIONAL LEAGUE	NATIONAL LEAGUE & INTL.	NATIONAL LEAGUE & INTL.	NATIONAL LEAGUE & INTL.	NATIONAL LEAGUE, SOCIAL VOLLEY, MASTERS, DEV LGE ETC
SCHOOL COMPETITION	NONE	FUNDA DAYS	4V4 VOLLEY	4V4 VOLLEY > 6V6 VOLLEY	6V6 VOLLEYBALL	6V6 VOLLEYBALL	STUDENT LEAGUE	4V4 & 6V6
NET & COURT	NONE	185CM, SGL BADMINTON	200CM, DBL Badminton	4V4: 2.15, DBL BAD 6V6: F: 224CM, M: 235CM	STANDARD	STANDARD	STANDARD	STANDARD
TRAINING VOLUME P/W	ACTIVE THROUGHOUT	12 HRS OF ACTIVITY ACROSS MULTIPLE SPORTS	14 HRS OF ACTIVITY ACROSS MULTIPLE SPORTS	14 HRS OF ACTIVITY ACROSS MULTIPLE SPORTS	20HRS IN VOLLEYBALL & FITNESS PLUS ONE OTHER REC SPORT	22HRS IN VOLLEYBALL, FITNESS & TACTICAL PREP	22HRS IN VOLLEYBALL, FITNESS & TACTICAL PREP	DEPENDANT ON AGE & TIME



## **Key Project Case Study: New Brand**

Back in November, we revealed a new logo, brand identity and website that represents a break from traditional sporting body branding.

The VLY. concept puts Volleyball itself, rather than the administrative body that governs it, to the forefront. Using an abbreviation rather than an acronym, is a key differentiator that stands Volleyball Ireland out from the crowd.

The primary role of our organisation is to govern and promote the sport, and when you have a sport like *Volleyball*, it makes sense to put it at the front and centre of everything you do. It shows we are proud of our game and what it represents. The sport is our brand and we wanted to celebrate that.

The branding project came about following a competition ran in collaboration between marketing agency Branding Sport and online media company Sport for Business, which led to one sports body being given a full brand makeover.

A high quality, vibrant and progressive brand identity can have a number of benefits, opening up a range of opportunities including:

- Increased sponsorship opportunities
- Growth in digital marketing followers
- Support the creation of energetic & vibrant events

• Professionalise the organisation

The brand identity follows these values:

Youthful: The marque is intentionally youthful. The key strategic aim of Volleyball Ireland is to strengthen the pathway from school to club to national team, to grow participation in colleges and to develop volleyball programmes nationwide.

Energetic, dramatic & fun: Volleyball is fiercely athletic & dramatic, where every point is an event. Both on the court and on the sand, the sport is great fun to play. The shaping of the VLY logo represents the athletic, twisting and stretching movements that are prevalent in Volleyball.

Equality: Volleyball is one of the few sports where male/female participation is relatively equal. In Ireland, 62% of players are women or girls. This is important to us. The brand is intentionally gender neutral, to represent our membership.

Multi-cultural: 74% of adult Volleyball players in Ireland are foreign nationals, coming from 64 different nationalities. The colour palette is purposely neutral to represent all of our members and the global community that exists in Irish Volleyball.

Ambitious: To be truly ambitious you have to be different, you have to stand out from the crowd. The new brand isn't afraid to do that, it's bold and it's dramatic – just like Volleyball.











































## **Stakeholder Survey**

The Annual Stakeholder Survey is now in its third year and provides a great opportunity for the volleyball community to share ideas for improving the organisation.

The survey has established 'performance benchmarks' in a range of different areas including Communications, Coach Education, Player Development and Leadership, as well as providing an overall view of the perception of the organisation.

Previous versions have provided a range of ideas which Volleyball Ireland has since implemented including: regular newsletters, online player registration system, online kids camps and a Junior Beach Volleyball competition.

This year's instalment returned significantly less contributions which is perhaps unsurprising with a lack of volleyball activity. Nonetheless the general feedback continues to be positive in regards to the overall effectiveness of Volleyball Ireland as an NGB.

All scores returned exceeded those from the 2019 version.

For 2021, a new Covid category was added to gauge the reaction from members in regards to our performance specifically related to the pandemic.

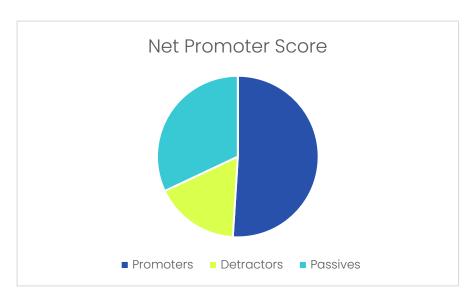
Rating	2019 Score	2020 Score	2021 Score				
	68 responses	120 responses	47 responses				
General NGB satisfaction ratings							
Net Promoter Score	N/A	+49	+34				
Overall Effectiveness as an NGB?	7.04	7.57	7.66				
Do you consider	58% Successful	72% Successful	72% Successful				
Volleyball Ireland to be a	15% Unsuccessful	3% Unsuccessful	5% Unsuccessful				
successful NGB?	27% Don't Know	25% Don't Know	23% Don't Know				
How do you rate the	69% Positive	80% Positive	74% Positive				
overall image of	16% Negative	3% Negative	2% Negative				
Volleyball Ireland?	15% Don't Know	17% Don't Know	24% Don't Know				
Specific Areas, ratings out of 10							
Marketing, Engagement and Communication	6.5	7.7	7.5				
Organising Competitions	6.9	8.3	7.2				
Coach & Referee Education	7.3	8.0	7.9				
Leadership & Governance	7.1	8.1	7.3				
Raising Participation	6.5	7.4	7.2				
Player Development	6.4	7.0	6.7				
Total Rating Score	40.7	46.5	43.8				
Handling of Covid Pandemic	n/a	n/a	8.0				



#### Net Promoter Score

The 2020 version included a Net Promoter Score question. Net Promoter Score is a globally recognised tool to measure customer satisfaction in a number of industries. NPS works by asking a simple question "How likely are you to recommend a friend or colleague to become a member of Volleyball Ireland". Members then score on a scale of 1–10. People who rate 9 or 10 are classed as promoters. Anyone who scores 1–6 is classed as a detractor. And 7 & 8s are rated as passives. The % of detractors is subtracted from the % of promoters to give a score between –100 and +100.

Global benchmarks suggest a score of 30 is 'good' and anything above 50 is 'excellent'.



Interestingly, the overall Net Promoter Score rating dropped by 15pts but the *NGB Effectiveness* rating increased with the *Success* rating scored the same.

