



British Fencing Board Minutes

DATE Monday 16th September 2013
TIME 17:30-21:30
VENUE Beazley, Plantation Place South, 60 Great Tower Street, London EC2R 5AD

Present; David Teasdale (DT) (Chair), Paul Abrahams (PA), Tom Cadman (TC), Clare Halsted (CH), Alp Orge (AO), Graham Paul (GP), William Pitt (WP) - by telephone, Georgina Usher (GU) - by telephone.

Observers - Jack Magill (JM), Hilary Philbin (HP), Ray Stafford (RS)
In attendance - Peter King (PK), Penny Moseley (PM), Alex Newton (AN), Jeremy Beard (JB - Auditor), Kim Robinson (KR - Minutes Secretary).

GU excused herself for the discussion of Nominations Committee recommendations. Apologies; Julia Bracewell (JB), John Troiano (JT).

Introduction

1. Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Hilary Philbin, the new President, Kim Robinson in her first meeting as Minute Secretary and Jeremy Beard Auditor from haysmacintyre. The Chair thanked WP and Beazley for the hospitality.

New Declarations of Interest

2. CH, PA and GP declared that they fence for Salle Paul now part of the new Leon Paul Fencing Centre. ACTION; Kim.

Annual Accounts

3. Jeremy Beard (JB) took the Board through the Audit Findings Report. His comments included;

- explanation of the prior year adjustments;
- advice for BF to identify specific risks each year;
- the fraud reference did not imply any suggestion of fraud;
- for the first time there were related party transaction notes in the accounts as required under the Companies Act. The Chair confirmed he agreed the notes were necessary;
- the deficit to be addressed by the Board and executive;
- the accounting function is now in good order, all questions were answered promptly and efficiently;
- BF had "strong values" in its assets;
- he will look to involve a Board representative in the audit planning process next time.

4. PK noted that the deficits concerned largely stock write offs, trade debtors, legal fees, The Sword magazine, the Events programme and severance pay. GP queried the property value and PK agreed to seek an estate agent valuation. ACTION; PK.

5. The AGRC recommendations for the AGM were to reaffirm the Board's policy to achieve a balanced budget and restore reserves; and to be frank at the AGM about the financial report. The Board agreed and asked AGRC to advise Directors on the AGM presentation.

6. The Board approved the Accounts, for the Chair to sign on behalf of Directors. ACTIONS; Auditors, PK, DT.

New BF Insurance policy

7. Directors agreed that the new insurance was an improvement on previous years, it dealt more clearly with coaches and teams travelling abroad. The Board approved the policy, asking the executive to take steps to make members aware of the benefits. (NB. Summary already on website).

Governance - Updated BF KPIs, Policies and Procedures - for Self assurance

8. The Chair linked this agenda item 4 with 5, as all concerned the self assurance governance process due to be completed by the end of the month. He thanked TC, PM, DM and PK for all the work done on updating BF policies and procedures. After Board discussion;-

- the amended H & S Policy was approved by the Board;
- the new Data Protection Policy was approved;
- the Risk Management Strategy was approved;
- the updated BF Expenses Policy was approved;
- the new Customer Charter was approved, with DT confirming that detailed amends by CH were included;
- it was noted that newly drafted BF KPIs would be circulated for Board consideration and approval in writing. ACTIONS; PK, DT.

Bribery Policy

9. TC fully briefed the Board on the Bribery Act, stressing the implications for BF Directors, staff and volunteers. Key dangers were discussed. The Board approved the policy, noting that necessary steps were taken to ensure that BF was in full compliance with the Act. ACTION; TC, PK.

Fund for young fencers

10. TC reported to the Board that the Fund's Constitution was in place and the Board must appoint three trustees to administer the fund. The Board approved the appointment of GU, JT and TC. ACTION; TC.

Recommendations from Nominations Committee

11. Re ***Honours proposals***, on the Chair's suggestion it was agreed that the Nominations Committee would have a further conference call to consider and approve the Queen's Honours nominee(s). ACTION; DT.

12. The Board discussed at some length the paper on the ***timeframe and process for recruiting the new CEO***. While recognising that the Board had given approval to the process in May, CH and GP questioned whether all the options, and considerations, had been reviewed sufficiently for what was a key decision. It was agreed that further Board discussion should be arranged, urgently, given the proposed timeframe and SE and UKS expectations (this meeting was fixed for Monday 23 September at 2.00pm).

13. The Board approved the expansion of the Nominations Committee for the specific recruitment task, adding JT, CH and JB and also an observer from UKS/SE and from the Home Countries. The Board also agreed, after discussion, and with legal advice from TC, that any Director applying for the CEO post should step away from Board duties for the period of that process. ACTIONS; All Directors, DT.

Gold; report on World Championships

14. AN reported to Directors on the recent Championships in Budapest, giving a range of statistics and making the following points;-

- the one last 32 in the World Championships meant we met our target. The GB MF team's last 8 exceeded targets set by UKS (1 x 32 individual, top ten in team event);
- the Russians had a very strong championships, in part because they had treated the Europeans as a practice run. BF must prioritise to peak at future Worlds;
- our fencers were still learning, for most this was their first World Champs. The experience was invaluable;
- we need to rethink our expectations. We cannot rely on just one athlete, we need more athletes through the performance system. This is an eight year journey for the sport and BF;
- BF is in negotiations with UKS for the next stage of funding. Currently there is no medal target for RIO, we are at "podium potential". UKS is supportive of progress we have made - BF has done what it committed to do - and AN believes funding should be secure for the next 2-4 years.

15. AN noted there were Board comments about "disappointment" with World results, which DT and AO discussed, during which the Chair confirmed the Board's strong support for our athletes and the WCP.

Competitions Policy

16. DT reported on behalf of JB that her recommendation is for Competitions to be moved to the Executive, while keeping the present Committee as advisory. He gave her apologies for being unable to complete the report because of work commitments. PK told the Board that he had decided to take responsibility for the Competitions programme this year, to ensure budgets are met - for which he has a meeting with the Competitions Committee Chair next Monday. In discussion the Board welcomed this decision and asked PK to keep them informed of the competition content and any issues. For the future, PA volunteered to take over JB's task of recommending the BF programme for 2014 onwards. ACTIONS; PK, PA.

Any other actions offline

17. PK reported that the two nationality changes he brought to the Board's attention were now approved by the Board. He will write to the applicants officially. ACTION; PK.

18. PK also reported that there was no budget set for the AGM, we now need to budget an extra £1000; the Board approved. ACTION; PK.

19. PK also reported that a budget was needed for Safeguarding - to buy more time from the Safeguarding Manager Liz Behnke. The Board gave approval. ACTION; PK.

Matters arising

20. CH asked AO if he had checked on ownership of the BF logo. He had not done so, he agreed to consult, check and report. ACTION; AO.

AOB

21. GP raised questions about the delays with Disciplinary procedures and It was agreed that timescales must be monitored carefully and the process should be passed back to the Disciplinary Chair John Boumphrey if not dealt with in a timely manner. ACTION; PK.

22. The Chair proposed Life Membership for Georgina Hoskyns; the Board approved. ACTION; HO.

23. PA expressed concern that the Board was not briefed about the Coaching conference 6th Oct, funded by Beazley. WP explained that this replaced two other coaching events, but he apologised that he had not kept fellow Directors informed.

24. The Chair thanked WP and Beazley for the excellent pop-up event held, to very high standards, on the 11th September.
