



BRITISH FENCING

Minutes of the Board meeting held at APCO, London, on Sunday 12th December 2010 at 11.00
Approved by the Board on Wednesday 23rd February 2011

Present			
David King	Director and Chair		DK
Keith Smith	Director and President		KS
Ismay Cowen	Director		IC
Murray Morrison	Director		MM
Libby Payne	Director		LP
David Sach	Director		DS
Penny Spink MBE	Director		PS
Mike Thornton	Director		MT

Also in attendance (non-voting)			
Ray Stafford	England Representative		RS
Bob Turner	Wales Representative		BT
Piers Martin	Chief Executive (CEO)		PM
Dr. Clare Halsted	International Committee Chair (IntCom) [part]		CH

Apologies for absence			
Andrew Brannon	Director and Treasurer		AB
Chris Hyde	Scotland Representative		CH
Jack Magill	Northern Ireland Representative		JM
Alex O'Connell	Athletes Representative		AO

Ref	Minute	Action
94.	<u>Welcome and general</u>	
94.1	DK welcomed everyone to APCO and noted the apologies for absence as recorded above.	
94.2	It was noted that the Athletes Committee had not sent a representative to a meeting of the Board for over a year. The Board asked PM to speak with the Chair and encourage attendance where possible.	PM
95.	<u>Declarations of interest</u>	
95.1	The following Declarations of Interest were raised and minuted:	
95.2	DS: Receives payment as a World Class Programme Coach.	
95.3	LP: The firm for which she works, Olswang LLP, has in the past undertaken pro bono legal work for BF. She is also an athlete.	
95.4	IC: Her husband is an England Fencing Director.	
95.5	RS: Is the parent of a GB athlete.	
96.	<u>Minutes of the 2nd November 2010</u>	
96.1	81.3: Corrected to read: <i>"The firm for which she works, Olswang LLP, has in the past undertaken pro bono legal work for BF"</i> .	
96.2	The Board approved the minutes of the 02.11.2010.	
97.	<u>Matters arising from the minutes not on the Agenda</u>	
97.1	83.1: DK informed that he had passed on GW's response on this matter to the parents and there had been nothing further received.	

97.2	83.3: It was noted by the Board that not all Weapon Committees had completed this request. PM was asked to ensure this was undertaken by the next Board meeting.	PM
97.3	83.4: IC, LP and PM agreed to present Terms of Reference for the Welfare Committee at the next meeting.	IC;LP; PM
97.4	84.9: LP explained that she had not received a satisfactory response on VAT and upon seeking additional advice was concerned about the situation. The Board agreed for her to arrange to meet with Julian Ghosh who had offered to help in this area.	LP
97.5	84.10: The Board noted that it had not received a response on James Williams' role as Sports Science and Sports Medicine (SSSM) Manager. DK agreed to write to GW for confirmation. It was also raised that Job Descriptions for all World Class Programme (WCP) were still required to comply with the Audit recommendations. PM informed the Board that Moore Stephens were coming in to Audit again on the 6 th and 7 th January and these were required urgently for this.	DK
97.6	85.10: DK informed the Board that he had spoken to Rupert Davies-Cooke from the Lansdowne Club regarding formalising an agreement with BF and was waiting to hear back from him on initial thoughts.	
97.7	85.13: DK reported to the Board that Peter Jacobs (PJ) had accepted the position of Chair of the International Relations Committee (IRC) and agreed with the Board's view on Chairing more than one Committee. PJ therefore proposed Steve Higginson as Chair of the Rules Committee. The Board approved the two positions.	PM
97.8	90.1: PM informed the Board that he had requested an NGB allocation of tickets for London 2012, however LOCOG had asked him to reduce by 50%. He reported that he had done so and had requested 75 tickets per bracket per session. He also explained to the Board that he was , along with other NGBs, finalising with LOCOG how administration and postage costs would be met. He informed the Board that individuals would need to pay for tickets before BF would be required to make a payment.	
97.9	90.2: PM reported to the Board that he had received a response from Graham Watts (GW) on this matter stating that he had only been involved in an application for Juliana Reves but would send all details to the Board. The Board noted his concern about LP being conflicted in this matter and she agreed to leave the review of documents to MT. The Board also minuted their concern about the liability of approaches of this nature and how they were currently being handled. MT agreed to report back at the next meeting.	GW MT
97.10	90.4: The Board asked LP for an update on her complaint. LP informed the Board that she still had not received an answer from Peter Cadman, Honorary Legal Adviser (HLA). The Board asked DK to write as Chair and request a response as a matter of urgency.	DK
98.	<u>Formal Board Correspondence Received</u>	
98.1	The Board received formal correspondence from Barry Paul in relation to School Sport Partnerships funding. The Board noted that since the letter, the Government had agreed to review the cuts to this programme.	
98.2	Following a request from KS, DK asked for all the correspondence from the last Board meeting to be tabled again:	
98.3	<u>Letter from Lord Drayson:</u> The Board were presented with the letter from Lord Drayson previously shown to the Board on the 2 nd November 2010, explaining his reasons for not wishing to be involved with BF based on conversations with UK Sport. In response to the letter, KS stated that he had a very good relationship with UK Sport and he did not believe that they would have made such statements. DK explained that whilst at UK Sport's offices, he had been spoken to by Baroness Campbell who explained that she had been contacted by KS in relation to Lord Drayson's letter and felt the manner of such contact was inappropriate. The Board noted this and raised concerns with KS that this could damage the relationship with UK Sport. KS apologised for his approaches to UK Sport and added that Baroness Campbell had written to him and told him that she did not say anything inappropriate.	

