

**Board Meeting Minutes**
**Minutes of the Board Meeting held at 6pm on 22 April 2020, Zoom**
**Present**

Graeme Marchbank (GM)	Chair
Euan Lowe (EL)	Chief Executive
David Beattie (DB)	Board Director
Kerry Christie (KC)	Board Director
Jackie Davidson (JD)	Board Director
Andrew Dunlop (AD)	Board Director
Andy Figgins (AF)	Board Director
Caitlin McClatchey (CM)	Board Director
Moraig Macdonald (MM)	President
Ian Fleming (IF)	Vice President

**In Attendance**

Sharon MacDonald (SM)	Director of Development
Deborah McGinniss (DM)	Finance Manager/Company Secretary
Elaine Mackenzie (EM)	Director of Services
Ally White (AW)	Director of Performance
Helen Plank (HP)	Head of Marketing
Kelly Fraser (KF)	Minute Taker
Barry Cook (BC)	<b>sportscotland</b> partnership manager

**Item No.**
**Action**
**1. Chair's Address**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Meeting and started by thanking the staff team's response during this extraordinarily difficult time because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Chair also noted the fantastic response from the wider swimming community, which speaks volumes to the power of our sport. We have also received incredible support from our partners, including **sportscotland** and the Chair asked BC to feedback the Board's gratitude to **sportscotland**, and our wider governance community through District support.

The Chair reflected on a quote relating to showing your best when at your worst and noted that, as an organisation, we have the right tools to be stronger than before.

The Chair concluded his address by advising the Meeting that in line with our Governance Documentation, a record of decisions will be made and circulated to Board Members for approval following the Meeting as it is being held virtually.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

The President declared an interest with her son being a member of the Scottish Swimming Senior Gold squad. AF declared an interest as a tutor and member of BSCA.

**3. Apologies for Absence**

None.

**4. Minutes of Previous meetings: Board and Council meeting 25 January 2020**

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

**5. Actions from previous meeting: 25 January 2020**

EL advised the Meeting that all actions are either complete or in progress as per the paper. EL confirmed to the Meeting that item 8.3 is in progress.

SM advised the Meeting in relation item 7.2 and discipline investment that confirmation has been received from **sportscotland** that the DCI application for water polo has been approved and this will be picked up once COVID-19 pandemic is over – this is in conjunction with the University of Strathclyde.

**6. Items for Decision**
**6.1 Review of Board & Management Roles**

EL introduced the paper and advised the Meeting that it reflects the status quo for roles as we do not consider that there needs to be any revision at this stage. However, revision will be considered with the new Corporate Plan or in the event that special circumstances merit a change.

The Chair acknowledged DB's previous comments regarding undertaking an extensive review under the new Corporate Plan and DB advised that this was discussed by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) regarding transition out of COVID-19, which may be more difficult. The areas for focus will likely

vary under the Corporate Plan, which will have an impact on these roles, particularly around commercial, sponsorship and finance.

## **6.2 Corporate Governance**

### **6.2.1 AGM/Awards Dinner**

EM introduced the paper and explained the content of the Annual Business Document and the proposal to reduce the content to bring the cost down to zero.

In relation to the Awards Dinner, EM advised the Meeting of the proposal to cancel the Awards Dinner this year given the current circumstances and the cancellation of events meaning that many awards will not have recipients.

In relation to the AGM, this is planned for 26 September 2020 to be held at the same venue as the Awards Dinner – the Hub in Edinburgh. As we will not have had an AGM for 18 months, EM advised the Meeting that there have been discussions regarding reducing the content or keeping the usual amount of content but holding the meeting virtually. EM advised the Meeting that the Districts have all postponed their June AGMs and so this will also have an impact.

EM proposed that we keep the date for the AGM in order to approve the proposed Governance amendments but asked the Board to consider holding this at the University of Stirling instead. The President's reiterated EM's comments and highlighted that social distancing measures may not be lifted by September so this is a relevant factor for proceeding virtually.