#### Promoters feedback typically focussed on:

- Excellent member engagement during the Pandemic
- Covid support and information provided
- Move to online programmes
- Club support and training
- New brand identity and website
- New coaching courses

## Passives feedback typically focussed on:

- Improvement needed for Beach Tour
- Visibility and promotion of the sport
- Generally satisfied with performance
- Too much admin and workload for club volunteers
- More focus on promoting National Teams is needed

### Detractors feedback typically focussed on:

- New logo
- Not enough enforcement of Covid protocols
- More coaching courses are needed
- More clubs and activity outside of Dublin
- Not enough promotion of Volleyball on TV
- Not enough support for clubs





## **Competitions Review**

National League, Association Cup & Championships

The Covid Pandemic decimated the Indoor Volleyball season, with all School Competitions, Recreational Tournaments and the vast majority of National League matches cancelled, as was the Adult Beach Tour for Summer 2020.

Despite this, the club community rallied to implement Covid related protocols, and to brainstorm creative solutions that gave the National League competition a fighting chance to be delivered in line with Government restrictions at the time. This spirit allowed 13 matches to be played, all on the first scheduled weekend in October.

A number of proactive and fruitful club engagement workshops were held for clubs and the NLMC to explore a range of creative solutions in case the National League competition could not be delivered as originally intended. Whilst these ideas were ultimately in vain, the concept and the benefits of regular engagement with clubs was a positive, and a model for the future.

Naturally, the number of players registering to play Volleyball during the season dropped significantly from 1,062 to 446 licensed players. This is largely down to the cancellation of Recreational Competitions and the Youth National League, along with a decrease in National League player registrations. The only players







licensed in the 2020-21 season are players that compete in the Adult National League. With the uncertainty around the resumption of league fixtures the number of registered Adult National League players also reduced versus previous years.

Whilst the % of players registered with u18 licenses dropped versus last season (mainly due to no Youth League), it has increased by 5% versus 2017/18 – the year before the Youth League was introduced. This is a positive trend and is testament to clubs and staff that are developing and supporting young players.

The cultural diversity of the sport in Ireland is a key strength, with just under 70% of members being born outside of Ireland, which is in-line with recent trends.

Incidentally, Ireland (126), Poland (77) and Brazil (36) are the countries that provide the highest number of players with licenses across the 2020/21 season.

## Youth Competitions

From a team entry perspective there were positive increases with some new indoor competitions helping grow the sport and despite the pandemic, four additional teams entered the Adult National League structure versus 2019/20.

This is largely related to the formation of a new Development League (D3 Women), in which five teams entered. The aim of the Development League is to create a pathway from the Youth



League to the Adult National League programme, allowing experienced players to mentor younger players on court.

Il teams formed the newly regionalised ul6 Youth League. This regionalisation will reduce travel, time commitments and expenses and going forward we expect will help remove some of the main barriers to participation.

Whilst this was a slight reduction on 2019/20 (12 teams), this is mainly due to teams entering the Development League instead of



an u18 competition. Comparing like for like, 56 teams entered League competitions versus 52, the previous year.

#### Beach Volleyball

The Jnr Beach Tour was the only competition ran to completion and featured 38 players competing across 4 events in Co. Clare and Co. Meath. This new initiative, supported by the Olympic Federation of Ireland was the first step in a range of activities to promote this format of the game amongst young players.

#### 2020 Junior Beach Tour Roll of Honour

U19 Boys Gareth Gilmartin & Cian Humphreys
U19 Girls Lara Nichols & Maria Jones
U15 Girls Emer Phelan & Laura Connolly
U15 Boys Conor O'Neill



The Beach Tour Management Committee are working hard on newly branded and re-structured Beach Tour programme will see a 3-star approach introduced that creates a pathway from participation to performance.

1\* events will largely be entry level participation tournaments and can be mixed gender and up to 4-a-side. 2\* events will be single gender with National Tour ranking points available and 3\* competitions will be for the top players in the country with entry via a ranking points system.

Clubs will be offered the opportunity to host 1\* and 2\* events with entry fee revenues providing fundraising potential.

Following a similar format, a new Park Volley programme will be introduced whereby Volleyball Ireland support clubs to deliver 4v4 tournaments, again with revenues staying with the club. We expect this system will grow a number of volleyball opportunities for all abilities across the Summer months.

### School Volleyball

Whilst the 2020-21 School Volley programme has been cancelled, the School Committee has been working on a restructuring of Competition formats to align better with the new LTPD model. This new format will include a FundaVolley participation tour for beginners and a flagship 4v4 Mini Volley event for 5th & 6th class; with this age group the key focus is on fun, technique and gaining a love for the game. In conjunction with the Education & Training Commission, the School Committee have guided the introduction of the Young Leaders online TY programme.

## **Recreational Competitions**

As outlined above all indoor recreational events were cancelled, which has had a clear impact on player licenses. This setback has provided an opportunity to review the way in which the Recreational League & Cup are operated and with this in mind, a new Challenger Series format will be launched when restrictions ease. This model will allow recreational teams to play more regularly, more often and at times and days that suit them best. Challenger Series Cup events will tour Ireland in partnership with host clubs.





## **Education & Training Review**

The Education & Training of Coaches, Referees and Officials has adapted due to the challenges faced by Covid-19. This has resulted in a number of initiatives moving to an online format, including formal courses and CPD workshops for both Coaches & Referees.

Some key highlights of the Commission's work:

A new three tier coach development programme was introduced which is a blended approach to Coach Education, with three different levels. This system ensures all coaches can reach their maximum potential and the learning that the programme covers is appropriate for the experience level of each coach. The programme also helps create a coaching network of peer support.

Tier 1 New Coaches: those who have less than two years coaching experience or players who are considering a transition into coaching. Originally 12 slots were made available but due to staggering demand the Commission more than doubled capacity with 26 places allocated to people from 16 different member clubs. In total, 37 applications were received for the scheme.

Tier 2 Intermediate: Coaches who have been coaching for two years or more. This scheme is currently open for applications and

will see coaches working with Volleyball Ireland's National Team Head Coaches over a weekend programme this Autumn.

Tier 3 Advanced: Coaches who have been involved in Volleyball for several years. This element is supported by the FIVB and will see a range of high level workshops focussing on team development, tactics and strategies delivered by an International tutor. All 12 places have been allocated for this course.