98.4	<p><u>SABMiller:</u> The Board were presented with e-mails in relation to the SABMiller partnership (as part of the BOA FTSE-100 programme), previously shown to the Board on the 2nd November 2010, explaining their reasons for not wishing to continue the partnership with BF. The Board noted that this was partly due to the way SABMiller had been portrayed publicly by BF and also due to Board Directors on the Governance Working Group voting against the governance proposals developed with SABMiller at the Board. It was noted that the Governance Working Group proposals were in fact similar to the requests within the 2005 Audit, which at the time had not been presented to the Board, and also the recommendations of the 2009 Audit. The Board asked PM to speak with SABMiller and to report back at the next Board meeting.</p>	PM
98.5	<p><u>BOA</u> The Board were presented with e-mails in relation to the National Olympic Committee (NOC) representative. DK informed the Board that Andrew Hunt (CEO) had been told that PM was the NOC representative from British Fencing.</p>	
98.6	<p>At this point KS raised the fact that he had received formal correspondence from the President of the EFC, Frantisek Janda, which stated that a GB referee had contacted him directly. The Board asked to know who this GB Referee was and why this was a problem. MT explained that it was him, that he was old friends with President Janda and that he had contacted him not as a referee but in his official capacity as Board Director for International.</p>	
98.7	<p>LP requested an answer to an e-mail sent to KS asking who was responsible for womens refereeing. KS replied Helen Smith and Ana Pascu.</p>	
99.	<p><u>World Championships Review</u></p>	
99.1	<p>DK explained to the Board that the review of the World Championships by UK Sport had not been at all positive and that British Fencing had missed its own lower threshold targets (3 x 5-8 placings) for the second year. World Championships were business critical targets for British Fencing and were funding related. Because we had missed targets for the second year in a row the situation had now become more serious and UK Sport were expecting BF to act if funding was to be maintained.</p>	
99.2	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	
99.3	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	
99.4	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	
99.5	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	
99.6	<p>It was made clear that Fencing was a “borderline” sport and made strong recommendations that the sport take note of this fact. UK Sport would maintain current funding levels on the understanding that British Fencing would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Performance Management Group with a full time Performance Manager. - Make use of the resources offered to BF by UK Sport such as a full, facilitated review and Performance Analysis. - Complete urgently complete the Audit recommendations, with specific reference to the WCP management. 	

