



Board Minutes

Tuesday 5 October 2021
Virtual Meeting by Zoom

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 Competitive Events: Margaret Docherty (Com)
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 and Communications: Harry Nijjar (Mar)
Chief Executive: Jon Cockcroft (CE)

2. Previous minutes

Aside from a small typographical error, the minutes of the meeting held on 27th and 28th July were approved to 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 meeting synopsis. During the meeting the following further discussions took place.

Member Services:

An update on the late affiliation process was given and there was a discussion about the inconsistency of how counties conduct this, and the effect of the later affiliation date. It was agreed to discuss this with counties at the meeting in November.

The CE shared in his paper that the Sport England funding submission was ongoing and that we were working with the BDA on this important piece of work.

Competitions:

The CE shared that more detail on the 2022 National Championships and Competition information had been shared with counties and the board discussed the



merits of the Middleton and Johns being a round robin or a knock out competitions at the early stages. It was agreed to pick up this as discussion point at the Counties meeting alongside qualification numbers, regional events, travel expenses and Finals draws.

The board raised its concerns about the late payment of travel expenses following the National Finals. The CE explained the various challenges but it was acknowledged that this was not satisfactory.

The travel expenses discussion prompted the Fin to raise the topic of changing the Bowls England financial year given the Nationals is so close to year end. It was resolved that the Fin would develop a paper so the board can consider.

National Finals:

An overview of the National Finals was shared including ticket sales numbers and reach of the live streaming. The CE shared that a survey had gone out to spectators, that it was also important to get player feedback on the greens and that we will digest feedback from counties. Whilst it was acknowledged that there were lots of room for improvement, there was universal praise from the board on delivering an enhanced event in the timescales shaped by Covid and with a number of challenges. Com commended the CE on the hard work of the staff team and there was enthusiasm about the foundations laid for building the National Finals over coming years.

International Success:

The CE informed the board of World Bowls' decision to introduce blue and red bowls for the competing teams at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. The rationale behind this is to make bowls matches more spectator and broadcast friendly, and better position the sport in the eyes of the Commonwealth Games Federation.

Following discussions with Bowls Scotland, the Board were asked to consider its position on the World Bowls fees for 2021/22. It was resolved that Fin would look into this matter and develop a proposal for the board.

Coaching:

Coa updated the board that Coach Bowls was exploring additional Centres of Excellence to ensure a greater geographic coverage.

CE shared an update on the meeting he had with EBCS and the board reiterate its desire to bring our organisations closer together.

CE informed the board that a meeting was planned with EBUA and it was agreed that it was critical that Bowls England and EBUA work on the recruitment of officials at that this was a risk to our competition delivery.

Brand and Communications:

The CE was asked about the recent Zoom call with a number of active social media followers who had been critical of Bowls England. He said it was a worthwhile exercise. Following a discussion, it was resolved to look at a statement to ensure interactions on social media are respectful to Bowls England staff and fellow users.

Governance and Overheads:



The board discussed the ongoing challenges around current disciplinary cases and the importance investing in specialist expertise. Interviews are being held shortly for the Disciplinary Working Party who will conduct a full review of all aspects of Bowls England's disciplinary policies and processes.

An update was given on the board member election process and it was resolved that interview for the Independent Director would be conducted around the Counties meeting.

CE shared that a venue had been found at Loughborough University for the Counties Meeting in November. Following a discussion, it was resolved that each county would be asked to bring 2 delegates, and that Bowls England would pay for travel, accommodation and food for all delegates over the course of the meeting.

5. Operational RAG Status

The CE presented an update on the Operational RAG status. Given the challenge of navigating the sport through the pandemic, and the significant change and workload that had entailed, it was pleasing that the majority of objectives in the 2020/21 Operational Plan has been delivered against target

6. Management Accounts

The CE presented the August Management accounts and informed the board that we are on track for the end of year forecast. The National Finals bottom line was similar to originally budgeted despite the significant change to the event, and it was acknowledged that there was a lot of financial activity that needed to be processed before the year end, which presents challenges.

7. Risk Management

Fin asked whether we had signed up to a credit ratings agency to assess club loan applications and CE said he would find out and report back.

Ind reminded CE of the agreement to have the top 5 risks in a report and CE said he would share these off line.

8. Operational Plan 2021/2

The CE gave the board an overview of the operational plan and budget. Building on the July Board meeting agenda item, the plan explained how Bowls England was going to introduce new initiatives to take advantage of Birmingham 2022 as well as deliver its core functions.

The CE explained the work that had been done with Fin around the budget and that, whilst it was proposed that we would draw on more reserves than in the 6 year financial plan, in the context of a better than expected 2020/21, we would remain ahead of our planned financial position.

Following a discussion about the level of ambition and the extent to which we may need to bring in external agency support for some projects, the plan and budget



was agreed by the board. The CE committed to come back to the next meeting with an update on the major projects when these had been scoped out further.

9. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting at 6.35pm.

Current Actions

Date	Item No.	Action	Assigned	Deadline
27.07.21	4	Proposal to be compiled on Humberside BA	CE	31/3/22
27.07.21	4	Replacement Male selector to be sought for the south region	CE	
27.07.21	8	Annual Awards Dinner to be developed and launched	CE	16/10/21
27.07.21	9	Review with other nations the format of the BIBC/BIWBC championships	CE	31/10/21
27.07.21	10	Board to impose sanctions as determined by the Safeguarding Bowls Case Management Panel	CE	
27.07.21	12	Revised Governance Structure implementation to be carried out 2022/23. Arrange a GWP meeting.	GOV	31/10/21
27.07.21	12	MAR to be re-established at the 2022 AGM	CE	
27.07.21	12	GWP to review with Sport England the need for a company secretary	HBO	
5.10.21	4	Discuss affiliation process at the Counties meeting	CE	26/11/21
5.10.21	4	Develop a paper on the merits of changing the Bowls England financial year	Fin	31/12/21
5.10.21	4	Propose Bowls England's position on the membership levels for World Bowls in 2021/22	Fin	7/10/21



5.10.21	4	Develop a statement around respectful social media use	CE	26.11.21
5.10.21	4	Schedule interview for the Independent Director position	HBO	16.10.21
5.10.21	6	Investigate position around signing up to a credit ratings agency	CE	12.10.21
5.10.21	6	Send to the board the 5 key risks	CE	12.10.21