

BRITISH FENCING BOARD MINUTES

Date of Meeting 29th June 2024

Time 17.00 – 20.00

Location Linklaters, London and online

Present

Directors (Voting)
Mark Lyttle, Chair
Pat Aiyenuro, Anti-Doping Champion
Brian Brittain
Jade Clarke
Mary Cohen
Tommy Curran Jones
John Troiano
Chris Tidmarsh

Executive Attendees (Non-Voting):

Georgina Usher, CEO (GU)
David Moseley, FD (DM)

Observers/Home Nation Representatives (Non-Voting)

Jack Magill, Northern Ireland Fencing
George Liston, Scottish Fencing
Caryl Oliver, England Fencing

Apologies

Yashmin Harun, Safeguarding Champion
Matthew Russell, Welsh Fencing
Members of Senior Athlete Rep Panel

Item	Item Description
1.	Directors Only Items Apologies - YH Board Director - New Declarations/Conflicts of Interest - None For Discussion • EF/BF Project • Wheelchair WCP transfer out of UKSI • Competition Gender Policy (Minuted separately)
2.	General Introduction Chair's Opening Remarks – reminder of process Other Apologies Notable Results - David Sosnov and Alec Brooke both took silver medals at the 2024 Cadet & Junior World Championships in April in Saudi. 2 medals at zonal qualifiers – Carolina Stutchbury (WF) 2nd and Julia Caron (WE) 3rd. Carolina won Bronze at the Senior European Championships yesterday. The Board congratulated all the athletes. Condolences – James Williams – Mark paid tribute to James and his contribution to the sport at all levels. We have sent their condolences to the family, Pat gave a lovely eulogy at the funeral which was extremely well attended by the fencing community Other New Declarations/Conflicts of Interest - None Interim Decisions: Byelaws, Election Pack, 24-25 Budget and Safety Guidelines all approved Noting of Policies / Papers for (Pre)Approval with no discussion anticipated: Inputs: Pre Approved Documents “Pre-approval” and for in-meeting in “For Approval” Board folder 2024 Annual Policy & TOR Review The Board approved the policies Noting of Papers for Information with no discussion anticipated in this meeting: Board folder “For Noting” Insurance, Pay Rises and Bouses

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	Summary of the GBR pathway written by ML, taken from various published sources.
3.	Action Items Update 79, 96, 107, 11 & 16 closed as other related projects have superseded. 124, 125, 134, 67, 65 done New Risks • None to note <i>Inputs:</i> Action List (below), Interim Decision (none), Risk Log
4.	Approve Previous Board Minutes The minutes were approved.
5.	<i>Strategy Area: Sustainability (& Resource Management)</i> <i>Tactic: Continue to prepare and manage a managed budget</i> <u>Finance Part 1. 23-24 Q4 Management Accounts</u> Input – Q4 Management Accounts (copy in for approval folder) Short verbal update of highlights was given by DM; budget that was set for the year ended March 2024 was a deficit of £7000, and the result is actually a positive surplus of just under £1500 so a good result for the year. Key variances listed in document along with some commentary. • small positive variance against budget for events, which is due to a ranking levy offsetting the cost of volunteer training at the competitions. • a small negative variance against commercial, commercial director left halfway through the year, combined with a start to last year from a sales perspective. To come in as close to the surplus budget as expected is actually a really good result. • staff leaving who were funded out of the membership department and the replacements, in some cases, recognised in corporate services due to changes in role. • one off, cost of us transitioning to the new finance system from Jockey Club after they ceased operating, cost of external contractor to support data migration, plus transitioning and onboarding of the new system to train staff. 25K cost has all been written off in last year, so we've managed to clear that cost out in the previous financial year, whilst also coming in better than budget. • spending more time in safeguarding Questions were invited

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	MC – Why were there no wheelchair entries for the nationals? The top eight worldclass program athletes were away/just returning from an international tournament, so insufficient classified athlete to create event. Thanks was given to DM. The Board approved the Q4 Accounts. <u>Finance Part 2. 24-25 Q1 Budget Update</u> Things have started well, we are a little ahead of budget in terms of membership income. Commercial started well, particularly the WAFF Program. Five new schools signed (compared to 0 in this quarter last year). Events - run two of the competitions of the four in the portfolio, both have gone pretty well, with entry numbers bit better than budgeted. And as a result, we're a little bit better than budget across those two events combined. Entry numbers for the Open (July Q2) currently are close to the budgeted figures. No exceptional costs to mention at the moment - a pretty solid start to the current financial year.
6.	<i>Information & Approval (to be confirmed after Nom Com)</i> <u>Board Sub-Committee Items: NomCom</u> Last meeting NomCom was not quorate so approvals coming to Board. Pat summarized: - Chair Recruitment – NomCom recommended candidate CV in pack. Summary of process. NomCom met and appointed Hartmann Mason – who proposed eight candidates, we shortlisted it to six for first interview. Shortlisted to three very good, candidates for 2nd round. One of the candidates had to withdraw because of other project commitments and one with concerns that the role was too big, expressing interest in becoming a non-Executive Director I'm on the board. Went ahead to call final one back, for interview with PA and JT and Dame Catherine Granger, Chair of UK Sport. Also met with GU. All agree an outstanding candidate who is recommended to Board. Thanks to Yashmin for leading and John and Brian as well. A decision was made to delay the announcement until after the Olympics. Board agreed the appointment - BF Honours Update - list from Honours Committee (HC) in pack. The HC noted that in regards to James posthumous award unlike previous posthumous nominations James had not already been recognized for his services at an appropriate award level. Board approved Honours List - Election Timetable/paperwork and Skills/Diversity Statement – to note that NomCom reviewed that and published as per the bylaws and UK and governance code - NED Recruitment - 3 candidates are being interviewed in July, for the Independent Director role. Interviews to be done by Pat, Tommy and Brian. - EFC Nominations - just noting this work is underway - CEO Performance Review – held to end of meeting for Directors only discussion
7.	(break)