99.7	DK told the Board that he believed from his discussions with UK Sport that if we made these changes, specifically to the leadership of the WCP, that our funding levels would be maintained through to the London Olympics	
99.8	[REDACTED]	
99.9	DK explained that he had spoken to GW and was aware that he was not prepared to undertake the role full time and give it the time it required. Nonetheless it was agreed that for a smooth evolution it was important to have GW's buy in and input on any Performance Management Group.	
99.10	The Board agreed that it was the right thing to do immediately and the right thing to do for 2016, particularly as GW was due to finish in 2012 and a high performance legacy was important.	
99.11	The Board agreed that UK Sport funding was at risk, that the most important is that BF are seen to be doing what UK Sport have advised and that we cannot be seen to be doing just the bare minimum any longer.	
99.12	DK agreed to speak with GW and to put these changes to him.	
99.13	It was also proposed that DK (as acting Chair), PM (as accountable officer) and DS (given his involvement in the WCP) meet with UK Sport and establish a way forward.	
99.14	The Board then unanimously agreed to what was required to maintain funding, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a Performance Management Group with a full time Performance Manager. - Make use of the resources offered to BF by UK Sport such as a Performance Analysis and a full, facilitated review. - Complete urgently the Audit recommendations, with specific reference to the WCP management. 	
100.	<u>Governance Audit Update</u>	
100.1	PM informed the Board that Moore Stephens would be coming in to undertake a re-audit. He raised his concerns at the fact that we had still not completed some of the recommendations and had missed deadlines.	
100.2	It was raised that given the decisions made under minute 99, some of the issues with GW and the CIC/BF relationship may be resolved in other ways.	
100.3	DK explained to the Board that discussions with Nosheen Khan (NK) had continued for a significant length of time and BF had still not managed to agree a contract. Most significant was NK's refusal to obtain professional indemnity insurance. He added that BF had been advised by Towergate that this was essential and would not be costly as it could be taken through a professional institute.	
100.4	DK explained to the Board that it had transpired that NK was not qualified and therefore would not be able to join an institute. The Board expressed surprise and concern at this.	
100.5	It was noted that at the last Board meeting NK had stated she did not wish to work more than her original days [2+1] and given that the company had grown significantly in size, the Board agreed a full time qualified accountant was needed.	
100.6	The Board therefore unanimously agreed to recruit a full time Finance Manager and asked the CEO to make proposals to the Remuneration Committee to progress this.	PM
101.	<u>GB Youth Trips</u>	
	<i>[CH entered the room at this point]</i>	
101.1	DK explained that there had been much discussion on this topic, but AB had provided some information on the risks associated with making payments before income had been collected.	
101.2	He went on to explain that there were two key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative issues (NK did not have the time to deal with the additional income). - The risk of paying for flights without money in the bank. However, this meant that costs were escalating. 	
101.3	CH then presented a paper detailing the issues, the actual process and explaining the way forward. CH also informed the Board that she was disappointed that nobody had discussed	

	the situation with her or Heather Hyman, when they had more accurate information than NK. She added that she did not understand why the Board had agreed to underwrite the risk, which was expected to be minimal, and then change the decision mid-season. Due to the	
101.4	CH added that because of the delay in payment, prices have escalated and the problem has spiralled, causing major discontent amongst parents. Last year there was a small deficit and we were prepared to take it.	
101.5	The Board requested to know what the actual risks were. DK explained that this was the number of defaulters who may not pay, which last year led to a small deficit.	
101.6	RS informed the Board that England Fencing had also agreed to underwrite in the same way and for years had not had 1 fencer default. He added that he felt it was BF's responsibility to do this and it was wrong to hold payments in this way. As a membership organisation, BF was in a better position to ensure payment from members.	
101.7	CH explained that over £100k income had been taken had been taken with very few gaps and the online system allowed us to see exactly who had not paid and chase up. She added that this should be irrelevant as she understood that the Board had agreed to underwrite this in the very beginning. It was agreed that this was the case.	
101.8	The Board discussed the issues and it was agreed that the risks appeared minimal, especially compared to the personal risk individual weapon captains were taking before centralisation. It was added that the real risk was that members would not be able to afford trips because BF had allowed costs to escalate over this.	
101.9	The Board asked why the decision to support made on the 02.11.10 had been overruled. DK explained to the Board that NK had presented the risks to him and AB.	
101.10	CH explained that the decision had been made in ignorance of the facts of the situation and that had she been consulted she would have been able to present facts: that >£100k had been taken and nearly everything has been paid on time.	
101.11	The Board raised concerns at the fact that travel plans were being put in jeopardy because NK refusing to make payments and consequently CH and Heather Hyman were making significant personal payments.	
101.12	The Board noted that there were only a few trips remaining this season and that a planning meeting for next season was scheduled for early February 2011.	
101.13	It was unanimously agreed to complete this season and do whatever was necessary to ensure payments were made. The Board instructs the BF Accounts Manager to make payments for these trips as requested and asked DK and MT to oversee this.	DK/MT
101.14	It was unanimously agreed for MT/PM/CH to bring in additional financial support if required.	MT/PM /CH
102.	<u>Complaint regarding a Youth trip to Bratislava</u>	
	<i>[At this point Ray Stafford left the meeting due to a conflict of interest]</i>	
102.1	The Board requested an update on the situation with a complaint regarding a Youth trip to Bratislava.	
102.2	PM explained that some significant work had been undertaken to gather information from those involved. He informed the Board that most had now come forward willingly and most statements were aligned.	
102.3	PM went on to explain that it seemed clear that both officials and athletes had been drinking and therefore in breach of the code of conduct. Furthermore it was clear that some of these athletes had been drunk which had led to their involvement in fighting and damage to both hotel and bus.	
102.4	The Board noted that one of the staff members was a contractor and LP agreed to liaise with PM and TB on this matter.	LP
102.5	PM explained that this was only for information at this time and that he was liaising with TB over it.	
102.6	The Board asked if it was possible to suspend those who had come forward and admitted guilt. PM replied that following discussions with TB it was hard to select <u>only</u> those who had come forward and that certain Team Officials had denied any breach. This	
102.7	The Board noted their displeasure at the alleged conduct of both Team Officials and Athletes and whilst they wished to be strong over such conduct it was agreed that PM liaise with TB	

