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Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
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27 March 2024

Dear Chair

Accounting Officer Assessment: EURO 2028 Programme

It is normal practice for Accounting Officers to scrutinise significant policy proposals or plans to start or vary major projects, and then assess whether they measure up to the standards set out in Managing Public Money. From April 2017, the Government has committed to make a summary of the key points from these assessments available to Parliament for projects within the Government's Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP).

Background and Context

UEFA announced the UK and Ireland as successful hosts for EURO 2028 in October 2023, following a competitive bid process with Turkey. EURO 2028 will be the biggest sporting event our islands have ever jointly hosted, building on our world-leading track record of delivering major sporting events.

It is predicted to deliver cumulative socio-economic benefits of up to £2.4 billion to cities and communities across the UK, driving growth and enriching lives. It will deliver jobs and volunteering opportunities, as well as inbound tourism, business opportunities and much more, acting as a beacon to show that the UK is open to visitors from around the world. A £45 million legacy fund is being created to help deliver a lasting legacy for communities across the UK and Ireland.

The UEFA European Championships (EUROs) is globally the second largest football tournament, held every four years. The men's tournament was last fully hosted in the UK (England) in 1996, with England and Scotland also hosting matches during EURO 2020 (hosted in 2021 due to the Covid pandemic). The tournament forms a key part of our pipeline of major events over the next decade.

The successful UK and Ireland bid was delivered through a collaboration of five government partners, five respective Football Associations and UK Sport. These partners will now work alongside UEFA (the rights-holder), UK and Ireland 2028 Ltd. (a private limited company to be set up by the Football Associations to coordinate key aspects of tournament delivery),

host cities, stadia, police and other stakeholders to deliver the tournament from 2025 onwards.

This AO assessment considers the four accounting officer standards of regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility.

Regularity

I assess the EURO 2028 programme as regular. Funding for the delivery of the tournament is agreed via HM Treasury's approval of the Full Business Case in March 2023, and should be confirmed through future fiscal events.

We are confident that we have the relevant powers to fund all areas committed to in the budget. UK Government funding for UK and Ireland 2028 Ltd. and host cities will be made available through UK Sport. The funding provisions in section 3 of the Physical Training and Recreation Act 1937 and/or s50 UKIM enable the UK Government to Grant in Aid to UK Sport. UK Sport's 1997 Royal Charter then gives it the power to onward fund across the UK. Funding for other government departments can be made available under existing legislation. Spending will be compliant with UK and European law (so far as relevant), including rules on subsidy control.

Summary: I assess that there are no issues of regularity.

Propriety

I assess the EURO 2028 programme as proper. It is compliant with parliamentary control procedures and expectations. Careful consideration has been given to interaction with other parts of the public sector and the programme's consistency with overall government policy. Commitments made by Government during the bid process were consistent with UK Government principles of propriety and the actions of UK and Ireland 2028 Ltd. during the delivery of the tournament will also be appropriately consistent.

Summary: I assess that there are no proprietary issues.

Value for Money

The EURO 2028 programme will be delivered in accordance with HMT's Managing Public Money guidance to ensure best value for public sector investment.

The cost benefit analysis conducted for the full business case demonstrated that EURO 2028 could be hosted in the UK and Ireland in a manner in which the public sector investment can be justified by the benefits. The tournament is predicted to deliver up to £2.4 billion of socio-economic benefits across the UK and hosting the tournament will also provide significant opportunities for local and regional suppliers across the UK.

Sport is estimated to be worth over £48.9 billion a year in GVA (Gross Value Added) to the UK economy, and hosting major sporting events plays a significant role in delivering continued growth across many of our key sectors. For example, the Office for National

Statistics credited the Women's EUROs and Commonwealth Games with helping the UK's economic return to growth in July 2022, with GDP rising 0.2% between June-July 2022 following a drop of 0.6% the previous month.

Summary: I assess that there are no value for money issues.

Feasibility

The EURO 2028 programme must be delivered on time in June/July 2028. The programme has now entered a transition phase (October 2023 - December 2024), during which it is putting in place firm foundations for tournament delivery (January 2025 to July 2028). The Full Business Case sets out a thorough evidence base for feasibility and I am confident that the tournament can be delivered on time and within budget.

The UK has a world-leading track record of delivering major sporting events (most recently the Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022 and the Rugby League World Cup in 2022). The Football Associations have also delivered recent UEFA events such as EURO 2022 (England) and matches during EURO 2020 (Glasgow and London).

The tournament is largely reliant on existing stadium, transport and accommodation infrastructure. The hosting of matches at Casement Park in Northern Ireland is dependent on the progress and funding of the stadium's build, a separate project led by the Department for Communities in Northern Ireland. Successful delivery of the tournament is dependent on a range of public and private partners across the UK and Ireland. Robust governance, programme management and assurance measures are being put in place to coordinate delivery and ensure value for money. DCMS will continue to undertake close monitoring of delivery risks and ensure that mitigating actions, including an appropriate range of contingency venues and approaches, are taken if necessary.

The programme joined the Government Major Projects Portfolio in January 2024 and as such, will be subject to annual assurance reviews overseen by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority. In January 2023 (during bid phase), the programme was subject to a Gate 0/4 Independent Assurance Review and was provided with a Delivery Confidence Assessment of Amber.

Summary: Based on current plans and contingency arrangements, I assess there are no feasibility issues.

Conclusion

As the Accounting Officer for the EURO 2028 Programme, I considered this assessment and approved it on 27/03/2024.

I have prepared this summary to set out the key points which informed my decision. If any of these factors change materially during the lifetime of this project, I undertake to prepare a revised summary, setting out my assessment of them. This summary will be published on the government's website (GOV.UK). Copies will be deposited in the Library of the House of

Commons, and sent to the Comptroller and Auditor General and Treasury Officer of Accounts.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Storey', written in a cursive style.

Susannah Storey
Permanent Secretary