- The formal Coaching Ireland accredited Foundation Course has been delivered to 37 coaches across two programmes. This is an increase of 24 versus the previous year
- Serbian Volleyball legend Vanje Grbic delivered a four week introduction to LTPD over the Summer with over 130 registrants
- Belgian Coach Kristof de Loose provided an online workshop on how to be creative with exercises
- The Grade 3 Referees Course trained up eight new Referees
- The Referees Refresher Bootcamp was moved online with
   36 attendees brushing up on their skills and knowledge
- The Commission developed an online scorekeepers tutorial; the training and engagement of scorekeepers and officials is a key focus of the groups work at present.



With the curtailment of the season after one weekend the licenses of all coaches and referees have been automatically rolled over from the previous season meaning a statistical comparison of previous years numbers isn't possible. However, a further 6 Referees and 5 Coaches did license ahead of the 2020-21 season.

A significant success on the Education & Training front has been the introduction of the Online Young Leaders Course which is being delivered to Transition Year Students across Ireland. The one day programme features and introduction to Coaching & Refereeing, and has so far trained up over 250 young people from 21 different schools/colleges The programme has been so well received the schools in England and Scotland have also signed up to the initiative.

An in-person club version of the programme will be launched when restrictions permit and will deliver a more detailed introduction to leadership and officiating.

#### International Referee

Despite Covid-19 our newly qualified International Referee Vinnie Dos Santos has been appointed to the ul7 Men's European Championships in Romania – congratulations Vinnie. Previous appointments at Champions League matches were curtailed due to travel restrictions.

Looking ahead, the Commission has been working on a number of key projects including:

- New CPD License Scheme
- Beach Coach & Referee Courses

#### CPD Licensing

The Commission are re-structuring the Coach Licensing scheme from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2021. The new scheme will require all coaches that wish to renew a license to have up-skilled in the previous three years, gaining a minimum number of CPD points.

This new CPD system aims to support our coaches for both personal and club development. Volleyball Ireland will assist the coaches with a variety of opportunities to progress and better themselves, their clubs and their players on a continual upskilling basis. This will help cultivate an ethos of continuous development within our coaching pool ensuring standards of coaching are always improving across the community.

A range of innovative coaching courses will be delivered in line with the LTPD model and will focus not only on technical skills but also on the soft skills that are necessary for personal development.

This new approach brings the Coach licensing system broadly inline with the Referee license system which requires the completion of the Refresher Course.





## **High Performance Review**

Government restrictions have prevented all but a small amount of National Team activity to take part this season. Frustratingly the pandemic is also preventing the confirmation of Small Countries Association competitions in both formats of the sport.

Despite this both the Men's and Women's National Team programmes have continued to develop a range of online workshops and trainings.

### Beach Programme Update - Head Coach: Luciana Sombrah

A 10 strong group of female athletes formed the 2020 National Training Squad programme with bi-weekly sessions in operation when restrictions allowed.

Due to the pandemic no competitive events were participated in. A key highlight of the reduced programme was the joint training session with Junior Beach Tour players.

Moving into 2021 a new Regional Training Squad programme for u20s will be established in early Summer, with the aim of participating in an International age group event in August. The RTS will be made up of 16 athletes with local and centralised trainings.

### Women's Programme – Head Coach: Mark Delahunty

- Two training weekends were delivered during the pandemic in both Kilkenny and Dublin, as restrictions eased in Q3 2020.
- Viera Hauriskova has hosted a number of online fitness and mobility sessions with the team during the various lockdowns
- Jana Langford has delivered a number of sessions on mental wellbeing and mindfulness
- Mark Delahunty and Edyta McMullen have delivered online video analysis sessions focussing on different aspects of the game
- Alex Graves (UCD) and Mikal O'Boyle (Mayo) were ratified as Captain and Vice Captain of the Senior National team respectively
- A number of guest speakers came in and talked to the girls ranging from generic approaches to sports and success to specific volleyball speakers, including Kerri Walsh Jennings (3x Olympic Gold Medallist), Maja Poljak (CEV Hall of Famer) and Mike Johnson (Head Coach of Notre Dame College).
- A number of fun, social events have been facilitated by the players to ensure an element of team bonding and development progresses despite restrictions.



### Men's Programme – Head Coach: Andrei Molnar

### Meetings & Engagement

The Men's Squads have had regular zoom meeting to discuss different issues, training methods and just to encourage ourselves to keep in contact and motivated during this time.

Periodic contact has been made on an individual basis with the players to check the state of their morale and to check if any support is needed from training advice or mental health once

#### Workshops and Learning

Several FIVB specialists were invited to host lectures for the Squads players and staff members.

Marius Pop a very know DATA volley analyst has delivered a game analysis session for the players including guidance on how a detailed game tactic is built at an international level, concerning selection and statistics.

Professor Catalin Stirbu has presented CPD lectures for our head coach concerning youth volleyball. The lectures were aimed at selection and development methods used in different countries and scenarios.

#### Mental Health

A mental health specialist, Grainne O'Kane was brought to the Squads to interact with the Squads players and staff. Ms O'Kane has engaged via zoom with a good number of the Squads players and based on her assessments a meeting with the Squads staff was made in trying to offer more support to our players. Both players and the Coaching team have gained numerous benefits from their work with Grainne, and a longer term project is in development.

#### Talk to the Coach Podcast

The regular podcast was a great success between the Irish youth players and the good number of high-end players coaches and specialists. This included Romanian star Adelina Ungureanu which brought over 5 thousand views on Facebook after the podcast was published.

## Training

U20 Captain Gareth Gilmartin has created a WhatsApp group where daily fitness programs had to be presented by players and staff. This constant engagement and the camaraderie developed has ensured fitness levels remain good ahead of a return to training.

### International Projects

The partnership with French club Narbonne, is getting stronger despite all the pandemic related travel issues. Cathal Dwyer's stay



with the club has been extended which is incredibly exciting, helping pave a pathway from participation to high level professional volleyball.

A 2h meeting was also held where ideas around youth volleyball and mini volleyball were exchanged between Narbonne junior coach Cecile Pitchoune, Andrei and Volleyball Ireland Development Officers.

The recognition of our work culminated with the acceptance of two other players to go for an internship, Gareth Gilmartin and Peter McGlynn. Due to the COVID restriction sadly the internship was not able to be delivered.

A new partnership with the Italian club Volley Potentino Potenza Picena is in development which will open up further opportunities for players to sample a professional environment. It is expected that three players will take part in a two-week training exchange later this Summer.

#### **HP Framework**

Behind the scenes the HP Commission is continuing work on the Framework document which will provide a development pathway and guide the operation of our National teams over the next 10 years.

