

'SPORT BEING FORGOTTEN IN OLYMPIC FUNDING ROW,' SAYS CCPR

CCPR chief executive Tim Lamb today expressed deep concern that the true interests of sport in the UK could be overlooked in the escalating row over Olympic funding.

Commenting on the most recent funding estimates, which put the total cost of the 2012 Olympic Games at around £10bn, Tim Lamb said those who run sport in the UK would require ministers to keep a much closer eye on the Games' budget in order to prevent further raids on lottery funds.

He said:

"The public supported the Olympics on the basis of the costs they saw at the time. What they didn't do is give ministers carte blanche to run up bills which community facilities and projects may end up footing. We are seeking assurances that community sport won't lose out as the budget grows.

"It's a dreadful shame that 2012 has been engulfed by this funding row. The Games are fundamentally about sports - yet that's a word that's barely been mentioned in recent months. We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that London 2012 should be a celebration of the Olympic values - not some kind of sporting arms race where each host out-spends the last.

"The Games were billed as the catalyst for getting a generation of kids off the couch and into more active lifestyles. But raiding lottery funding for community sports projects to pay for the Olympics will completely undermine that pledge. If the money is not there for community clubs, they simply won't be able to open their doors as widely for new participants when 2012 comes around.

"2012 isn't just about Olympic sports. CCPR represents around 270 governing bodies of sport and recreation, all of whom could suffer if the lottery is used as a piggy bank for ministers to pay for the Games."

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