

Draft Minutes of the
British Weight Lifting Board Meeting

Date: Friday 4 August 2023
Start: 13.30
Venue: Manchester Central Convention Complex (Room Central 4), Windmill Street,
Manchester, M2 3GX

Present: Angus Kinnear (AK), Matthew Curtain (MC), Philip Edmondson (PE), Kelly Sotherton (KS), Rupinder Ashworth (RA), Jenny Tong (JT) – from agenda 5

Apologies: Sheona Southern (SS), Neill Wood (NW), Tom Whittaker (TW), Emily Campbell (EC)

In attendance: Kath Leonard (KL), Mark Martin (MM), Stuart Martin (SM), John Harrison – UK Sport (JH), Tara Drake (TD)

1 Welcome and Apologies

AK opened the meeting, noting a special welcome to John Harrison (JH) who was attending the meeting as a representative of UK Sport. Congratulations were offered to SM and the weightlifting performance team for performance at the European Junior Championships in Bucharest. AK noted apologies had been received from SS, NW, TW and EC. AK declared the meeting quorate and outlined the key agenda items for discussion during the meeting.

2 Declarations of Interest

AK reminded members that the proceedings of the meeting were confidential. No conflicts of interest were noted by the new role that JT has taken on as Governance and Sustainability Consultant with 'I Trust Sport'. KS's employment with Sport England was noted and agreed that KS would recuse herself if necessary if there were any discussions where she felt she was conflicted.

3 Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 22 March 2023 were agreed as read and approved. It was agreed that any sensitive or highly confidential matters should be redacted from the version published on the website. At the last meeting, RA requested a 'Road to Paris' planning document, which was circulated by MC yesterday. It was noted that the executive is currently recruiting two new staff members into the marketing and communications team and so it was agreed that this be deferred until the next meeting on 27 September 2023.

4 Finance Matters

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR JUNE 2023

MM gave an overview of the year-to-date accounts noting the June figures showed a surplus ahead of budget. The figures were attributed to a challenging month for course sales, but mitigated by controlling course delivery costs, staff cost savings and Board fee savings. He advised that the risks were mainly due to unpredictable course sales although MC commented that engagement with high street gyms was underway as well as the promotion of the new L4 S&C course. Sport England projects overspend were also considered a risk but were being closely monitored. He noted that the reserves remain healthy at approximately £300k. The updated year end forecast is now showing a surplus of £63k which remains considerably ahead of budget, and it was noted that is no reason to modify any of the major annual income targets.

UK SPORT ANNUAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY REPORTS

MM presented the data provided by UK Sport which reflects the financial performance of the World Class Programmes during the second year of the Paris Cycle, for the year end 31 March 2023 and how expenditure compares to other Olympic and Paralympic sports. Para-powerlifting is a mature programme which has evolved over many years and approximately half of the four-year award (51%) had been spent by the end of year two. It was noted that there is an average forecast accuracy of 15% and that BWL typically spend 85% of the money that asked for in the quarter.

Weightlifting is a less mature programme, created for this cycle. Due to the successes achieved so far on the platform, the award value has been uplifted three times already, twice in the second year, and now stands at £2.4million, having opened at £1.5m.

5 Decisions Taken outside the Board Meeting

EMILY CAMPBELL RESIGNATION

MC noted apologies had been received from EC who was unable to attend due to travel delays. AK advised that EC had resigned as Athlete Representative due to 'recent events within the organization. These events make it difficult for me to continue representing the athlete's voice and pushing the current vision'.

Thanks was expressed to EC for her contribution to the sport and the Board, her honesty and collaboration. It was agreed at the last meeting in January 2023 that BWL would set up an Athlete's Commission, noting there is provision in the current statute to set this up with the Board appointing a chair for the next twelve months. The chair / vice chair will then join the Board. KS asked about succession planning for the Board, specifically someone from sport and not just weightlifting. It was noted that this would be addressed later on.