The Framework will outline the:

- vision for our squad programme
- organisational structure of the National Team programme

- underlying principles that guide projects and inform our decision making
- performance targets that can measure the effectiveness of the plan
- detail on the investment required to deliver the framework
- roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders
- programmes that will support the framework

This framework is aligned with Volleyball Ireland's recently published Long Term Player Development model and will include the formation of a *Performance Director* role that will create a smooth link from National Team Head Coaches with the HP Commission.

The Framework is in the final draft stages and will be published this Summer.







## **Finance Report**

The Covid pandemic has severely impacted our activities, meaning we've deferred a significant amount of income to 2021. Therefore, our P&L account reflects an income reduction of 40% from 537k (2019) to 32lk in 2020. Costs have reduced in line with this.

The majority of our income comes from Sport Ireland and other grant aid (81% in 2020 v 56% in 2019), and as such means we've been able to remain relatively agile during the pandemic, compared to some other sports bodies that have more diverse income strands dependant on ticket sales or major sponsorships.

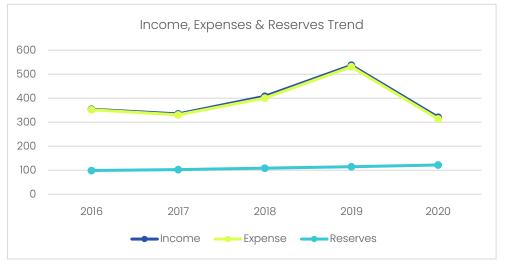
Typically, our programmes and competitions more or less run at cost, so when income isn't coming in then our expenses reduce in line. Although entry fees for club and school competitions have reduced significantly so have costs, which have allowed the organisation to retain a small surplus of 7k, which is in line with previous years (6k 2019, 6k 2018).

The cash the organisation currently holds has more than doubled to 369k (175k in 2019), which is mainly due to the deferral of a number of projects that have already been paid for by Sport Ireland, such as Women in Sport, Special Projects & Dormant Accounts Inclusion. These projects will resume in 2021. We also

received €71,500 in Covid Grant support to help re-start Volleyball activity in 2021.

The organisation's reserves have therefore increased to 122k which is roughly 50% of our annual operational costs. We are currently working on a formal Reserves policy but as a general rule it is good practise to have 6 months of operational costs in reserve.

Balance Sheet	2020	2019	2018
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Assets	6,833	9,352	0
Current Assets			
Stocks	14,030	9,395	12,405
Debtors	31,800	110,404	36,239
Cash & Equivalent	369,488	175,149	233,566
	415,318	294,948	282,210
Creditors due within 1 year	-299,848	-188,738	-172,643
Net Current Assets	115,470	106,210	109,567
Total Assets Less current liabilities	122,303	115,562	109,567
Capital and Reserves			
Income & Expenditure Account	€122,303	€115,562	€109,567





The surplus generated doesn't paint the full picture and covers over some areas of concerns such as:

- Some usual income strands such as player registration will be reduced in Q4 2021 as all 2020-21 licenses will be rolled over free of charge for the new season, which is to compensate the 446 players, plus coaches & officials that registered for the previous National League season.
- We expect the re-engagement of players into the sport, as well as schools and recreational teams will be a challenge with ongoing indoor sport and travel restrictions, and as such we are projecting a reduction in those income lines for 2021.
- For the last six months of 2020 one staff member was absent on maternity leave, whilst this salary saving was beneficial, the impact on our strategic objectives wasn't as severe due to ongoing restrictions.

As we account on an accrual basis, we have also deferred over 11k in revenue for programmes that did not happen in 2020. This includes 2k in primary school competition fees, 8k in fundraising for the u19s Women's National Team and 1.3k in u20 Men's National Team funding.

There is a full and detailed comparison of the income & expenditure account in the Audited Financial Statements appendix.

#### Some key P&L variances versus 2019:

- Competitions Entry Fees & Registration: no Recreational or Youth competitions and free entry to the National League for clubs has reduced this income line significantly.
- 2. School Entry Fees: All competitions cancelled.
- 3. Grants: As outlined above a number of grants have been deferred into 2021.
- National Teams: The cancellation of the u19w/u20m
   Small Countries Association Championships reduced costs by over 30k versus 2019.
- Retail Equipment: Due to a lack of volleyball activity our online retail operation has reduced. However, to offset the potential impact of Brexit, a number of purchases were made to increase the stock levels of the shop in Q4 2020.
- 6. Salaries: As outlined above (Maternity leave) as well as the Sport Ireland Aspire Graduate was only employed for 2 months in 2020 versus 9 months in 2019.
- 7. Software: A full year of Go Membership versus 6 months in 2019 has increased costs by 2k.
- 8. Annual Awards: Cancelled due to Covid 19.
- 9. Intl Events: All Intl events postponed due to Covid 19.
- 10. Courses: A number of coach education courses, mainly Teacher Training workshops couldn't be delivered due to Covid 19.

## Detailed Income & Expenditure

Income Line	2020	2019	Expense	2020	2019
Annual Awards & Events	-28	8099	Advertising & Marketing	3156	2025
Beach Event Intl	0	50473	Annual Awards Dinner & Events	0	9573
Beach Events	4410	15176	Audit & Accountancy	4122	6391
Other Grants	3573	13120	Bank Charges	825	846
Club Affiliation Fees	7360	14214	Beach Event Expenses	271	1729
Coaching & Referee Courses	3629	7747	Capital Grant Costs	3390	-388
Coaching Registrations	811	115	CEV Project	237	2655
Competition Entry Fees	2960	9037	Cleaning	281	281
Equipment Sales	5244	10089	Closing Stock	-14030	-9395
Indoor Event Intl	0	17079	Club Development & Training	540	0
National Squad Beach	0	739	Coach & Referee Courses	3338	4522
National Squad Men	2356	20394	Competition Costs	8077	12223
National Squad Team Green	891	0	Depreciation	3120	1108
National Squad Women	236	14195	Direct Costs	3764	6351
Other Income	350	0	Dormant Account Project Costs	6351	4650
Patrons of Development	144	144	Equipment for Coaching	1401	1261
Player Registration Fees	18561	22598	Equipment for Resale	10071	4747
Referee Registrations	1370	1350	Hardware & Technology	544	2717
School Entry Fees	5137	11397	Insurance	12882	12543
Sponsorship	0	4000	Intl Beach Event	96	65177
Sport Ireland Aspire Grant	2127	19139	Intl Indoor Event	0	17220
Sport Ireland Core Grant	210000	200000	Light & Heat	2363	2615
Sport Ireland Dormant Acc Inclusion Grant	23706	32127	Medals, Trophies, Prizes	4764	7474
Sport Ireland WIS Grant	20458	35502	Memberships	1818	2551
Staff Coaching Services Income	7143	14371	National Squad Beach	0	4871
Sundry Sales & Fines	659	1336	National Squad Men	5537	21826
Sport Ireland Special Projects	0	10000	National Squad Women & Girls	4468	26196
Women in Sport Other Revenue	0	4875	Opening Stock	9395	12405
Total Income	321095	537315	Phone Mobile Internet	4565	2565
			Photography Video Live Stream	1818	3360
Surplus	6741	6192	Postage	1909	718
			Printing & Stationary	7783	12705
			Referee Expenses	1823	8107
			Rent & Rates	11951	11900
			School & Development Costs	9607	15741
			Software	5002	2965
			Staff Coaching Services	1045	0
			Staff Salaries	188678	220545
			Strategy Development	0	331
			Travel Expenses	289	10796
			Women in Sport Project Costs	3103	12401
			Training Camps	0	4816
			Total Expense	314354	531123



