



# **Bowls England Board Meeting Minutes 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

## **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

Board Chair: David Tucker (Chair)  
Dr Anna Molony (AM)  
Mr Adam Tanner (AT)  
Mr Stephen Hemsley (SH)  
Mr Foster Johnson (FJ)  
Mr Jo Doust (JD)  
Mr James Wurr (JW)  
Mrs Margaret Docherty (MD)  
Mr Jon Cockcroft (JC)  
Mrs Victoria Underwood (VU)

### **Apologies**

Mr Mal Evans (ME)

Bowls England Board Meeting was opened at 10.00 on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at the Woodland Grange Hotel, Leamington Spa by the Chairman of the Board.

The Chair noted the significant contribution that Life Member Norma Hazzledine MBE had given to bowls.

## **2. PREVIOUS MINUTES – accuracy/matters arising.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2024 were approved to be signed as a true and correct record.

## **3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No new Declarations were made.



#### **4. OPERATIONAL UPDATE**

JC presented the Operational Update, which provides board members with an overview of key items of activity since the previous meeting, and. thanked the Board for the support that they have given during the Aviva National Finals. Some key points were noted.

##### **MEMBER SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT**

play-bowls.com: The final testing on this is due to be completed once the competitive season finishes. The Board asked for the data to become available as soon as possible.

##### **CHAMPIONSHIPS AND COMPETITIONS**

Competitions Review and Implementation. A discussion was had about the opportunity for Bowls to be part of the School Games and JW offered to support this.

##### **AVIVA NATIONAL FINALS (ANF)**

The Board agreed that this year's competition is progressing well and the organisation has been excellent. Ticket sales were up on this time last year. It was noted that there had been a transfer of tickets from players to non-players. The Board asked for tickets to be non-transferable.

##### **INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS**

The Chair stated how impressed he was with the new British Bowls format, and players and spectators were also pleased and felt it better. The Board congratulated the team on the event.

##### **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BIDDING**

JC introduced the World Championship Expression of Interest and budget that have been sent to World Bowls. The Board was happy to support progressing the bid, noting the budget shortfall which needs to be bridged before the Board considers committing to hosting.

The Board discussed the UKSport Major Events list again And JW suggested that the legacy element of the bid is critical

The Chair asked JW to be the Board sponsor for this event and that was supported by the Board.

##### **COMMERCIAL AND FINANCE**

New Business Development: The Board discussed financial support from a betting company in light of a £10k investment opportunity to support club development. The Board agreed to progress the opportunity and asked for a future paper to discuss sponsorship relationships.



#### GOVERNANCE AND OVERHEADS

Warwick District Council (WDC): JC shared the WDC 2024 Greens Presentation and presented the opportunity for BE to take more responsibility for operating Bowling Facility at Victoria Park. The Board agreed to revisit this after further exploration.

#### SAFEGUARDING

The statistics on the number of clubs with a safeguarding officer remains as a concern as many still haven't completed the survey, although the trajectory is promising.

The Board proposed that this was added to the agenda of the Counties Conference for further discussion. This can then be followed up at the AGM.

### **5. RISK REGISTER**

The Risk Register was presented. The Board acknowledged the current major risks and was happy these were being managed effectively.

### **6. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS JUNE 2024**

The Management Accounts of June 2024 were approved. The Board also approved to write off a small amount of stock.

The Client Agreement, Data Protection Document and the Risk Questionnaire for the previously agreed financial investment were all agreed by the Board of Directors and signed accordingly.

### **7. FRAUD POLICY**

SH introduced the draft Fraud Policy to the Board, which was approved with some small changes as per below.

- In the Introduction, the policy needs to ensure it applies to everyone listed in the document.
- The final sentence of Para 1 in Introduction needs to include 'Working Parties'.
- We should have a 'cash handling' policy. This would apply to the Ticket Office at the ANF where monies are changing hands each day. How do we ensure 'appropriate prevention'. This may need to be in more than one policy.



- Procurement principles are not addressed. A section needs to be included about seeking multiple tenders and quotes.
- Review of service contracts to ensure they are competitive and independent could also be included / referenced in this document.

After these amendments have been address, the paper will be recirculated and then signed off by the Board.

The Chair has asked that the Board are reminded of the financial controls that we have in place at the next Board Meeting, including the PO thresholds.

The Board also confirmed that the new Chair of the Audit Committee should lead this area and report to the Board.

## **8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY (CoI)**

JD introduced the CoI Policy to the Board following considerable work looking at other sports and industry best practice. This policy is part of our Tier 3 requirements.

