



# Minutes - July Board 2016

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<b>Date of Meeting</b>	12/07/2016
<b>Location</b>	Eversheds
<b>Present</b>	Chair, P Abrahams, T Cadman, J Campbell, C Oliver, G Palmer, B Speight, J Troiano, P Wedge.
<b>In attendance</b>	CEO, J Magill, David Moseley (items 3), M Liston, K Robinson, A Newton (items 5,6,7) G Williams (items 5,6,7) L Behnke (item4).

## 1. Introductions & Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologised for a late start. Chair noted that this meeting would cover every aspect of British Fencing's responsibilities and activities. Chair thanked Eversheds for the excellent hospitality.

There were apologies received from C Halsted.

### *New Declarations of Interest*

CO declared she had become Co Team Manager for England Fencing for the Five Nations tournament and voted in as President of the European Veterans Council.

### *Interim Decisions*

Noted interim decisions are on the agenda and have been noted by email.

### *Non-Exec action points from meeting held 15<sup>th</sup> March*

List of non exec actions points are listed on the agenda.

## 2. Finance

### Q4 Management Accounts

DM reported on Q4 Management Accounts.

In Board discussion, PA asked if we needed to be more effective with the events programme. He gave examples of how the USFA work and asked if we should scale our events for profit as opposed to loss. Should we be more ambitious rather than cut back? JT – if we operate a system as the USFA it would take a great deal of change and a lot of work. He agreed we should be open-minded about our solutions.

The CEO reported that there is a competitions review happening with the HC's Presidents which would report back to the Board with proposals.



JT reported to the Board that the previous index link gilt expired and has now been rolled over into a short dated one as a preservation of our capital.

#### **Summary**

The Board approved the Q4 accounts.

The Board noted the provisional year-end position, which will be revisited in September after the audited results, taking account of the competitions review.

The Board noted JT's statement on the action re the index link gilt expiry.

### **3. Board Sub-Committee Items Part 1 AGRC Items**

#### **Risk Log**

It was noted that the reviewed changes to the document have been highlighted in yellow. JT was reporting to the Board on back of a deep-dive review of the Risk Log performed by the AGRC. There was nothing specifically the AGRC wanted to bring to the Board's attention. The Board was asked to note the AGRC presented Risk Log as an accurate record of the major Risks facing BF and the mitigation plans in place.

#### **Summary**

Board approved the Risk Log.

#### **Memorandum and Articles of the Association**

In the previous AGRC meeting, the AGRC on behalf of the Board undertook to:

- consider The Memorandum and Articles of Association and
- confirm they meet the needs of the organisation
- confirm they allow for open recruitment to the Board.

TC reported that the AGRC reviewed the Memorandum and Articles in relation to the Board composition and decided that they were satisfied that the articles presently meet the need of the organisation. In light of possible changes to Governance requirements coming from our funding bodies, it was not considered appropriate at this stage to propose any changes to the Memorandum and Articles but to wait to see what requirements are imposed upon us from our funding bodies.

#### **Summary**

The Board agreed this position re the Mem & Arts.

### **4. Equality and Safeguarding**

Chair welcomed Liz Behnke Equality and Safeguarding Manager and informed the Board that the Board Equality Survey had been completed by only 7 out of the 10 Directors and some were completed late. He asked Directors concerned to reflect on their lack of action - when such surveys for example are important.

CEO confirmed that the role of the Nominations Committee (NC) was to look at the Board and Staff Equality Survey and review the draft recommendations presented by the Exec. As a result of the NC discussion



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recommendations numbers 2.2a and 2.3a have been scored through as they do not represent an outcome that follow from the survey results.

LB reported to the Board that this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the equality survey process. The purpose was to capture data to identify protected characteristics that we cannot capture through the membership database. There were 800 responses, the biggest response so far, which makes up 8.9% of the membership.