# GOVERNANCE

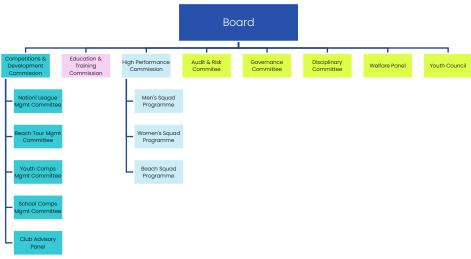


## **About the Organisation**

Volleyball Ireland is the Governing body for the sport of Volleyball in the 26 counties of Ireland. Formed in 1968, the organisation's mission is to develop, promote and effectively govern Volleyball in Ireland.

In summary, the organisation's core work is to organise a range of competitions and programmes to grow participation in the sport, leading to an improvement in National team performance in both Volleyball and Beach Volleyball formats of the game.

As the National Federation, we are affiliated to the Confederation de Europeene Volleyball (CEV), Federation de Internationale Volleyball (FIVB), Olympic Federation of Ireland (OFI) and are members of the Federation of Irish Sport, as well as being a Sport Ireland funded body.



## **Company Info**

Legal Name: Volleyball Association of Ireland, Company Limited by

Guarantee

Trading Name: Volleyball Ireland

Registered Office: 141 Thomas Street, Dublin, Ireland

Website: volleyballireland.com

Principal Bankers: Bank of Ireland, Ballsbridge

**Auditor: Searing Point** 

Company Number: 317399

**Directors:** 

President (Chair): Grainne Culliton
Secretary: Regina Halpin
Treasurer: Rachael Kilgallen

Vice President: Clodagh NicCanna (Doherty)

Alfredo Aloi Erica Fatini Derek McGrath Cliona Boland Stephen Moreton

Resigned: Barbara Wojcik Jaruga (April 2021)

Denise Tallon (September 2020)
Peter McDonnell (September 2020)
Aidan Curran (September 2020)

Alddir Currair (September 2

General Manager Gary Stewart



# **Board and Governance Issues**

The Board Directors during the 2020-21 season:

Name	Role	Bio	B/M Att.	Term Info
Grainne Culliton	President	Grainne is a qualified accountant and international tax expert. She's held a number of roles within Volleyball both on the Board, as part of National teams and as part of her club Ballymun Patriots. Grainne is a National Grade Referee and qualified Coach.	8/8	Joined 2013 3 Terms completed
Clodagh NicCanna (Doherty)	Vice President	Clodagh is a Director of a global software development team who write software for the Optical Industry. Clodagh's speciality is People and Process Management. Clodagh started playing Volleyball at the age of 13 in DCGA and has represented Ireland at various age groups through to the Senior team. She's held a number of leadership roles within clubs and within Volleyball Ireland including Competitions Secretary. During this time she introduced the Premier 32 competition with Northern Ireland and the first Beach Volleyball <i>Circuit of Ireland</i> . She is a National Grade referee and experienced coach.	8/8	Joined 2019 1 term completed
Regina Halpin	Secretary	Regina is an active player for UCD, as well as on both Volleyball and Beach Volleyball National Team squads. Hailing from Co. Galway, Regina is a qualified physiotherapist. Regina has been involved in volleyball from a young age and has represented Ireland at junior level as well as Senior honours.	7/8	Joined 2018 1 term completed
Rachael Kilgallen	Treasurer	Rachael Kilgallen is a Chartered Accountant employed in the National Treasury Management Agency as an Assistant Finance Manager. She completed her qualification in Deloitte where she trained as an Auditor in Financial Services. She has a huge interest in sport and is a keen runner in her spare time.	2/2	Joined 2021 0 terms completed
Alfredo Aloi	Board Member	Alfredo's volleyball journey started over 20 years ago in Italy where he held various roles, from player to referee, including a 6 year collaboration with the Sicilian Committee of the Italian Volleyball Federation. During this time Alfredo was in charge of supporting their equivalent of the Competitions Board and in the latter part he was part of their Disciplinary Committee. Alfredo is currently actively involved in the development of volleyball in Cork, where he holds a management position with Net Force Volleyball Club Cork. Alfredo's occupation outside of volleyball entails developing and motivating talents to achieve goals, with a specific focus on training and communication.	8/8	Joined 2020 0 terms completed
Erica Fatini	Board Member	Erica is a former professional player in her native Italy and has been a driving force behind Munster Thunder VC. Erica is an active coach, referee and mentor and has worked with Ireland's underage national squads. In her professional career she is a leading kitchen designer.	7/8	Joined 2020 0 terms completed
Stephen Moreton	Board Member	Stephen is a former professional cricketer, who has worked in a number of professional coaching roles including as Head Coach for the Ireland Women's team. He was the first in post of the CI Coach Education & Development pathway for 1500 coaches in Ireland, and in 2015 setup his own business as an organisational performance coach. Stephen has an MBA in	2/2	Joined 2021 0 terms completed



		International Sports Management from Loughborough University and, is a qualified Executive Coach and is accredited to deliver <i>Insights Discovery</i> .		
Derek McGrath	Independent Director	Derek runs a sports business consultancy and is a veterinary surgeon. Derek was formerly CEO of ERC Ltd which ran the Heineken Cup in Rugby and has also been CEO of Curragh Racecourse overseeing the redevelopment of the racecourse. Derek is a former Board director at Basketball Ireland and played rugby at International level.	2/2	Joined 2021 0 terms completed
Cliona Boland	Independent Director	Cliona M Boland is a practising Barrister, engaged in many differing areas. She works in Dublin and in the west of Ireland. As a student she studied Law (B.C.L.) in University College Cork and at the Honorable Society of King's Inns, Dublin. She studied at the Law Society of Ireland, post-qualification, and obtained a Diploma in Sports Law. She has extensive experience lecturing in many legal subjects and co-taught Sports law in UCD in 2020.	2/2	Joined 2021 0 terms completed

#### **Board Composition**

67% of Board Members are female, which is closely aligned with female v male participation rates, Volleyball Ireland are one of the few National Governing Bodies of Sport with gender balance on the Board.

