

BRITISH FENCING BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date of Meeting	22.06.2021
Location	By Video Link
Present	Chair, PA, PAiy, TC, JC, CH, YH, TCJ, MO, CO, JW
In Attendance	CEO, KR, DM, FG, JM, JS (part)
Apologies	There were no apologies

1. INTRODUCTION

Chair Opening Remarks

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Joanne Shaw INED to British Skydiving as an observer as part of an initiative backed by the CEO of UK Sport, providing opportunity and experiences to encourage senior executive leadership from the corporate sector into the sport sector.

New Declarations of Interest: None

Conflict of interest: [REDACTED]

Interim Decisions: Board approved the 2021/22 Budget post March 21 meeting offline, European Selection Policy approved offline.

Notable results: None.

Action Items: Budget Approved offline, European Selection Policy approved offline. Annual Survey on Culture is on hold.

Risk Items: Board discussed the cancellation of the European Championships [REDACTED]

Strategy & Objectives: Chair proposed to have a longer discussion at this meeting, on the Board Strategic work plan and how the Board see the future.

2. APPROVE PREVIOUS BOARD MINUTES

The minutes of March 21 were approved. It was pointed out that the World University Games were now not going ahead.

3. CEO UPDATE - CURRENT COVID LANDSCAPE

Funding

International Relations: BF have secured £52,000 investment, which amounts to the full amount requested. This is an indication that the BF IR Strategy is in alignment with the UK Sport strategy and reflects our positive progress in achieving objectives.

International

- FIE Commission council meeting will be held this weekend
- The FIE Congress has been moved to Lausanne in November
- The EFC Congress will be held in Sochi in September
- Hilary Philbin has been invited to be on the organising committee staff for Tokyo
- FIE calendar: Has been published but may not go ahead
- Risk: Eden Cup in November, the hosting on the event is a risk
- Will require a Board level policy on travel to countries based on traffic light system.

National

- Lockdown – 21st June postponement to 19th July is having a knock-on effect on international organisers who are having to redo their risk assessments and putting provisions in place.
- There will be a document on racial inequalities released by the Sport Council tomorrow, 23rd July.
- There is a new UK Sport progression 'playbook'. BF has been given the opportunity to apply for confirmation money for individual athletes.
- GU met with BVF – the majority of the focus is on making the Guildford veterans competition happen independently of the European Circuit – the competition was deferred from last January. It will return to the circuit in January 2022. Discussions have been going ahead on whether there will be a Veterans World Cup.

Membership/Events

- There has been an increase in membership with the March 6457 figures at our lowest. We are now up in May to 6500
- Digital membership cards are in place
- We have launched a range of benefits for members from discounts to welfare programs. This has been implemented on the sport80 membership database and is through a company called Wrkit
- Have put in a new weekly tracking system to track membership progress
- Club Poll – the last poll had 68 responses and 30 clubs reported activity. 9 clubs are at full capacity with social distancing measures in place. The poll will be repeated later this month
- Community discussions are still taking place and we have had 29 meetings in total, the last one was the biggest in attendance. We will continue the program and add listening events.
- CEO thanked JC and CO who will be hosting the LGBT+ and Ethnicity events
- GB league is in place, and it will be piloted with one of the clubs. It is meant for recreational membership and is designed to encourage members back to the clubs. Clubs can start to run their GB League events at anytime

- There remains a risk due to access to venues. Play Football Birmingham had closed, we had booked them for our events and are now looking for different venues
- The first senior ranking event will be held in September, with the first cadet and junior events taking place in July/August
- Thanks to Peter Smith and Ian Lichfield the rankings documents are being revamped and an automated ranking system has been put in place
- Discussions ongoing over delivery of events with LP

4. COMMUNITY RESTART 7 RECOVERY UPDATE

- Competition guidelines have been in place since 17th May. Clubs are putting covid guidelines in place
- ADP – ran a cohort induction and will be running an ADP camp face to face in Nottingham on the 3rd and 4th July
- Junior Cadet and Senior selection documents are going to the community for consultation before coming to the Board for approval.

5. FINANCE

Part 1 Q4 Management Accounts. DM prepared year end accounts which show no material difference to the forecast in last meeting finance documents. There is a deficit of £25,000 against a budgeted deficit of £50,000. Membership is down by 35% and the cash impact is £84,000. Though the results are better than budget we are not out of the woods yet as the effect of falling membership in cash terms will impact 21/22 as well.

We do not have Q1 accounts yet. Budget for year was a deficit of £58,000 and we are currently showing better than budget. Commercial is showing a lot of activity and is on track.

