



TITLE OF MEETING: Board Meeting
DATE AND TIME: Monday 11th May – 5pm
LOCATION: Virtual Meeting

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

Board Chair: David Tucker (Chair)
Director of Coaching: Mal Evans (COA)
Director of Development: Adam Tanner (DEV)
Director of Governance: Foster Johnson (GOV)
Director of Finance: Stephen Hemsley (FIN)
Independent Director: Dr Anna Molony (IND)
Independent Director – Marketing & Communications: Harry Nijjar (MAR)
Bowls England 2020 President – Paul Robson (PRE)
Chief Executive: Jon Cockcroft (CE)
Head of Business Operations: Helen Slimm (HBO)

Apologies:

Director of Competitive Events: Margaret Docherty (COM)

2. Previous minutes – accuracy/matters arising

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 22nd March and 19th April 2021 be signed as a true and correct record. There were no matters arising.

3. Declarations of Interest

None declared

4. Operational Report

The CE had circulated an operational report, in advance, to provide all board members with an overview of activity since the previous meeting. A summary of the report, which was compiled by both board and staff members, has been circulated within the accompanying synopsis. During the meeting the following further discussions took place:

Member Services and Development:

Feedback had been received on Bowls Big Weekend. We have 600 registrations nationwide, the branding, website and communications have all been produced. Everyone in the meeting was asked to confirm to HBO if they would be able to attend.

The return to play step three guidance was issued on 21st and sent to all Counties and Clubs, with positive feedback on the speediness and clarity of the information.

Club Affiliation 1650 of 1977 clubs have completed the affiliation registration form, which is very positive and will stand us in good stead for ensuring that the correct information gets to the correct person within clubs and will help with our communications structure going forward. This is a huge

step in terms of building club relations and being able to exact real change in the way our sport is delivered, a fundamental element of our strategy to get more people playing.

The PRE indicated that there had been a reduced amount of players nominate for celebration matches for this year with most Counties returning less than 25% of their allocation. PRE and HBO are working together to fill the spaces for these games with invitations being extended to international players, youth players and key club volunteers from within the sport. Following positive feedback from these invitations, it has been a positive initiative that can be reviewed and expanded in future years.

International Success

The full board expressed its delight that, following successful discussions, bowls will be guaranteed its full quota of 10 places within the overall allocation of places within Team England for Birmingham 2022. This has ensured that we will have representatives in every discipline.

World Bowls had shared their plans following a review of their events. The IND and CE discussed the planned World Bowls regional events which would enable qualification at world events going forward. The DEV questioned why the World Bowls Junior tournament only taking place every four years. The FIN asked what return we were getting for the affiliation fee to World Bowls for 2021 and 2022. The CE informed the Board that Bowls England was discussing the global development of the game with other leading member nations. The Board gave approval for Bowls England to be a signatory on correspondence to World Bowls on this matter.

Coaching

COA informed the Board that seven centre of excellences had been set up around the country in clubs that have both indoor and outdoor facilities. The idea behind this is that the practical hands on coaching will take place at a local facility. The full announcement of centres will take place shortly.

Commercial and Finance

The CE advised the Board that a partner proposal was being drafted for Dennis Mowers. The C asked the CE to elaborate on the type of proposal. More detail included Dennis Mowers' support on the educational side of greens maintenance in return for rights as official greens maintenance supporter to Bowls England and other marketing benefits.

Brand and Communications

The Board was presented with the plans for a Brand Refresh. The key changes are a slightly simplified and modernised logo, a broader colour palette and a new look and feel that utilises the shape of a bowl. Feedback on the presentation was given by the FIN, GOV and IND.

Governance and Overheads

The DEV noted that a subject access request had been made for a disciplinary case on which the HSO and our legal team are working. The C made the board aware that Bowls England currently does not have the legal experience within the staff team and, at the current time, the team is not at full capacity. Owing to a number of disciplinary cases coming into the office there is a real strain on staff resource.

5. Operational Plan RAG Status

The CE provided a status update. Whilst good progress had taken place in the high priority areas, there had been a few changes to the plan and the RAG rating since the last meeting. Current workload within the team, had resulted in delays with the new bursary and affiliation strategy, whilst the cancellation of the Youth Academy has resulted in a knock on effect to the development of a Talent Pathway strategy.

6. Management Accounts

Management Accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting. The CE explained that we were still taking a cautious approach to expenditure as the affiliation fee outcome was still unknown. IND asked for clarification on the Coach Bowls Staffing expenses. The CE advised this was time that the Finance Manager and Comms team put into Coach Bowls. After a further review there were no further questions.

7. Governance Working Party Report

The GOV presented the second report from the Governance Working Party and, in doing so, he thanked the Working Party and Sport England for their input to date. The purpose of the report was to provide the Board with a chance to preliminary discuss the proposal ahead of the July Board meeting, when further discussions would take place.

The C thanked the working party and fully supported the recommendations that were put forward. The FIN and IND discussed the principle around both elected and appointed directors.

The Governance Working Party will present a final report to the Board ahead of the July board meeting, when all recommendations will be looked at in full.

9. Risk management and internal control systems

The updated risk register was presented to the Board, the risks that had changed in level were the top five risks at a controlled risk level were discussed.

Failure of business systems - the Board had previously signed off a migration onto cloud based emails which has already taken place. Part of the sign off was to purchase a new server for the head office to store legacy documents and files. At the current time due to restrictions on entering the office a new server has not been purchased, however to reduce the risk the current server has externally managed offsite backups in place.

Facility Audit - a review of the green provision in the country should take place, which will enable us to develop a facilities strategy. This will help us to better understand how to grow the sport, stimulating demand where there is more spare capacity.

Affiliation income – short term work is taking place around the protection of the affiliation income after Covid, whilst the medium term challenge is growing participation and providing value to the clubs. We currently have a plan for this area.

Performance – Commonwealth participation numbers have now been confirmed, our relationship with Sport England is now improving and we are comfortable with our direction of travel.

The current pandemic still features on the risk register and will continue to be reviewed with government guidelines.

10. Disciplinary TOR

Following the Board's commitment to review our disciplinary regulations, the CE advised the Board of a meeting that had recently taken place with the C, DEV, COA, HBO and HSD. This had resulted in terms of reference for a Disciplinary Working Party that would be led by the DEV.

The board had been supplied with the TOR prior to the meeting. Following discussion with the IND and C, it was decided that the TOR will be adopted and that DEV/CE liaise and discuss and appropriate time for the working party to be advertised when appropriate staff resources are available.

11. MAR TOR

The C gave the Board an update following a meeting with the Chair of the MAR committee. The consensus of the Board was that due to the current workloads at national and county level, vacancies on the MAR committee and the impending July Board discussion on the Governance Working Party's proposal, the MAR committee should be paused for the current time. The CE is to arrange a meeting further meeting with the Chair of MAR to keep him up to date with the current Governance Working Party recommendations.

13. Any other notified business

DEV raised a question on club insurance, the C provided an update on the current provisions through Sutton Winson.

The C raised the appointment terms of the IND, following discussion it was agreed that IND appointment would be extended until the 2022 AGM.

Following discussion, the Board agreed to change the date of the July Board meeting to the 27/28th July to coincide with the July test event starting on the 29th. The Board meeting will be held in person at the Chesford Grange.

The meeting closed at 6.30pm.