ADRVs –



EGM – MODIFICATION OF BWL ARTICLES

MC noted that modifications of the BWL Articles are required to expand the definition of “United Kingdom” to include Gibraltar (in addition to Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), and provisions to be made to enable the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held remotely, hybrid and/or in-person. Fifty signatures are needed to activate an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) with a deadline of 5 September 2023 for an EGM to be held on 26 September or one day before the next Board meeting, where the date of the AGM will be confirmed.

JT arrived at the meeting at this point.

IWF Matters

MC noted that the IWF report had to be sent to the IOC no later than 10 August 2023. The Olympic Programme Commission meets on 31 August 2023. The final decision will be announced at the IOC Session in Mumbai 15-17 October 2023.



6 Minutes and Recommendations from the Sub-Committees

AUDIT

The Committee last met on 7 March 2023 and approved the 2023-24 budget. The next meeting has been confirmed for 6 September 2023 and will focus primarily on the audited financial accounts for 2022-23.

ENGLAND COMMITTEE

The next meeting will be held on 29 August 2023 in Sheffield.

PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

KS noted that the Performance Committee had not met officially but does meet regularly across both sports to select national teams and to assess, evaluate and approve selection policies. MC noted that communication with athletes is important especially surrounding selection criteria.

COMMERCIAL AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

No meeting has been held since the Board last met in March 2023. This is a priority for the remainder of 2023. MC noted that despite no meeting being held, there has been increased communication and activity.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

No formal meeting has been held in 2023 so far however BWL continues to deliver against strategy and continues to be in close dialogue and communications with UK Sport concerning weightlifting’s future position in the Olympic programme (LA 2028), Russia / Belarus, and BWL’s planned partnership programme with the Jamaica National Federation.

AK noted the difficulty of Board members being able to commit to regular Board and Sub-Committee meetings and suggested that informal meetings/updates be provided in future.

BATTLE OF THE BARBELL

MC asked JT to update on BWL's new concept competition "Battle of the Barbell" which had been run at the Strength in Depth event at the NEC in Birmingham on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 July. It was designed to appeal to strength, and CrossFit athletes widening the appeal beyond traditional weightlifting. JT noted it was designed to be run as individuals, pairs, and mixed gender.

The trial competition featured a 3-minutes clean and jerk AMRAP and due to the accumulated scoring using the Sinclair coefficient. JT reported positive feedback from the gym and CrossFit community and next steps were discussed. This could potentially be a BWL 'workout' being included at CrossFit competitions and AK noted that a partner buy-in will be key to success.

JT noted that the format is still in its initial developmental stage, but the concept can be expanded into a full competition. It was also noted that the England Championships are being held as part of Fit Fest at the Birmingham NEC 9-10 December 2023.

7 Operational Reports

Weightlifting

SM noted that the performance team have had success at the following International competitions:

- European Senior Championships (Armenia) – 6 medals
- IWF Grand Prix (Cuba) – two top 8 and two top 10 finishes
- European Youth Championships (Moldova) – three top 5 and one top 8 finishes
- European Junior and Under 23 Championships – two medals
- Commonwealth Games (Delhi) – 3 senior medals (England), 2 senior medals (Wales) and 1 junior medal (Wales)

SM noted that UK Sport progression will focus on changing how athletes of high potential are supported via BWL Podium and Academy programme (launched June 2023). An annual calendar has been finalised and he noted that Dr Phil Clelland had been appointed as Chief Medical Officer and Liam Rodgers appointed as Athlete Health Lead/Physio.

KS advised that she could help to promote the coaching conference and also felt it could be promoted to other sports. SM provided an update on Talent Transfer with camps planned for 2023-24 and Madison Farley becoming the first Talent Transfer athlete to receive GB Representative honours. Recruitment for 2023-24 cohort and staffing is underway.

SM provided an update on the Sport England Talent programme noting 30 camps and squads planned for 2023-24, six new pathway coaches have been recruited and the pathway team restructure will make Kristian McPhee's role more athlete focused. Academy accreditation continues as usual, and SM noted there is learning from the Legacy project

and delivering over and above the objectives. In order to build a broader and more diverse base of athletes, pathway teams will be restructured from September, a new “Pathway Operations Lead” role has been advertised and will have a more explicit focus, with an additional Pathway Officer Role also advertised. A new cycle of Raise the Bar delivery will start from October 2023. SM noted that 16 camps and squads are planned for Sport Scotland Talent in 2023-24.

