

14th July 2016

**Special
Olympics**
Ireland



To whom it may concern.

Subject: Special Olympics Ireland – Note on governance

Recent revelations in the media in relation to a number of charities has once more mired our sector in negative publicity and has the potential to betray the trust of volunteers, benefactors, funders and clients of charitable organisations. This is so disappointing for the vast majority of charities, like Special Olympics, who adopt good governance and focus daily on delivering on our stated missions.

It is also challenging for Board Members, patrons, staff, volunteers, athletes, family members & sponsors. They are on occasion put in a position whereby they have to justify their chosen charity on a range of levels. Whilst frustrating, this reaction is understandable. Charities do really depend on the generosity and support of the general public and so many more to succeed.

Special Olympics Ireland has always recognised best practice governance as central to engendering trust for charity organisations, including:

- **Adoption of the Governance Code for Community and Voluntary Organisations**
- **Up to date Registration with the Charities Regulator**
- **Lobbying activities reported regularly on the Register of Lobbying.**
- **Open publication of Annual Directors Report and Audited Financial Statements on our website**
- **Implementation of strict financial control policies limiting individual spending approval and including independent scrutiny**
- **Independence of Board and Executive functions**
- **Voluntary Board Directors, renewed regularly per prescribed maximum six year terms of office**
- **Regular Board meetings and sub-committees, with minutes (six Board meetings per year)**
- **No salary top ups**
- **Currently working with the relevant authorities in both jurisdictions (RoI & NI) to review our M&A (Memo & Arts) to ensure the Special Olympics organisation is operating in compliance with the requirements of the new charities and companies legislation**
- **Commitment to adoption of SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) accounting practice for annual financial returns. We are currently investing in new financial systems which will further strengthen our capabilities in this area**

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us at any time on info@specialolympics.ie On behalf of all our many stakeholders, I would like to thank you for your interest in Special Olympics and for your on-going support. We are very fortunate indeed to have so many people who work together to ensure Special Olympics continues to develop positively and make such a difference to the lives of so many.

Thank you so much for all your support.

Warm regards,

Matt English
Chief Executive Officer