The Board agreed that it is important the membership see the Board as objective and discussed that by removing the opportunity for Board Members to also hold office within a club / county may be detrimental to the discussions that need to occur at Board Level.

It is noted that the Chair is the only Board member that cannot hold a position on a County Executive.

The Chair suggests that there is an additional section to this Policy for Senior Managers within the business.

Once this policy has been adapted, it will be recirculated to the Board and approved.

## **9. OPERATIONAL PLAN AND BUDGET 2024/25**

JC presented the Operational plan and budget for 2024/25 which was approved. The following was discussed.

JD highlighted an ongoing concern that the ANF was continuing to lose money. JC suggested that some of these areas of loss should be seen in the context of other business objectives such as relationship buildingproviding education (Club



Zone), and ensuring sponsors and key stakeholders are engaged. It was agreed that this can be further discussed after the ANF has finished and all data collected.

The Board also discussed how the affiliation processes can be improved to ensure that all players are being declared and we are being proactive at getting more members. At this stage it is estimated that a number of members are not declared. VU mentioned that an audit was being considered in this area.

The Chair also suggested that we ask counties for the number of unaffiliated clubs that they have.

The Board declared that this operational plan and budget was confirmed for 24/25 and congratulated JC and the BE Staff for all of their hard work.

## **10. PRESIDENTIAL TEAM SURVEY & CONCEPT MODEL**

VU presented the feedback from the Presidential Team Survey and a potential concept that had been compiled as a option to ensure the Presidential Team could thrive going forwards.

The feedback from the survey was presented including the challenges of recruiting candidates namely the amount of time the role took up; being away from home for significant periods of time, the extensive travel, and the personal cost require to invest over and above the honorarium.

The paper was challenged by JW for not containing sufficient information on other options, and the resulting action from 'doing nothing'. In response, it was agreed that these would be added to any paper that went to counties for consultation.

The Concept Model was considered with varying opinions. MD was concerned about the number of people who would apply, especially as the concept required a greater amount of Vice Presidents. It was felt that the title of Vice President was preferable to Presidential Ambassador as it represented a higher status. Consideration would also need to be made about the male / female split that has traditionally been in place.

It was agreed the concept demonstrated an increase in the Team so that it could have a greater impact and become more accessible. This may also assist in the need to become more inclusive and diverse.

The Board discussed why so few County Associations have put forward and voted for Presidential Team members recently and that this is because of the volume of work they need to undertake on other matters, combined with the challenged that they have recruiting their own Presidents for County roles. It was suggested that



nominations might come in directly to the BE Nominations Committee, shortlisted and sent out for Counties to vote on.

The following actions were agreed:

1. The paper to be reviewed with greater information, rationale and options.
2. Due to time pressures, we would operate on a team of 3 again over the next year, meaning the recruitment of two new members to the team for 24/25. These would be two Vice Presidents, who would initially cover a one-year period whilst the strategy was being consulted on and finalised.
3. That the revised concept paper would be discussed with County Associations at the County Conference.

## **11. STAFF SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS**

The 2024 Bowls England Staff Survey was sent out in June 2024 in line with that of the previous few years. Since the last survey there have been three new members of staff, and the total staff count stands at 13. Overall, the feedback was very positive, and progress is being made in all areas. The Board were pleased with the feedback, congratulating the operational leadership on their diligence. One of the key areas for development was giving staff the time to develop and grow. JW offered support in finding mentors for staff to support this.

## **12. BOWLS' BIG WEEKEND 2024**

The paper was well received by the Board although a request for additional statistics / data was made including:

- Repeat customer base numbers
- New customer base numbers
- The reason clubs have run the event in the past but didn't this year give – was it because they were now up to their optimum numbers, or because they didn't find it effective?
- Number of members recruited through BBW that have renewed for another year

AM suggested that the marketing collateral should have more longevity and that better instruction on their use was needed.

It was agreed to revisit the Bowls Big Weekend 2025 plans at a future meeting.



**The meeting was closed at 15.00.**

**Future Board Meetings:**

24<sup>th</sup> October 2024, Woodland Grange, 10 – 15.00 followed by Riveria Meet and Greet at Kenilworth Castle.

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2024, Hilton Double Tree, Coventry. 14.00 – 18.00 followed by the Counties Conference and Awards.

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025, Virtual Meeting, 10 – 15.00

21<sup>st</sup> February 2025, Leicester, 14.00 – 18.00 followed by AGM and National Awards.