Item	Item Description
8.	CEO Update GU noted highlights from Balanced Scorecard and CEO Report Draft in pack. • Note that purdah is in place which affects what we can communicate. • Olympics - no athletes qualified for Olympics – expected following the loss of World Class funding in 2016 and the lack of direct financial support that is available for our athletes. The future lies with athletes that have not experienced a funded system, and Carolina is the first of those athletes to demonstrate a trajectory that would be considered World Class. GU will be attending in TeamGB Board Director role. HP attending for IR meetings. • Reminder that UK Sport indicative funding figure received but no update from Sport England. Keeping involved in UK Sport System Master Planning meetings • Epee Cub has donated £25,000 mainly to support coach development in Epee. The Board expressed its thanks. • FIE/EFC – HP is standing for re-election to EFC ComEx – HP & PA attending EFC Elective Congress in September • Elective FIE Congress – expected to be in Lausanne but in Tashkent in late November. Important to send candidates to increase chances of their election/selection. • Pathway/GBR – GBR selection policy is now out for consultation, evolution not revolution. April camp was for the recruitment of a new cohort of fencers with a more even spread across the age groups. Senior athletes coming along to camps working with younger fencers. Athlete welfare, tap mentoring programs continued, capturing data on minor injuries/niggles with a concern that the explosive nature of saber is creating a higher prevalence. The BF Medical Committee is involved in this. Mental Health First Aid course delivered to staff and coaches off the back of an incident that happened last year. Ambition is for all ADP coaches to be trained to support an athlete is having a mental health crisis. • P&P/Social Impact - Due to update the leadership in fencing award prior to the start of school terms next year, enhancing our WAFF program as well as our offers to scouts and Muslim girls fence and London Youth. Creating a CPD learning module to support fencing clubs that support children with ASD. We continue to work with partners in Wales to build on the Para fencing World Cup and the wheelchair fencing activities that happening there. • Membership/Clubs/ Customer Service - Announced the Community Awards, and will open in September for nominations. Re-assessing Playwaze as issues with platform continue to hold back GB league • Media & Comms- Stats on Instagram have significantly improved and engagement has doubled. And it's the videos and reels that the team are producing. A lot of the athletes are doing content as well and tagging British fencing in. The Bios are being well received. No Olympics coverage, but additional support around Paralympics in expectation of medals. • Disciplinary/Sport Integrity we have created a fast track notification process when there is undisputed evidence. • Equality - our diversity and inclusion action plan (DIAP) is complete. it's incumbent on every one to raise any issues that we're aware of in the sport or in clubs or in programs that we have.

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	- Safeguarding - Safeguard (new Safeguarding course getting excellent reviews). Clubs being disaffiliated when they fail to meet minimum standards for welfare officers and welfare training. Questions were invited - PA – was it a Board decision to fill/not fill teams for Majors. ML - The Board has not said we must fill full teams at all events irrespective of standards. That decision making process belongs in the executive space, not in the board space. Guided by the Board approved weapon strategy and selection policy.
9.	<i>Information & Approval</i> <u>Board Sub-Committee Items: AGRC</u> (items not already covered above) Risk Management Process Reviewed - The risk management framework that we have had agreed was reviewed and considered satisfactory, noting the requirement for this review to be performed under the governance code.
10.	<u>Board Strategy Away Day Outputs</u> Club Strategy Paper – Action - Board comments invited on Club Strategy Discussion paper GBR Pathway Paper – pulled together since last Board meeting - in pack for Information Ratings Update - Brian ran through a powerpoint detailing ratings platform at club level. - Feeds in place from results (En Guard, Fencing Time Live) and Sport80 to ratings system, fully automated. ~87 clubs with only one fencer competing - around 1600 unidentifiable fencers who are not BF members. - users of the system have doubled to 10,000 – some looking up their competition in real time. - Greater individual and club data available for analysis - Some challenges with misspelt club names and people with the same names - Flexible approach for organisers to run DUE competitions alongside Opens - Look to review engagement/naming etc as part of overall Event Strategy. Thanks were given to Brian and Paul Abrahams for all their hard work on this Medal Presentations - Thanks were given to BB and JT for attending events to support this.
11.	<i>Information</i> <u>Standing Item – Safeguarding</u> Covered in CEO Item

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12.	<i>Information</i> <u>Standing Item – Anti-Doping</u> Covered in CEO Item
13.	<i>Information</i> <u>Standing Item - Equality & Diversity</u> Covered in CEO Item
14	AOB Sport England Governance – items not already covered – none BVF Selection Complaint Letter Meeting closed at 8.10pm

Date of Next Meeting: 12th September 2024