SM noted that 10 athletes have been selected for the World Senior Championships (Riyadh) 1-18 September 2023.

Para Powerlifting Performance Update

TW was absent but provided slides with audio. He noted that February 2023 saw the annual WCP performance testing trials prior to WCP selection which led to a number of athletes competing at the World Cup (Georgia) which was a qualification event for Paris 2024. All athletes protected or improved their top 8 rankings. Athletes will compete at the Senior and Junior World Championships (Dubai) in August 2023, followed by a smaller group competing at the World Cup (Cairo) in November 2023, with those attending Cairo having the ability to defend, protect or improve existing top 8 rankings. Annual milestone remains World Championships (UAE).

Louise Sugden makes remarkable return to fitness after shoulder reconstruction but Mark Swan’s fitness ahead of the World Championships is in doubt. Rebecca Bradford (61/67kg class) joined the WCP, making the current WCP cohort nine athletes. Louise Sugden was elected WCP Athlete Representative by her peers, which is a two-year term working with the WCP Senior Leadership Team.

Targets for the World Championships (Dubai) from the team of 12 senior / 1 junior athletes selected are one medal (any colour), two 4-6th place finishes, three 7-9th place finishes and one 10-12th place finishes.

2022 pathway athletes Doaa Shayeaa, Sam Mackral and Fin Davidson continue to develop, and 2023 athletes Miranda, Cassey and Cody are being inducted onto the pathway. The Para-powerlifting team have been present at disability events such as Dwarf Sports, Para Sport Fest and Limb Power and are supporting new relationships with NFG. Discussions with British Powerlifting are underway regarding the integration of Para lifters into able-bodied competitions to broaden the domestic competition offering. A positive culture health check report has been received from UK Sport. The team are exploring their understanding of neurodiversity in order to better build a suitable learning environment for athletes. There was some discussion amongst the Board about neurodiversity and the impact of this on sport and athletes. The team continue to work with the UKSI and UKS to provide mental health support for athletes.

Various projects are underway including a Female health collaboration with UKSI, daily activity monitoring with Biostrap, a data project with UKS/UKSI to improve insights into world standards, heat exposure project in preparation for Dubai and Paris, novel force output diagnostic with Remaker and new equipment concepts with Eleiko.

Planning for the Paralympic Games 2024 continues with a target of 1-3 medals with a team size of five or more and qualification ending in June 2024. The team is currently sourcing kit, organising friends and family support, drafting selection policy and starting education and anti-doping training.

Planning for the rest of 2023 includes athlete reviews, LA strategy, Worlds and UKS annual review, UKS investment review, notice of membership endings in 2024 and publishing selection policy for 2024/25.

Sport England and Education

KL noted the full operational scorecard had been circulated and provided an update on education, noting that courses were being reviewed to ensure they remain fit for purpose and considering where the offering can be enhanced especially with regard assessment of learners. KL noted that partnerships have been established with Pure Gym and Virgin Active about them using the BWL education offer. The DiSE programme continues to run well and currently has thirty learners with the new September cohort currently being recruited. It was noted that the delivery of the Birmingham Legacy programme has accelerated over the last few months with an increased number of technical official and coaches recruited, the Legacy programme ends in December 2023. KL noted that regular meetings with Sport England continue, objectives continue to be met and reporting deadlines achieved.

WPPO World Cup 2024

KL provided an update on the World Cup where numbers are expected to be high with it being the final qualifier for Paris. An external event management company has been appointed and other suppliers and contractors are being looked into. A number of hotel site visits have been carried out and rooms secured. Currently in discussions with WPPO about rule changes which have recently been introduced to ensure they are factored into the planning. The LOC meetings will commence in due course and Liam McGarry has been selected as athlete representative on the Stakeholder Board.

8 Board Matters

Policy Updates

KL noted updated safeguarding policies had been presented to be signed off by the Board which will enable the services from both the Sport Integrity Service and / or Sport Resolutions to be utilised in safeguarding cases. The updates policies were approved.