The Vice President advised that there will need to be a discussion with the Districts regarding continuity and succession of Office Bearers and the President confirmed that the Districts' executives are still meeting virtually following a query from EM.

The Board agreed with the proposal to cancel the Awards Dinner and reduce the content of the Annual Report. EM was asked to consider the associated costs, size and virtual capabilities so that the Board could make a decision on where the AGM would be held.

EM

### **6.2.2 Scottish Swimming Governance Documents**

EM advised the Meeting that the proposed changes within the paper reflect those considered by the Council at its meeting in March and reviewed by the Editorial Board. EM highlighted the critical proposal within the paper (PR2) regarding the County Team Championships and advised that the change is required even if the event does not go ahead in October 2020 to allow participation next year.

EM also confirmed to the Meeting that further changes will be proposed for the Board's approval following internal discussions to clarify the position regarding holding virtual meetings.

AF advised the Meeting that he would liaise with BSCA regarding proposal PC4 in relation to renaming the awards.

The Chair raised a query regarding the proposed wording for PC3 regarding consultation with anyone outwith the Awards Panel and EM agreed to feed this back to the Editorial Board.

EM

The Chair also queried the decision-making process in relation to PR2 and whether it is for the National Swimming Committee to drive changes and undertake consultation but the Board has final approval. There was a discussion around the appropriate approval and updated wording. The Board agreed that the final decision should sit with the National Swimming Committee and it was agreed that EM would confirm this with the committee before updating the wording to make the proposed change.

EM

### **6.2.3 2020 AGM Proposed Governance Changes**

As above.

## **6.3 Corporate Plan Process**

EL advised the Meeting that the paper proposes to pause the development of the new Corporate Plan as the current circumstances have meant that targets and opportunities to engage with clubs cannot take place, as well as issues regarding current uncertainty. EL welcomed Board discussion on the proposal to pause at this time and propose new deadlines, this would mean the extension of the current Corporate Plan until we have appropriate consultation opportunities.

EL separately advised that even as we navigate out of current circumstances, there may be a difficulty with long-term planning.

The Chair asked BC if **sportscotland** has any particular position regarding corporate plans and BC advised that there is nothing formal just now but often SGBs do seek to make amendments to

investment and length of plans. BC also advised that **sportscotland** is currently dealing with immediate priorities but monies are coming in for current investment and so BC said he was happy to take this back and have discussions internally.

The Vice President agreed with the proposal to delay the new Corporate Plan given current circumstances but, in his view, we may need to consider some form of emergency action plan in order to get through first year. The Chair and EL agreed that there will need to be planning for a strategy after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chair suggested having a COVID-19 update item in Board Meetings going forward and review associated plans for transition period after special measures. JD also suggested including an update from SM regarding clubs' landscape, as well as the wider swimming community. **EL**

## **7. Items for Information and Discussion**

### **7.1 COVID-19 update including financial projections - verbal**

DB advised the Meeting that there is enough cash in the bank but things can change quite quickly in this landscape and so the Board needs to be kept up-to-date on our financial position and continue to have financial forecasts.

The Chair queried the **sportscotland** investment commitment reference within the paper and DM confirmed that we have a 12-month commitment being paid in two instalments.

DM advised that there is a positive message around membership and clubs' registration of members, particularly in the current circumstances. In relation to finance, we have so far seen a high return on invoicing. In respect of the Government's furlough scheme, we reviewed the current staffing structure against the funding receiving from **sportscotland**. As we have flexibility around our investment programmes, we hope to make up the shortfall in respect of salaries. DM also confirmed to the Meeting that there was a typo in paper 7.1 there should be a "no" in relation to the educational programme.

SM added that since the launch of the online CPD as we have had good engagement, particularly from the coaching community. Clubs have been slower but will continue to promote these and increase engagement. SM did express a concern about the future in relation to the amount of income that we normally generate from courses and DM advised that this has been captured in the projections.