The first part of the data of note is that there is a very low response rate from the under 18s. Reasons for that could be parents and/or schools getting the information for the youngsters and not completing the survey. We have to think of other ways to target the younger members. The good news is that we have had an increase on each group from the previous years.

Gender imbalance, in terms of the response and membership; increasingly BF was getting more men year on year with women numbers staying the same. Significantly there are more male referees and coaches than female but more female volunteers than male. We need to look at ways to get more women involved in coaching and refereeing. Currently we are looking at more mentoring to see if we can tip the balance a bit.

Ethnicity - predominately white European.

Disability - we need to change the filter question at the start of this section as we have had under-reporting from disability groups.

LB concluded her summary by noting that the educational attainment of members is startling when compared to the UK population, how many of BF's members are educated to degree and postgraduate level.

### **Recommendations**

The recommendations are included in the paper, but the most important point is that BF should work to get a younger representative voice on our Board. The Youth Panel is paramount to that.

### **Summary**

The Board

- a) noted the results of the Equality Survey (circulated in advance)
- b) accepted the recommendations for action as updated by Nominations Committee
- c) re-approved the Equality Policy (as circulated in advance)
- d) agreed that the election/appointment procedures be reviewed for next elections particularly the tone and style of language and methods of communication to attract a more diverse (and particularly young) set of candidates.

## **5. UK Sport Strategy Feedback and Timings**

Chair welcomed Alex Newton Performance Director.

In a brief report, AN noted that the papers on the WCP Tokyo Strategy had already been circulated to the Board. Points to note are:



We are at phase 4, which means that UK Sport has assessed the plans for all sports and no final decisions will be made now until after Rio. Post Rio, UK Sport will look at all sports targets for Rio and do analysis of targets versus actual; targets will be announced on Thursday. UK Sport will assess whether sports have hit their targets or not and then have individual discussions about what this means.

All things being equal in Rio, then our target and athlete numbers have been provisionally accepted so will be confirmed. The strategy has been provisionally accepted subject to revision of the following: 1. Looking at R & I project in partnership with the EIS and clarity on talent transfer and so more detail will be needed. All sports will be reviewed and ranked before being presented to the UKS Board for a funding decision.

CEO stated that the Board should not underestimate the amount of work Alex has put in to get us to this position. We are in a very good position. It is a huge step forward to have qualified a team.

The Board joined in giving their thanks to Alex, and her colleagues, for all the hard work done and acknowledged her achievement in getting BF to this position. The Board wished the team good luck in Rio.

### **Summary**

The Board noted the feedback from UK Sport on the BF WCP Tokyo Strategy; and thanked the Performance team led by AN for their effective progress and results.

## **6. BF WCP Talent Strategy**

A paper had been presented to the Board in advance of the meeting.

AN reported that discussions have already started with Sport England as part of the next funding cycle and submission of our application. The new proposals have been made with the following considerations:

- the Talent Pathway Manager has left British Fencing;
- we have started to review where we are and where we want to be with the talent pathway;
- we are looking at where we are, following the results of the Junior World Championships;
- Sport England has issued its strategy on Talent and reframed the level underneath Podium Potential.

AN continued, over next six months we will start to move towards the new system of introducing a new streamlined Performance Foundations level and this will be a key part of the new strategy. The overall vision and mission remains the same. We are reconfiguring the talent pathway, the name and terminology and levels. We are focusing resources at Performance Foundation level on three weapons based on who qualified for the World Championships - Men's Foil, Sabre and Women's Foil. We will continue to have a six-weapon pathway at Talent Development Centres and club level.

We will need additional resource from Sport England in order to manage and run talent development centres the way we want and this will be a key part of the funding application.

We are working together with the BF Coaching Development Manager and the coach development programme; he is working to ensure that coach education and development supports the talent pathway from clubs through to Podium.



It was noted that England Fencing are working with the Development Director to employ a Manager who will work with the regions to bring the development of fencing forward and support all six weapons.

The Chair thanked Alex for this summary report and once again for all the hard work.

