

Address by Sport Ireland Board Chairman Kieran Mulvey on the occasion of the Launch of the Masterplan for the Sport Ireland Campus*

17th November 2022.

A Taoisigh, An Tanaiste, a Aire, a Aire Stait, and members of the Oireachtas.

On behalf of the Board and Staff of Sport Ireland I wish you all a most cordial welcome to the Sport Ireland Campus.

I know Taoiseach this is your first visit and I hope you will be impressed with the developments in the Campus to date.

Today represents further significant progress for the sports community in Ireland. A community who have, in their many sporting disciplines, generously and with immense pride returned that investment with unparalleled achievements at national and international level.

One hundred years on from the foundation of this State, the flag of our Nation has flown on many fields, stadia and arenas reflecting the successes of our athletes in many sporting endeavours.

This Masterplan represents a major milestone in the development of Sport Ireland and the Sport Ireland Campus.

It is a major and positive assertion and vote of confidence in our current National Sporting Bodies, their athletes and their voluntary Boards.

It is a reward for their extraordinary successes. They have already achieved seven gold medals in World Championships in four sports this year, with 92 major medals having been won by Irish athletes and teams in 2022 to date. This will be a record year of medal winning performances for Ireland. Of particular note is the

continuing and increasing achievements and successes of our female athletes and teams at international level.

This Government commitment represents a major investment in the highest quality of high performance facilities and is a major contribution to the future in all forms of Olympic sports, World and European Championships and our own National sports.

The existing sports facilities are of a world class standard and the future plans for new sports specific buildings will continue this objective.

These are reflected in the National Aquatic Centre, our National Indoor Arenas, our National Institute for Sport, the playing fields/facilities for GAA, IRFU, FAI, Hockey, Boxing, Cricket, Horse Sport, Cross Country and the HQ's for many NGB's, including the Olympic Federation of Ireland, Special Olympics and Sport Ireland.

What started as a vision and a dream many decades ago is fast becoming a reality. Our thanks go to all who contributed to this Masterplan, to the Government and all who have supported and endorsed this ambition.

New projects are in planning and concept stage such as the Velodrome/Badminton Centre and we are actively pursuing options for a new hotel, conference centre, athletes accommodation centred on the heritage mansion of Abbotstown House.

Ireland is a sporting nation on many levels and in many sports. We succeed in many fields and in many disciplines and in field sports in all genders and in a spirit of inclusivity, regardless of race and physical and mental capacity.

We have a zero tolerance on doping and we aspire to the highest standards in sportspersonship. Our current and future representation in sport will continue to reflect our inclusive and multicultural nation.

Today is an investment in our sporting community and nation and a vehicle to realise the ambitions and aspirations of our young population so that the traditions and successes of their predecessors can be sustained, maintained and improved upon.

Our thanks are due especially to Pat O'Connor and the Campus Board, to our Consultants on the Project, the Local Representatives and Officials of Fingal County Council, and to Tony Lawless and his team who have brought their time and expertise to the realisation of this Masterplan.

Taoiseach and members of the Government, representatives of the Department and the many past and current Board members who have made this day possible please come back in future years and survey your enduring legacy to the Sport Ireland Campus.

Today represents nearly my swansong as Chairman of the then Irish Sports Council and now Sport Ireland.

I want to thank especially all those who made my tenure exciting, fulfilling and controversial. There never was a dull moment.!!

The Chair of a State Body requires supportive Ministers, understanding Departmental Officials, truly great staff and professional and reliable Chief Executives . I was privileged to have a combination of all these during my tenure.

I thank you all.

Kieran Mulvey, Chairman

Sport Ireland.

* Note – This is the speech as it was prepared. There may have been some slight variation in delivery