BWL Athletes Commission

MC reminded the Board that at the January 2023 meeting, it was agreed to establish an Athlete's Commission (AC). This can be established without changing the statutes and should comprise of the following members: Jenny Tong (Interim) Chair, Para Powerlifting designate, and Weightlifting designate. The term of tenure should be limited to a maximum of twelve months after which the AC shall have undertaken and completed the following tasks:

- Terms of Reference
- Rules and regulations for an election to be held in 2024
- Candidate form
- Consent and waiver form

- Declaration form

The CEO will work closely with the AC to ensure governance changes to the AC are reflected in the BWL Articles as required. Upon completion of the 2024 AC election, the elected chair and vice chair automatically become voting (and legal) Directors of the BWL Board. KS noted that there needs to be governance support in place to the Group and MC agreed noting that he does not want to influence the AC. JH offered UKS support to JT including governance training and suggested getting support from another sport who had gone through the process. He also suggested an independent advisor might be helpful.

Revised Code for Sport Governance

MC provided an update on 5:15 reporting which is now in place at BWL. JT raised concerns about the current staff structure and asked about implications of staff leaving the marketing and communications department. MC noted that a temporary staff placement has been made in this department and recruitment is underway. RA suggested increasing the current notice period for senior leadership team members from one month to three months and offered the suggestion of outsourcing work to an agency for continuity reasons. AK noted the difficulty in recruiting staff in the current market.

The progress report around meeting the new requirements Code for Sports Governance was discussed and it was agreed to appoint AK as the Board Welfare and Safety Lead.

UK Sport – System Masterplan

JH from UK Sport provided an update on UK Sport's System Masterplan Working Group. The ideas discussed, led by NGBs with relevant engagement from the Sports Councils, BOA, BPA and UKSI, were grouped into five overarching themes for change, namely:

- Structural Alignment and Integration: The opportunity to incentivise alignment and integration of structures within and across British sport, including at GB home nation level where appropriate.
- Operational Efficacy: The opportunity to explore specific ideas for operational efficacy including an integrated system-wide strategy for safeguarding, a specialist major events unit, opportunities for consolidating performance operations and corporate services, and greater understanding of organisational health.
- Relevancy, Engagement and Revenue: The need to reform fan engagement in a unified way and through compelling story telling, fanbase data and major events.
- People System: The need to coalesce behind a single identity to attract, develop, retain, and support our people, with dedicated services, networks and support in place
- One System, One Team: The need to embed a major cultural shift in recognising ourselves as part of a single sporting family, underpinned by a shared sense of identity, belonging and purpose.

Risk Register Policy

The risk register was reviewed and noted.

Complaints Log

The complaints log was reviewed noting there are currently two ongoing complaints.

Operational Scorecard

The Operational Scorecard along with additional Membership and social media statistics were provided to the Board.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan

KL provided an update on the Diversity and Inclusion Action DIAPS journey noting consultancy support was provided by UK Sport/Sport England to help develop the plan. JT, as Board EDI lead, noted that BWL need to be more proactive than reactive, highlighting that the recent video interview with Ryan Lowther-Lucas was the most engaged post to date. JT noted that there is a need to be explicit as to why we are focusing on EDI, for example being representative of our members and suggested partnering with relevant organisations, e.g., Stonewall. It was agreed that that being focussed is key and implementing fewer but better campaigns in order to be successful and drive engagement. KS stated that more needed to be done and that inclusivity around age, gender and socio-economic levels needs to be embedded into the culture and increasing diversity will ultimately increase participation and talent.

9 Any Other Business

RA stated that she will be stepping down as a BWL Director as she has completed her four-year term with an additional year extension.

10 Dates and Venue of Next Meetings / Forward Agenda

- 26 September, EGM
- 27 September 2023 (Audited Accounts, 2022-23)
- 26 October 2023, Annual General Meeting

The meeting closed at 5.00pm.

11 Private Meeting of NEDs and INEDs

It was agreed there was no need for a private meeting.