AW advised the Meeting that there has not been a final agreement between British Swimming (BS) and UK Sport but discussions have been positive – UK Sport has also confirmed that BS can save any money not used in the current cycle. AW's preference is to extend current agreement with BS but a discussion will need to take place to confirm BS's position.

The Vice President queried if we would lose funding income if local authorities sought to run their own courses and DM advised that **sportscotland** funding only relates to bursaries, which is winding down, so no specific income would be lost but SM advised that our concern is potentially around resource.

DB queried investment around performance centres and furloughed staff. AW advised that much of our investment is retrospective and so we would not seek to invest in a post that had been furloughed.

The Chair thanked DM for her work on the paper.

## **7.2 Annual Plan Progress**

### **7.2.1 Annual Targets – 12 months' progress report**

EL provided an overview to the Meeting and advised that we are pleased with progress so far. However, there are a couple of exceptions and EL noted the following:

- while we have overall membership growth, our non-swimmer memberships are increasing above swimmer memberships;
- our performance targets are difficult to reach but there is evidence of depth and strength in our system in respect of our overall approach; and
- our equalities target is tied into next year and we are behind with this. However, there have been good discussions with Plan4Sport in order to ensure that equalities practice is fully embedded across the sport.

### **7.2.3 Development Plan – 12 months' progress report**

SM provided a summary of the targets as follows:

- Participation: we are on track with work and the framework has been a real success throughout its implementation. However, this will be one of the areas impacted the most by COVID-19 and it will be interesting to see how local authority trusts come out of this;
- Clubs: in addition to membership targets, we have SwiMark + and while we are behind on this target as it depends on clubs and the re-validation process takes time. We

have an aquatics forum with local authority trusts, which is a positive opportunity to discuss pool times, as well as the chairs network; and

- Education: this has seen the biggest impact, particularly around the new teaching qualification and we are still working on this. We also have a high level strategic group to set the strategic direction for education, which is now working well. We are currently undertaking a coaching review but there has been progress with our online content, which has been well received by coaches, particularly the age group coaches.

The Vice President queried the lack of progress regarding clubs' use of community sports hubs and SM advised that some clubs are part of these hubs but we do not have oversight of this. However, hubs will be considered under the new Corporate Plan. BC advised that **sportscotland** has an overall list of hubs and he is happy to get an overview to provide to Scottish Swimming.

### **7.2.3 Performance Plan – 12 months' progress report**

AW advised that there has been a big impact on performance outputs as a result of COVID-19, which is difficult for athletes. Other KPIs are positive and the plan sets out our views regarding our progress and there is an ongoing challenge around planning and progression into the performance pathway.

AF asked for an update on Project Ailsa and AW confirmed that there have been females transitioning through the pathway and we are working with individuals to continue this work in terms of engagement and coaching. We are also trying to promote female coaching. AW confirmed that we have altered the National Programme in relation to male athletes and trying to be proactive around increasing boys' involvement in the National Programme.

CM queried support to athletes during current time and to ensure wellbeing and AW advised that clubs and coaches are doing a good job in this area from what he is hearing, particularly providing support around mental health.

EM advised the Meeting that an equalities meeting is planned for next week and we have continued support from Lindsay Booth regarding compliance with wellbeing and protection standards.

## **7.3 Marketing & Communications Plan – should have been in items for decision**

### **7.3.1 Marketing & Communications Plan 2020-2021**

AD advised the Meeting that the majority of the plan still applies during the COVID-19 pandemic and is vital in terms of continuing engagement with the wider community – the team has done a great job in creating content. As we move towards a world of delivering more content virtually, we will be considering a cyber security review.

HP advised the Meeting that she has read through the plan again in the current climate and considers that much of the content still applies but she has added in information regarding COVID-19 and adapted some of the content, as well as much of the content being produced in-house now as a result of a reduced budget.