On March 22nd 2021, Volleyball Ireland's member clubs elected Derek McGrath and Cliona Boland as Independent Directors, following a robust recruitment process by the Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee also recommended the co-option of Stephen Moreton, as well as the co-option of Rachael Kilgallen if a Treasurer vacancy arises. Barbara Wojcik-Jaruga resigned as Treasurer in April and Rachael was co-opted until the upcoming AGM.

### Meetings

The Board met formally eight times since the last AGM, held in September 2020, and other ad hoc project specific meetings. Overall, the board had a 93% attendance rate.

General Manager, Gary Stewart reports to the Board and sits in on Board Meetings in a non-voting capacity. Gary attended 7/8 Board Meetings since the last AGM.

#### **Board Member Selection**

The Board can be composed of between six and nine Directors, of which two must be Independent and recommended by a Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee is currently comprised of the National President (Grainne Culliton) and two non-board of staff members. These are: John Doherty and Michelle Tanner. The Board can co-opt up to two Directors based on a skills gap analysis of the Board. All other Directors are elected by the Membership at an AGM or EGM.

#### Board Member Induction & Training

Volleyball Ireland have developed a robust and in-depth induction programme which includes IvI meetings with staff, Commissions and fellow Directors, as well as formal training from external industry experts. Upon joining the Board all Directors must sign a



Letter of Appointment detailing their roles and responsibilities, and take part in a *Role of the Board* Training session. A calendar of training opportunities is provided related to a skills self–assessment that each Board Member completes.

#### The Role of the Board

The Board of Volleyball Ireland meets regularly so as to provide strategic leadership to the Company, exercise effective control over the organisation, and monitor executive management and performance.

The Board is wholly non-executive and comprises nominees of the Membership, through election, co-option by the Board and independent Directors. The primary responsibility of all Directors is to act in the best overall interest of Volleyball Ireland at all times.

Some Board Members will hold portfolios and act as the accountable person for delivery of each Commission and Board Sub-Committee operational plans. Directors can hold multiple portfolios.

Specific responsibilities of the Board are:

- •To provide vision, leadership and direction for the Company, normally through the consideration and approval of Strategic Plans
- •In this context, to define the Company's mission, decide its strategic goals and approve policies to achieve those goals

- •To ensure that the Company is well managed and that a proper balance is maintained between the respective roles of the Board and the General Manager and staff
- •To set performance targets and, in particular, to approve and monitor the Annual Operating Plan and Budget
- •To ensure that the Company behaves ethically and in a manner that accords with its core values as determined in the Strategic Plan
- •To define and promote the Company's role in the community by consulting its stakeholders and informing the public in an open accountable manner
- •To agree the General Manager's performance objectives in consultation with him/her

#### Conflict of Interests

The board has a conflict of interests policy whereby each Director must declare any potential conflicts of interest by written statement at the start of each year. Any board meeting agenda items which may raise a conflict are recorded in the minutes at the start of each Board Meeting. Conflict of Interests 2020–21: Nil. The Conflict of Interests policy is next due for review in January 2022.



#### Governance Code

In December 2020, Volleyball Ireland adopted the Sport Ireland Governance Code as a type B organisation. The Code includes the adoption of 64 different actions across five principles of good governance.

#### **Decision Making**

In summary, the Board control and govern the organisation.

Strategic powers are distributed to the Commissions or Board

Sub-Committees. Where necessary, Commissions may establish sub-committees to oversee competitions or specific tasks.

Staff are assigned to the day-to-day operations of the company, helping and supporting Commissions and Sub-Committees to carry out their functions. In short, the Board through the Commissions set the strategic direction for the company, and staff are tasked with ensuring its delivery.

#### Performance Management & Reporting

Volleyball Ireland's Performance Management and Reporting system are aligned with Performance objectives established for staff at the start of the year. Monthly Activities Reports relate to these objectives. Board Meeting papers are typically circulated 7 days in advance of Board Meetings and include updates from Commissions, staff and Management Accounts.

Each staff member takes part in an annual performance review, with weekly IvIs. The President acts as the line manager to the General Manager, who is the line manager of all staff within the organisation.

#### Remuneration

Any alterations to employee remuneration is currently decided wholly by the Board.



## **Commissions & Committees**

#### Commissions

A Commission means a body established by the Board for the purposes of carrying out the functions specified by the Board and as further set out in Article 15 of the Constitution and this Regulation 8. The role of the Commissions within Volleyball Ireland is to provide strategic guidance and oversee the development of a range of key activities including providing advice to the Board and carrying out its functions under the strategic plan of the Sport.

To facilitate the development of the Sport and in keeping with the strategic plan, the following principal Commissions shall be established by the Board:

- (i) The Competitions and Development Commission
- (ii) The Education and Training Commission
- (iii) The High Performance Commission

Commissions will be responsible across the breath of the Sports' disciplines and shall take this responsibility into specific consideration as part of their work. Commissions shall report to the Board via prescribed and clear reporting lines and the Board shall have oversight of their activities and budgeting. Staff officers are activated to support each element of the Commissions.

Competitions & Development Cor Board Sponsor: Clodagh NicCanno	
National League Mgmt Committee	Jennifer Fitzgerald Kevin Donnelly Fiona Dooley
Beach Tour Mgmt Committee	Miriam Gormally Marie-Claire Sabogal Cynthia Pawelski
Schools Development Committee	Mary Barrett Vivienne O'Neill Siobhan Tully Jennifer O'Buacella
Youth Comps Advisory Group	Jennifer Moret Karyme Kaminski Annie McBennett Leigh O'Connell
Education & Training Commission Board Sponsor: Alfredo Aloi	High Performance Commission Board Sponsor: Stephen Moreton
Des Currivan Colette King Declan Ryan Mikal O'Boyle	Cillian Bracken Oisin McArdle Marie-Claire Sabogal



#### Committees

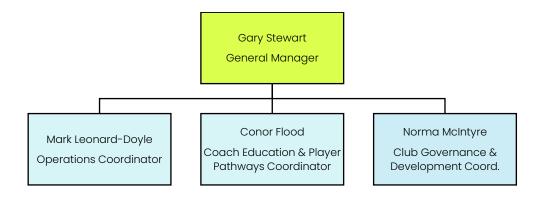
As well as sport focussed Commissions, The Board has established, a number of Sub-Committees to focus on the business side of the organisation. Like the Commissions, each Committee has a board member representative.

