



Louise Hartley

Year of Call: 2008

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Sports law

Louise Hartley was Head of Legal at Sport England for over five years from March 2019 until October 2024. This saw her responsible for public law, regulatory, commercial, data protection, information governance, safeguarding and giving advice on numerous other general in-house legal and regulatory matters.

She was the most senior lawyer in this national sports funding organisation, a non-departmental public body sponsored by DCMS. She reported to Sport England's Chief Finance Officer and lead a team of sixteen with five solicitors, three paralegals as well as the Information Governance Manager, Data Protection Office, Head of Risk, Assurance and Counter Fraud and the Head of Procurement reporting to her.

Louise has extensive experience of sports governance and safeguarding, having overseen and advised on reviews of NGBs in her time at Sport England. She worked closely with sports organisations who had received allegations of safeguarding breaches as well as serious complaints about their policies and procedures.

Safeguarding

Louise has a keen interest in safeguarding, having gained in-depth knowledge and experience in the sporting context. She understands the importance of handling these matters with the utmost care, diligence and sensitivity.

Regulatory

At Sport England, Louise provided advice on compliance and regulatory matters to the Executive Team, Chief Executive Officer and the Board. She also managed the litigation in which the organisation is involved, including instructing external lawyers.

She oversaw Sport England's Complaints Procedure including strategic advice on the handling of complaints about and the investigations into National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and other funded organisations.

Louise was responsible for the management of Sport England's role as a commissioning organisation in the Whyte Review into allegations of mistreatment within UK gymnastics.

Commercial

Louise has managed a number of commercial and intellectual property issues in sport including advising on brand protection, licensing and strategic/commercial partnerships for the *This Girl Can* campaign; and provided counsel and strategic advice on novel and complex investments of Lottery and Exchequer funding, including various emergency Covid 19 support packages to support the sports sector.

Data Privacy/information law

Louise is an expert on data and privacy issues in sports organisations; and advised on all information law matters including the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. She held the role of Sports England's Acting Data Protection Officer from September 2019 to March 2020.

Recommendations

"In her time as Head of Legal at Sport England Louise has given detailed, appropriate, expert and timely advice both to me and the organisation more widely. She has acted as lead advisor internally whilst also managing a consortia of legal firms providing additional expert views on specific areas of our work.

In terms of focus areas, I would highlight Louise's commissioning and oversight of the Review into systematic abuse in Gymnastics led by Anne Whyte QC; advising at pace on regulatory and other contractual elements around the introduction of the Sport Survival Package during the CV19 pandemic; ensuring Sport England appropriately interprets its regulatory responsibilities and function in particular around complex complaints about National Governing Bodies of Sport; and advising on Sport England's role in the development of the Sports Councils' Guidance on Transgender Inclusion in Sport."

Tim Hollingsworth, Chief Executive, Sport England

Academic qualifications

- BVC, Very Competent, College of Law, London
- LLB (2:1), King's College London

Scholarships

- Harmsworth Scholarship, Middle Temple

Professional qualifications & appointments

- Member of the Sport Resolutions Panel of Arbitrators

Professional bodies

- Honourable Society of Middle Temple
- Association of Regulatory and Disciplinary Lawyers