

Minutes of the
British Weight Lifting Board Meeting

Venue: Legends Suite, Elland Road, Leeds
Date: Tuesday 17 March 2020
Start: 12.00 noon

Present: Angus Kinnear (AK), Ashley Metcalfe (AM), Jane Fenwick (JF), Neill Wood (NW), Rupinder Ashworth (RA), Kelly Sotherton (KS), Guy Taylor (GT)

Via Skype: Matthew Curtain (MC)

In attendance: Kath Leonard (KL), Mark Martin (MM), Tom Whittaker (TW) – via Skype

1 Welcome and Apologies

AK welcomed everyone to the meeting, noted apologies had been received from Mike Irani, Ali Jawad and Sarah Davies and declared the meeting quorate. It was noted that David Knaggs had resigned from the Board and AK added his thanks on before of the Board for his commitment over the last 5 years.

2 Declarations of Interest

AK reminded members that the proceedings of the meeting were confidential and asked if there were any conflicts of interest. No declarations of interest were made.

PART 1 – REPORTS

3 Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 4 December 2019 were agreed as read and **approved** for posting on the website. There were no matters arising that would not be covered on the agenda.

4 Decisions Taken outside the Board Meeting

AM advised that the EWF elections had been postponed to June 2020. He noted that four GB nominations had been put forward for EWF Executive positions – Ashley Metcalfe (EWF Board), Dave Sawyer (EWF Coaching Committee), Heather Allison (EWF Technical Committee) and Mike Irani (EWF Medical Committee) prior to the 30 January deadline. These nominations

had been submitted following consultation with AK and GT and were approved retrospectively by the Board.

5 Minutes and Recommendations from the Sub-Committees

Performance – KS noted that the Committee had not met face to face recently but she reported on very positive feedback from the GB team in relation to the Para Powerlifting World Cup held in Manchester. She noted that the current Covid-19 situation would impact this Committee in the short term due to the cancellation of many international events. It was noted that Keith Morgan was a member of this group and AM agreed to send details to KS to ensure he was included in all future communications.

Finance and Audit – NW reported back from the meeting held on 12 February noting discussions had covered several areas including the current forecast (following December accounts) which was showing a positive improvement and although indicating a worst case scenario of a £47k loss, it was showing evidence that through careful management the organisation were heading towards the proposed break even position. There were also updates on the setting up of the charity, reviewing of the risk register, and the proposed plans around future executive appraisal/bonus structures that ideally would be introduced during 2020/21. NW noted that a review of the reserves policy may be required and that a breakeven budget for next year may be difficult but was appropriate given the current unprecedented climate. NW concluded that the Audit Committee were happy to recommend the proposed break even budget to the Board.

Commercial and Development – RA updated that the pursuit of a new competition format was still important but may now not be considered a priority, She advised that Gymshark were not interested in sponsoring this project, however, suggested a working group be set up to focus on this going forward. **AM agreed to facilitate the group.** She advised that the education development with LUFC had provided valuable learnings, but it was unlikely to be implemented this year. It was noted that BWL would need to take a stronger control of future recruitment initiatives in order to move it forward. Regarding commercial/sponsorship income, RA noted the sourcing of recent new sponsors still proved to be challenging and was not delivering the results everyone had hoped for. Finally, RA advised that even with capacity/resource issues, she felt the online marketing and social media messages had been much more positive and on message over the last few months.

International Relations – GT advised that currently BWL had extensive International representation but to enable this to continue the Committee were keen to implement a new framework with updated criteria regarding mutual expectations of international representatives to ensure that BWL was appropriately represented in the long term. Further plans and proposals would be brought to the Board in the near future.

England Committee – MC updated the board on the recent meeting held on 6 March noting that new TOR had been proposed and would be addressed later in the board meeting. He added several important areas were covered including initial preparations for Birmingham 2022, the role of the England Committee to support BWL's overall strategy and key priorities, as well as check and challenge current operational thinking around the growth and

development of the sport. He also added how BWL may be able to learn and benefit from a new lifting initiative in Sheffield that had particular physical, mental and social benefits.

6 Covid-19 Update

AM reported that the health and wellbeing of staff and others was key during this difficult time and that Government advice had continued to be followed, with all staff now working from home and additional communication channels established to support them. He advised that all competitions scheduled to the end of April had been postponed and the British Championships in June would need to be reviewed. At present education courses were continuing to be delivered but there was great uncertainty at present with the likelihood of longer-term cancellations, which would have a significant financial impact. Various financial scenarios were being investigated and would be forwarded to the board once completed. AM noted he had held discussions with Sport England and UK Sport who in acknowledging the key role NGB's play, were looking at potential centralised support to ensure their long-term future.