As well as the current Sub-Committees the Board are in the process of establishing a Youth Council, which will focus on ensuring young people have a voice within the organisation, a Disciplinary & Complaints Committee which will assess the validity of any complaints and suggest next steps in the process, and the Governance Committee which will ensure the continued improvement and good governance of the organisation.

Audit & Risk	Welfare Panel
Board Sponsor: Rachael	Board Sponsor:
Kilgallen	
Jue Gao	
Lorenzo Battistin	

#### Staff

At the time of the 2021 AGM, Volleyball Ireland employs four members of staff, which is a decrease of one versus the last Annual Report. Participation and Inclusion Coordinator Jessie Carmody resigned her position in March 2021, following maternity leave.



#### Volunteers

All Directors, Commission and Committee Members as well as National Team Coaches are volunteers. It's impossible to put an exact figure on the number of volunteers involved in the operation of the organisation to the sheer number of events and clubs involved.

# **Managing Risk**

The definition of risk management is the amount of risk an organisation is willing to take to reach its objectives. With this in mind the board have created a risk appetite statement that explains the amount of risk the Board are willing to take, related to the strategic objectives set out in Raising the Game.

Raising the Game established core values that are embedded into the culture of the organisation. These include Integrity – that's why it's important our risk appetite is public and transparent for our members, and Ambition – that's why we need to take risks to gain the rewards that our great sport and members deserve.

Understanding our risk appetite will help us govern effectively, making informed decisions across all areas of the organisation. There are certain risks that we will not tolerate, and some in which we have a high tolerance for.

The following scale highlights the spectrum of risk tolerance.

Risk Seeking	Risk Tolerant	Risk Neutral	Moderately Risk Averse	Risk Averse		
We believe that taking	We are willing to take some	We will take a balanced	We will take a cautious	We will not tolerate any risk		
greater risks is justified to	risks and take some	and informed approach,	approach to taking risks,	nor any negative impact		
reap significant rewards	negative impact than we	willing to accept both	with only a small negative			
and achieve strategic	normally would to achieve	positive and negative	impact being tolerated			
objectives.	strategic objectives	impacts				



Volleyball Ireland's strategic goals each have a differing tolerance level:

Strategic Goal	Current context	Risk Appetite
Raising	Participation levels are low compared with other sports, and have been	Risk Seeking
Participation	in decline for many years before stagnating recently. Yet with a	Participation is our key driver and increasing this will have
	significant schools programme there is huge potential.	significant benefits across the sport.
Raising Operational	The importance of good governance in this sector has never been	Moderately Risk Averse
Standards	higher, with Sport Ireland insisting on Governance Code adoption and	Whilst we need to make improvements to our governance
	regular audits which will impact on funding streams that make up 64%	arrangements, the negative impact of this going wrong are
	of our current income.	too high.
Raising	Our world and European rankings are very low. However, high	Risk Tolerant
Performance	performance sport is expensive. Do we focus on national teams before	We will tolerate risk as ultimately national team performances
	club structures are strengthened and participation is raised?	can only improve, yet we need to be somewhat cautious
		managing the financial aspect.
Raising the Profile	Relative to other NGBs our internal marketing activities are minimal,	Risk Tolerant
	although new initiatives have recently been introduced and member	We will tolerate risk as we are starting from a low base,
	engagement is strong.	however we will be cautious of potential reputational damage
		controversial marketing campaigns may have.
Fundraising &	The organisation has been at break even level for several years with	Risk Averse
Finance	64% of income is derived from central government. Although this is	The nature of our finances and the fact we are at the mercy of
	expected to increase during the Covid pandemic.	external funding for the majority of our income means we will
		not tolerate any risk in this area.
Monitoring &	The risk appetite statement will be reviewed quarterly when strategic obje	ective progress reports are published. A risk management
Review	summary will be included in the annual report.	



Alongside the risk appetite statement is a risk register which is reviewed at the start of each calendar year and identifies key risks and opportunities that might arise from them. It also establishes options to mitigate against those risks.

With the intention of transparency, Volleyball Ireland identified the following key risks for 2020:

Key Risks	Type of Risk	Mitigation
Covid-19 Pandemic severely impacts finances of the organisation and its member clubs	Financial Risk	Explore all organisational efficiencies and take a cautious approach to hosting of events and new programmes. Explore potential Govt supports to help member clubs.
Covid-19 Pandemic severely impacts participation within the sport	Strategic Risk	Develop new and innovative ways to engage people in Volleyball, exploring new programmes to re-start Volleyball activity post Covid 19.
Covid-19 Pandemic impacts on club, coach and referee development	Strategic Risk	Develop a range of online workshops and trainings to continuously develop volunteers and clubs.
Covid-19 Health & Safety of Members and Employees	Reputational Risk / Organisational Risk	Ensure robust Covid 19 return to play protocols are in place and approved by sport Ireland for both playing members and staff, including work from home supports.
Safeguarding and Welfare issues	Reputational / Legal Risk	Continue to engage with Sport Ireland on best practise Safeguarding policy and procedures.
Lack of adequate skills on the Board	Organisational Risk	Developed board induction and training programme, and recruited highly qualified Independent Directors, as well as co-opting based on necessary skill sets.





# **Appendix 1: Strategic Objectives Detailed Commentary**

2022 Target Achieved	2021 Target Achieved	Target Delayed	Target Off Track for 2022

Key Strategic Measure 2022	Start Point	2018-19	2019-20	2020–21 Target	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Target	2020-21 Progress Update Summary	2021-22 Season Action Plan	Bar Chart Code	% Achieved
Increase the number of licensed players to 1,251, from 834.	803	1040	1062	1,050	446	1251	Due to Covid 19, the number of people with player licenses has dropped significantly, as outlined in the Competitions Commission section of the Annual Report.  We are positive this target will be achieved with an easing of restrictions later this year.	Re-vamped Beach Tour along with new participation programmes for children & adults will drive licensing.	Participa tion	42%
Have a network of 12 active Volleyball Activators promoting and delivering participation programmes in colleges around Ireland	0	0	7	6	7	12	This project is ahead of schedule with the programme launched in Q4 2019. 7 HEVOS have been recruited and trained through Sport Ireland Women in Sport Training. Programme has been widely recognised as good practise and will be replicated by other NGBs.	The project will re-commence in Q4 2021.	DIVA	117%
Have a network of 8 Volleyball Activators promoting participation in Volleyball clubs and communities across Ireland	0	0	0	4	0	8	On hold due to Covid. The programme content and training has been designed. Will resume in 2021 covid restrictions pending	The project will re-commence in Q3 2021.	Activator s	0%
Have at least 100 Social Volley players active across the country	0	0	0	20	0	100	Project to be prioritised in 2021 and re-launched with a Social Volley registration model in partnership with clubs.  Due to Covid19 this is likely to happen in Q3 2021.	The project will re-commence in Q3 2021.	Social Volley	0%