	and identify a fair way forward.	
103.	<u>Senior Selection Policy</u>	
103.1	The Board reviewed the Senior Selection Policy presented by the IntCom.	
103.2	The Board still noted some concerns over the policy but it was agreed that all had had plenty of time to input. The Board agreed to approve for this season and note any issues for next season.	
104.	<u>Governance</u>	
104.1	The Board approved Peter Jacobs as the new Chair of the International Relations Committee (IRC).	
104.2	The Board approved Steve Higginson as the new Chair of the Rules Committee.	
104.3	The Board received an update from PM on the recruitment process for the Competitions and Calendar Committee. The Board then approved the appointment of the following people to the Calendar Committee and noted that PM would be working with the core committee to fill the remaining positions: <u>Recruited:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chair: Heather Hyman - Domestic: Mark Nelson-Griffiths - Technical: Jon Milner <u>Appointed:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International: Mavis Thornton (IRC) - Officials: Suse Wesley (Referees Committee) 	
104.4	The Board was informed that following open recruitment for the role, Karim Bashir had been appointed Communications Officer and DK and PM were negotiating remuneration.	
104.5	RS raised the issue of Governance over the England Development Programme (EDP). He explained that various directors of BF had made statements about England Fencing's involvement. The Board noted the fact that, whilst England Fencing were fully supportive of the EDP, the programme was managed and operated by BF.	
105.	<u>Premier Partner Update</u>	
105.1	PM and DK updated the Board on negotiations with the potential sponsor.	
105.2	DK explained that the agreement had been viewed by Peter Cadman and specialists in his law firm and that he would e-mail the Board with details when required.	
105.3	The Board authorised DK and PM to work with Beazley to finalise and sign the agreement.	PM/DK
105.4	The Board minuted their thanks to PM for his work on this project.	
106.	<u>BOA Athlete of the year</u>	
106.1	PM informed the Board that he had discussed the matter with GW and proposed Chrystall Nicoll. The Board unanimously approved this proposal and asked PM to inform the BOA.	PM
107	<u>Disciplinary Rules</u>	
107.1	PM informed the Board that Teddy Bourne had commenced his role as Disciplinary Officer and was reviewing both the rules and process with Peter Cadman and the members of the Disciplinary Panel. PM agreed to update at the next meeting.	PM
108.	<u>Thank you letters</u>	
108.1	The Board noted the work of the following people, and agreed for the Chair to send a letter of thanks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Graham Morrison (who, as Press Officer, succeeded by the new Communications Officer). - Paul Greening (who had resigned as Sabre Committee Vice-Chair). - Jon Milner (who had been Technical Director, now a part of the new Competitions and Calendar Committee). 	

109.	<u>Request for Salary information</u>	
109.1	KS had made a request for information on salaries for staff.	
109.2	The Board noted PM's concerns that he was aware of directors quoting salaries inaccurately.	
109.3	DK advised the Board that information of this nature should not be publicised. Remuneration Committee had been established to review remuneration on behalf of the Board.	
110.	<u>Any other relevant business</u>	
110.1	It was raised that the Epee Committee Chair and Vice Chair roles were to swap over at some point during the financial year. The Board agreed that this happen before the 31 st December 2010. DK agreed to inform the Chair and Vice Chair.	DK
111.	<u>Date of the next meeting</u>	
111.1	The dates of the next Board meetings are the 23 rd February 2011 and the 2 nd April 2011.	
112.	<u>Close</u>	
112.1	With no further Board business, the meeting closed at 16.20.	