### **Summary**

The Board noted the updates to the operational plan to Mar 17 and the discussions with Sport England on the proposed approach for Apr 17 onwards.

## **7. Sport England Submission**

Chair welcomed Gabby Williams, Development Director.

GW took the Board through the working draft presentation and noted that there is a Sport England scoping meeting next Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July with Chris Coleman and Paul Bickerton for BF to understand the investment guide distributed to all the NGBs and for us to give our feedback on our strategy and aspirations in a more generic sense for the next 4 years.

The investment guide is quite prescriptive in terms of what Sport England are asking NGBs to respond to and deliver against in line with the Governments Sports Strategy and Sport England's new Strategy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sporting-future-a-new-strategy-for-an-active-nation>  
<https://www.sportengland.org/media/10629/sport-england-towards-an-active-nation.pdf>

GW and GU will be discussing our vision and mission on Wednesday. They will be talking about what we know about our markets and the ongoing evidence of our delivery projects over the past months. They will speak about our core market and what we propose to do and why over the next few years. There are three key things; one around supporting our existing core, two around supporting our new core and three how we continue to grow the sport.

### **Summary**

The Board noted the progress of BF's response to the Sport England NGB Investment Guide (papers circulated in advance).

At the Chair's request, the Board thanked Alex Newton and Gabby Williams warmly for all the terrific amount of work produced.

## **Break**

## **8. Ongoing Commercial Strategy**

Chair introduced this key topic by noting that the Board had agreed that a key goal going forward is sustainability. We have to increase income. The CEO and Executive have produced a draft commercial strategy.



The CEO talked the Board through an on screen slide of the overview commercial model.

The two starting points are our relationships with organisations (B2B) and individuals (B2C): B2B relationships are progressed commercially in three ways, sponsorship, joint venture and licensing and bolt ons. The B2C relationships (members, participants, parents) are commercialised through add on membership services, patrons and merchandising. As we develop these relationships commercially we should focus on building a core customer database and a store of commercial assets.

PW informed the Board that discussion has taken place on how we move forward on commercial income but efforts so far are too widespread and not targeted. Going forward he recommended a more specified market for a specified message and audience, creating tailored collateral aimed at those sectors. The view is to identify three sectors; he suggested these could be financial services, the software developing companies and PW was also keen to propose the gambling sector. Going forward the recommendation is to employ a professional company onboard to do the work. Thus, Bastion's proposals had been circulated to the Board.

There followed a discussion by Directors. The key proposal emerging was that the Board should authorise a spend - of £10k, initially, this was then increased to £20k; how and where the money is spent to be an operational decision.

### **Summary**

The Board noted that the Commercial Strategy model was a good representation of the overall Commercial approach.

## **9. CEO Information Items**

Board noted all the recent press and agreed to take the other items off line.

## **10. Youth Panel Update**

GP confirmed that a paper had been circulated to the Board in advance.

Points to note were:

The Youth Panel had been formed around 8 months ago;

The panel felt that there was not a lot of contact between the Board and the Panel;

Most of the panel's interaction is carried out through social media.

CEO confirmed that when the Youth Panel was being created, the offer of the CEO attending the Youth Panel to answer questions was made. The offer is still open.

In a brief discussion, Board members confirmed this was an important initiative, which must receive strong support. Chair suggested that we think again about the idea of offering the Panel an observer place on the Board; this was agreed.

### **Summary**

The Board agreed that one member of the Youth Panel would attend each Board meeting.



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## 11. AOB

### BF Charity

The Chair of the charity, PW , gave a summary of facts:

- The charity is registered with the Charity Commission;
- A bank account has been set up;
- BT my donate page has been set up;
- The members of the charity are JT, PW and TC;
- Support will be given from Head Office;
- A briefing note will be put out to the membership next week;
- JT thanked PW for all the work put into setting up the charity.

### Summary

The Board noted the progress made and thanked the Chair and Trustees.

*The Meeting closed at 20:08.*