6. BF BOARD STRATEGIC WORK PLAN

The workplan had been circulated to the Board in advance and there followed a discussion reflecting if the Board were in the right place on the initiatives. The following points were raised:

- Should we consider investing to help restart despite accumulating losses
- Providing additional courses for volunteers may be worth exploring - there are online organisations that provide course for volunteers should we investigate one of those
- Do we go beyond the reserves policy that we have in place
- It is possibly too early and there are too many unknowns, should we discuss this again in around 6 months and use the time to do some planning
- Getting membership back up is key. We should spend extra resources to facilitate that
- Could we focus on coaches getting back with a hardship fund to propel coaching impetus. Coaches are dependent on clubs getting.
- Supporting clubs as opposed to supporting individual coaches
- Any investment should be targeted at regeneration and return

- How do we help recover members and increase membership?
- Better relationships with schools may increase membership
- Fencing can help in addressing other challenges such as mental health. Expand the schools project
- Look into other strands of funding
- Focus on grass roots and diversifying our sport
- We must ensure we have a sustainable sport through recurring revenue streams

Action: Chair to speak with CEO about a subgroup to pull together Board thoughts

7. BREAK

8. STRATEGY AREA OVERVIEWS

All presentations are in the Board folder including P&P, Commercial.

The intention is to have a separate briefing on ADP in September as a deep dive stand-alone meeting before the next Board meeting.

9. STANDING ITEM - SAFEGUARDING

CEO asked the Board to note a proposal for a safeguarding working group

The Board noted the setting up of the working group.

Board to endorse a proposal that cases arising through England Fencing are included in the BF Safeguarding system.

Board endorsed the proposal.

There is no update on current cases.

It was noted that BF has moved onto the upgraded Globocol system that give more administrative support and all cases are put into the one place. We have started the cycle review of all safeguarding procedures and bringing them back to the Board.

10. BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE ITEMS: NOMCOM

Board appointments

NomCom interviewed 4 people for independent Board positions.

1 withdrew, but it is hoped that they would get involved in the BF Medical position.

There are 3 positions to be approved

Jochen Losch has been recommended for an Independent Director position.

Francis Wilkinson has been recommended for the Appointed Director position, provided the 3 elected directors have a female representation. He will also be asked to Chair the AGRC.

Tom Murray, we did not have a position for but would be happy for him to attend Board meeting as an observer with a legal focus.

Board approved all 3 recommendations

NomCom also looked at the role and responsibility of Directors and decided they did not need to change those responsibilities and roles. The Board still needs to keep a Board lead for anti-doping and Safeguarding.

There was a proposal for a safeguarding working committee and an anti-doping lead and NomCom approved both proposals.

NomCom had seen and noted the revised organisational chart and the staff survey results which showed a reasonable outcome.

All annual processes have been undertaken including Staff 1-1 appraisals.

Board is being asked to agree the TOR for standing committees, noting that there may be additional updates which will come back to the Board for approval.

The Board approved, noting that if there were any further changes the document would be brought back to the Board.

NomCom proposed a new medical standing committee. Board noted, pending Board approval of TOR expected at September Board.

Board appraisals completed. **Board noted the Board appraisal.**

CEO and Chair appraisals will be discussed at the end of this meeting.

NomCom noted the skills set for the BF Elections noting that BF are looking to replace medical, IT strategy and 2 diversity elements (female and 18-35 year olds). Election documents are in the Board papers.

11. BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE ITEMS: AGRC

AGRC proposed to amend the articles to allow for hybrid general meetings. BF will need to call an EGM to discuss and vote on by proxy. The Board will then approve the proposal to meet by hybrid going forward.

Board approved the proposals to take steps to moving forward to hybrid general meetings

Insurance details will be forwarded to the Board. Package cover is changing so that associated body, regions and county committees will not be covered. England Fencing are taking steps to put cover in place for the regional committees.

12. STANDING ITEM - EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- Output from the away day feedback has been put into the diversity plan.
- ADP induction will include diversity
- Feedback on progress that BF has taken to the BLM group

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- Board should update diversity objectives for the next cycle

13. AOB

British Disability Fencing proposal

- There is a new UKAD framework that all NGBs must comply with. PAiy has agreed to be the Board Anti-Doping lead.
- Youth Panel update and discussion for September meeting. *Action GU to add to agenda*
- Board to acknowledge Keith Smith at the next AGM and discuss a competition in his name. *Action ML*

CEO appraisal – CEO and DM left the meeting.

Meeting finished at 19:50

Interim Decisions and Approved Items since the last meeting

See Interim decision log in Board Dropbox Folder.

Board Action Log

Ref	Date Raised	Action	Owner	Due Date
72	22.06.21	Board to acknowledge Keith Smith at the next AGM and discuss a competition in his name	Chair	14.09.21
71	22.06.21	Make insurance paperwork available to Board	CEO	14.09.21
70	22.06.21	GU to add Youth Panel Discussion to Agenda	CEO	14.09.21
69	22.06.21	Chair to speak with CEO about a subgroup to pull together Board thoughts	Chair/CEO	14.09.21
68	16.03.21	Annual survey on culture in ADP	Chair/JC	
				WIP
66	26.11.19	PAb and CEO to work on the events competition training and the rating system	PAb and CEO	WIP
64	18.9.19	DM to agree terms of VAT review and inform Board – DM waiting for quote from Haysmacintyre then will take to Board	DM	Updated
				On hold
11	22.11.16	Follow on for discussion the recommendation of the Governance Code to filter down to BF standing committees and possibly clubs once TORs amended	CEO	WIP
16	26.11.15	CEO to collect formal agreements through Home Nations working group	CEO	On hold