Increase the number of School entries in the National Cup Competitions to 1,141 from 847 in 2018.	901	913	923	950	0	1141	2020 competitions cancelled due to Covid. Upward trend over last two years and longer term target can be achieved, but is very much dependent on Covid restrictions and Dept of Education directives to schools.	Additional outdoor competitions to be developed, and more participation based Primary school events.	School Entry	0%
Deliver the TY Programme to 602 Volley Leaders per year, by year 4.	400	417	461	475	386	602	Programme heavily practical and postponed in 2020 due to Covid. Online version to be delivered from Q1 2021 has helped support numbers.	The programme will continue online with a club leaders version added in Q3.	TY Volley	81%
Grow Member Club affiliation to 32 clubs	20	22	24	28	25	32	19 Full member clubs and 6 associated registered at present that compete in the National League Programme.	Club support programme is to be introduced with a comprehensive support package for new clubs.  More Recreational competitions will support this as will a regionalisation of Youth Leagues and the introduction of the Development League.	Member Clubs	89%
16 clubs have completed the Club Mark Bronze award	0	0	3	6	3	16	3 clubs have now completed the ClubMark scheme so far with Ballymun Patriots signing off in 2021. A new incentive scheme that includes a 500Eur equipment grant for clubs was launched in early 2020.	We will profile the impact ClubMark is having on member clubs with the intention to inspire new clubs to the programme. GrowVolley to be introduced and will promote ClubMark.	ClubMar k	50%
12 clubs have active Youth sections	0	6	8	10	9	16	The postponement of the Youth Blitz initiative has hindered progress in this area.	A new Youth club programme PlayVolley will be introduced in Q3 that provides more comprehensive support and training for clubs and will be more robustly linked to the CEV Schools Project.	Youth Clubs	90%
8 Volleyball Centres of Development established and sustainable	0	0	0	3	0	8	Due to Covid 19 the Regional Development Centre project is on hold. Significant work preparing the project has been completed by it is likely to be launched in 2021.	The Centres of Development Programme is expected to launch in Q3 2021 with East & West regions for players aged 11-14 years old.	Dev Cent	0%
Adopt the Code of Practice for Good Governance	0	0	0	1	1	1	The Governance Code was adopted in December 2020.	Work will continue to support good governance of the organisation including the formation of a Governance Committee.	Gov Code	100%

Appoint a General Manager	0	0	1	1	1	1	Completed in 2018.	N/a	GM	100%
Launch a Club Development Handbook	0	0	1	1	1	1	Complete. A club development handbook is available for download. This live document is updated regularly and provides templates to assist clubs.	More resources will be added to this on a regular basis and will complement the GrowVolley Club Development initiative.	Club Hand	100%
Appoint a data protection officer to manage GDPR policies and compliance	0	0	1	1	1	1	Operations Coordinator Mark Leonard Doyle carries out this function.	N/a	GDPR	100%
Deliver 2 x Anti Doping Education Workshops for players and coaches each year	0	0	2	2	1	2	Anti Doping course delivered as part of Virtual Volley programme but with a lack of tournaments this has not been prioritised.	Anti Doping workshops will be promoted in line with a return to competition. A new Anti Doping Officer for Volleyball Ireland will be recruited to support this work.	Anti D	50%
Appoint a National Children's Officer to manage Garda Vetting and Safeguarding and Protecting Children & Vulnerable adults compliance	0	0	1	1	1	1	Development Officer Norma McIntyre carries out this function for the organisation. Volleyball Ireland were one of the first NGBs to create an independent welfare panel to advise on related issues.	This work continues with Volleyball Ireland adhering to good practise. A new club audit system will be introduced by Sport Ireland in 2021.	Child Off	100%
Launch a Long Term Player Development Model	0	0	0	1	1	1	The LTPD Model project was launched in November 2020 and features a range of content for clubs. Coaches, players and parents.	The LTPD model is a key policy document which will continue to inform decision making within the organisation. This model will be continuously promoted to clubs.	LTPD	100%
Have 24 teams actively participating in the Youth National League.	0	12	12	16	n	24	Eleven teams currently participating in u16 division, with five in the Development League. Covid aside the number of licensed players aged u18 has increased consistently in recent years.	Continue to develop participation and competition opportunities for teams. The Youth National League Boys section is a priority for the 2021-22 season.	Youth NL	69%



Train 24 new Level 1 (or equivalent) coaches	0	0	14	16	14	24	14 L1 Coaches trained in 2019. No L1 in 2020.	Develop and implement the Tier 2 & 3 level of the Coach Development Programme.	LI	88%
Train 64 new Foundation (or equivalent) coaches	0	0	13	32	50	64	13 Foundation Coaches trained in 2019. 37 trained in 2020.	Further develop the tier 1 level of the Coach Development Programme recruiting new coaches to the sport.	New Coach	156%
Train 36 new referees	0	0	6	22	14	36	8x Grade 3 refs trained, certification not completed in 2020 due to covid restrictions	Continue to deliver training online and develop a new Beach Referee qualification	New Ref	64%
Train 100 Chair Volley Leaders	0	0	60	48	60	100	60 Chair Volley Leaders were educated in 2019 as the programme was delivered in partnership with a number of Local Sports Partnerships. 0 delivered in 2020 due to covid.	This project will likely remain on hold due to Covid.	Chair	125%
Increase Social Media Followers by 80%	261 4	3933	5191	6229	5833	7475	The overall target based on an 80% increase from 2018 figures would have been already achieved, but this target is re-set year on year to grow by 20%. Volleyball action shots and league results typically drive engagement which has been reduced due to Covid.	Continue to develop more engaging content and increase the number of live streams delivering throughout the season.	Social Media	94%
Have 600 monthly subscribers to the Volleyball e-newsletter	0	0	1612	500	1585	600	The number of subscribers has dropped a little in line with player licenses but is still significantly ahead of target.	Introduce more people focussed profiles to generate interest in the newsletter.	News	317%
Increase member satisfaction year on year	0	56	72	73	72	76	Baselines were established through Stakeholder survey in 2019. 2021 satisfaction ratings have shown a slight decrease versus 2020.	Continue to engage with stakeholders and take into account suggestions, ideas and feedback that can improve all aspects of the organisation.	Satis	99%