HP advised the Meeting that more work is being undertaken in relation to cyber security and we are considering obtaining a third party view on this. In relation to Scottish Water, HP is keen to extend this contract to September 2021 and so this work is being progressed but does assume that swimming lessons will resume so this will need to be a fluid consideration.

There was a discussion regarding the COVID-19 suggestions and focusing on a few key areas, as well as engaging with the Young Ambassadors. The issue of cyber security was also discussed and the Chair queried if there could be a discussion with the home nation CEOs around collective content.

EL advised that there is a regular conference call with about 30 SGBs, which is good for sharing content, ideas and considering collaborative approach to ensure that sport has a positive profile. EL welcomed the comments around our messaging and advised that the team is working hard on this. Cyber security is more of a focus during current operations and advised that the Scottish Sports Association has offered support in respect of Cyber Essentials and Cyber Resilience.

The Board approved the plan and the Chair thanked HP.

### **7.3.3 Appendices**

As above.

### **7.3.3 COVID 19 Response Communication Ideas**

As above.

#### 7.4 Wellbeing and Protection Update

EL advised the Meeting that the level of content recognises the current challenges, although there are still ongoing cases and referrals have been made where required. PVGs are still being processed but priority has been given to essential jobs and there has been good use of online mechanisms, particularly training, and more courses are being made available due to demand.

The President queried if the PVG aspect is going to become an issue when we restart activities in terms of a delay, particularly in light of the proposed governance changes. EL will need to look at this and revert (BC suggested taking this back to the CEO group as this is going to be a wider issue) and KC asked for this to be logged as a risk with ARC.

EL

DM

#### 7.5 Audit & Risk Committee – verbal

Dealt with after item 7.3.

DB advised the Meeting that ARC discussed cyber security and crisis management, as well as current risks being captured in our register against the current risk level system. DB also confirmed that ARC will be meeting more regularly. EL advised that updated minutes will be circulated.

EL

[DB left the Meeting]

#### 8. Management Team Report

**Services** - EM had nothing to add to the report and confirmed that there will be a delay in the office move. The Chair queried the level of flexibility around the office move in relation to office space and rental price and EM advised that fixed rental price is for 25 years and the space does give us flexibility to have breakout space.

**Finance** - DM had nothing to add to the report. The Chair queried the term and renewal of the Walton and Kingour appointment and DM advised that she would check and revert.

DM

**Marketing and Communications** - HP had nothing to add to the report and there were no questions.

**Development** - SM updated the Meeting regarding the staffing situation – the proposal to increase one staff member's work pattern from three days has been delayed but her contract will be extended and another staff member has been split between participation and regional. SM also advised that out of our 29 leisure trust partners on the framework, 17 leisure trusts have furloughed or redeployed.

**Performance** - AW advised that our application for Coaching Futures has been accepted by sportscotland, which is a two-year project. AF queried with reference to the planning paragraph around when we will receive an update on calendar planning and AW advised that discussions have begun – our aim is to get the principles agreed and then will move forward with calendar planning. The President queried if international travel will have an impact on this and AW advised that there would be unlikely to be much international travel in the first calendar block but we will need to ensure that high performance athletes are still able to access appropriate levels of competition.

#### 9. Directors' Reports – verbal

None.

#### 10. British Swimming Update – verbal

The Chair advised the Meeting that a BS Board meeting was held recently, at which it was confirmed that the Tokyo funding has been rolled over and there is an indication that the same level of funding will be available for the 2024 cycle, however, more conditions may apply. There was also a discussion around change in strategy around holding major events in the UK and BS has furloughed the majority of staff and approved a cash neutral budget for next year.

#### 11. AOCB

None.

#### 12. Date of Next Meeting(s):

Joint Board & Council Meeting – 21 June 2020 10am–1pm (meeting to be held virtually)

cc	Board & Council Barry Cook, sportscotland	Editorial Board National Chairs	Harper Macleod Kevin Reynard
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