The Board discussed how BWL could possibly assist its clubs throughout this period in giving out relevant advice which could help them, especially around grants, centralised Government initiatives as well as directing people to good online activities if they are not able to visit a gym or the provision of useful and informative advice from top athletes.

TW gave an overview of the additional measures being implemented at Powerbase (Loughborough University) in order to keep it as safe as possible for the para powerlifting elite athletes to train out of whilst noting many of them are able to train from home, if needed. AM reiterated this was very much the same for the Olympic lifters.

MC provided an update regarding the impact on international Olympic qualification for weightlifting. He reported that nine events had been postponed and since March no-one had further opportunities to gain points for Tokyo which had resulted in a chaotic situation. He noted the IWF were looking at new qualification proposals to address this and hoped information would be available very soon, although it would need IWF and IOC approval.

7 Finance Matters

Management Accounts – MM reported that the figures to January were very good with a record month for courses contributing to this and the target of breaking even at the year end realistic.

Budget 2020/21 – MM advised that in line with previous proposals to the Audit Committee, the original budget, based on similar income levels to 2019/20, would result in a loss of £136k for the next financial year. He outlined plans to bring this back to a breakeven budget – with necessary increased income and savings on costs. The Board were in favour of the amended breakeven budget, but it was noted that the budget needed to be re-visited in light of the Covid-19 situation. It was agreed that a further budget should be drawn up with an overlay for the first quarter showing the impact of the loss of earned income due to the current circumstances. It was noted this would be circulated to the Board for review and electronic approval.

8 Operational Reports

High Performance and UK Sport Update – TW presented an update on the progress being made towards the World Class Programme (WCP) for Para Powerlifting. He advised that several qualification competitions had been cancelled and gave updates on current rankings for podium potential athletes, the preparation for Tokyo 2020 and the positive work being completed around culture and environment. He reported that the World Cup in Manchester had been positive for the GB team and the Board congratulated him on the most recent performances and the improvements made to the sport over a number of years.

AM presented a report on Olympic weightlifting matters, in particular the England Talent Pathway which remained on track and in line with stakeholder expectations. He provided an update on current rankings in the run up to Tokyo, which had been impacted by the cancellation of qualification events but still indicated three out of the four original lifters were in strong positions to qualify.

Sport Development and Coach Education – KL presented her report on operational performance including the latest developments and progress relating to Workforce, Competitions, Communications, Partnerships, Relationship Management and Governance. KL reported all areas were on target and delivering in line with stakeholder expectations. KS requested that anti-doping testing statistics be added to future reports. It was also agreed that the Board would address the current requirements to remain governance compliant, by endorsing the appointment of nominated individuals in the roles of Board Champions for anti-doping, safeguarding and equality/diversity.

9 Governance Updates

Financial Policies – A number of financial policies had been updated, reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee. **The Board agreed to approve these.**

Matters Reserved to the Board – **The updated document was approved by the Board** and would need further review in March 2021.

England Group TOR – Following a discussion about the number of BWL staff involved with this sub-committee and the time commitment needed, the **updated TOR was deemed appropriate and approved by the Board.**

Board Evaluation/Skills Matrix – Following the evaluation carried out in December, it was agreed that the board was in good shape, with a broad range of skillsets and expertise. The Board in its current capacity remained compliant in terms of the code for sports governance. However, it was agreed that following the recent resignation of a long-standing Independent Non-Executive Director, who had a strong legal background, the Board now lacked expertise in this area and therefore the Board as a priority were asked to recommend any individuals with these skills who might be interested in being appointed to the Board. It was agreed that members with interested colleagues would forward details to the CEO, who would update the Board ahead of and at the next meeting.

Stakeholder Strategy – **The updated strategy was discussed and approved by the Board.**

10 CEO Update

Charity – AM provided an update on the progress being made to establish the BWL Foundation, with further information to be made available as the launch progresses.

Complaints – AM advised that there had not be any new complaints since the last board meeting..

Risk Register – A revised version of the register had been circulated following review, check and challenge by the Audit Committee. AM wished to thank Patrick Roberts for his continued input and it was noted there were a number of current areas of the organisation that had been put under new financial and health and safety pressures and needed the associated risks increasing to red due to the Covid-19 situation. It was agreed this would need to be closely monitored and managed over the next period.

UK Sport funding submission – AM reported that Phase 2 of the para-powerlifting submission had been completed and feedback was due in April. The weightlifting application and been re-submitted (Phase 1) and feedback was due in May.

Scorecard – The February scorecard had been circulated noting all operational areas were on track and in good shape.

PART 2 – THE ROAD TO BIRMINGHAM 2022

This part of the agenda was adjourned.

11 Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

12 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Friday 26 June 2020 (part of British Championships) - TBC

Please note this meeting may be via a tele-conference if the current health crisis remains.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm.