



## British Fencing Board Minutes

DATE 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014  
TIME 17:30  
VENUE Beazley, Plantation Place South, 60 Great Tower Street, London EC2R 5AD

### Present

*In the Chair* David Teasdale (DT)  
*Directors:* Paul Abrahams (PA) (Part of meeting)  
Thomas Cadman (TC)  
Janet Campbell (JC)  
Graham Paul (GP) (by phone)  
William Pitt (WP) (by video link)  
John Troiano (JT)

In attendance: *Observers* - Jack Magill (JM), Marie Matheson (MM) Peter Smith (PS)  
  
*Staff* - Peter King (PK), Georgina Usher (GU), Penny Moseley (PM), Kim Robinson (KR).

Apologies: Alp Orge (AO), Clare Halsted (CH), Hilary Philbin (HP).

### Introduction

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked WP for Beazley's hospitality. He and TC discussed the quorum for the meeting and agreed that the meeting was quorate. GU, PK and PM apologised for late arrival from a previous meeting.

#### 1. New Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

#### 2. New Risk Management Items

There were no new risk management items.

#### 3. Urgent Catch up Items

There were none to report.

*Item 8 was brought forward.*

#### 8. Marketing Group progress report

WP reported on the Marketing Group's first meeting. It was agreed GU would join the Group. He set out the initial agenda which included a possible nationwide competition for novices as a step on the talent pathway - AO and PA will take the idea forward. The Group discussed how well the current competitions served different age groups and the motivation that

encouraged people to join. The Group would work with clubs to do more research, and then develop a plan in line with that research. The Group also planned a face-lift for the website refocusing it to attract new fencers, or old fencers back - the Beazley agency WSM would come up with designs. The May pop up fencing event at Waterloo Station was applauded, as strong club links were vital. WSM will look at identifying celebrities that fence, the Group will consider potential events.

JT asked if the initiatives have any budgetary implication. WP explained that the website was out of the sponsorship budget and the bulk of the Waterloo Station event would be covered by Beazley (and NetworkRail).

#### **ACTIONS: WP, PA, DT**

*At this juncture, with now a full meeting, the Chair formally welcomed GU as the new BF CEO, from 1 April. He presented PK and PM with thank you gifts from the Board and thanked them for their important contribution to the sport - they had "made a difference".*

*The Chair also welcomed JM from Northern Ireland Fencing and Marie Matheson and Peter Smith from England Fencing, Chair and Vice Chair respectively.*

#### **4. BF Budget 2014/2015 - oral report from Budget Group**

It was recorded that David Moseley apologised to the Board, he was not at the meeting due to work commitments.

JT circulated papers with a budget update; he reported that the first cut at the budget for next year showed a large deficit. The Budget Group has identified ways to reduce this, based on identifying where we are, what level of deficit we are targeting, noting that we need to get to a point where we balance out the budget. JT aims to present a budget that is manageable and achievable. He proposed, and after discussion the Board agreed, BF cannot afford anything but a small deficit in the coming year because of the future impact upon reserves.

It was noted that the WCP and Grow budgets balance. There is a need to make savings in Corporate Services, and the main areas identified were Membership Fees, Events, The Sword. An increase in membership fees was discussed, however PS pointed out that under the Home Country agreement BF could only increase the levy, membership fees were the remit of the Home Country. PK also pointed out that any increase in the levy had to be reported annually at the AGM to come into force the following January and thus there would only be limited impact upon next year's accounts. It was agreed that work on the new membership scheme was a priority; the next steps were for the Grow Group and their recommendations should come to the Board at the next meeting in April.

Events are currently breaking even with the exception of the Eden Cup. On the Camden International discussions are needed with the Council and with GLL - DT and GU have meetings with GLL and will report. Going forward, Events

should cover the cost of management, all competitions other than the Eden Cup should break even, we will continue to subsidise the School Games.

The Sword showed a serious deficit in the budget. The Board recognised there were two options - to have a printed copy of the sword and three pdf editions, OR to have four pdfs and no printed copies. WP pointed out that the pdf version issued in January was not user friendly and a web publication would be better but more expensive; he felt the Sword needed to be re-modelled and shortened. WP will meet with PA to look at ways of reconstructing the Sword without incurring further costs and make recommendations to the Board for April.

The Board agreed JT's budget proposals for AGM and Board; Chair expenses; and Operating costs. GU will consider and bring recommendations for a final budget discussion in April.

**ACTIONS: JT, PK/DM, DT, GU, Grow Group, WP/PA**

The Chair thanked JT and the Budget Group for their report.

**5. BF Financial update**

PK apologised for the absence of Management Reports, due to lack of usual resources in the Finance team. He believed that last year's outcome should be close to that already reported.

**ACTION; PK/DM**

**6. Grow Action Plan - to approve redrafted MOU from Grow Group**

PS presented the MOU document and pointed out the differences in the new MOU which focuses more on the partnership and the joint responsibility of EF and BF. The MOU sets out how EF and BF will work together to reach targets, the financial contribution from England and its trigger. The England Fencing Board is in full agreement with the document as drafted. After a short discussion, the BF Board adopted the revised MOU.

**ACTION; MM/PS, GU, DT**

GU reported on where we are with Sport England. Our funding for the next year carries four conditions;-

1. To recruit a Development Director
2. To have rigorous marketing analysis and data about fencing in England
3. To put in place proxy measures for fencing participation
4. To demonstrate the impact on the proxy measures in a scalable, repeatable way, and to produce a revised strategy, by September.

In discussion, it was made clear that we have to start work urgently on all these points, given the short timeframe. Like other NGBs we are a "delivery agency" and have to show we can get results, or the funding will cease.

**ACTION; GU, Grow Group**

**7. Transition Report**

GU and PK reported that they have worked through the timetable they started with and covered most areas, finance, budget, HR, governance, suppliers, stakeholders, strategic partners, grow, events, with WCP and discipline now in hand.

At GU's request, PA will create a Communications strategy, draft to be ready for consideration by GU and the Marketing Group by 13 April.

*(GP and WP left the meeting at 19:55)*

**ACTION: PK, GU, PA**

**9. Nominations Committee Report**

Chair reported that the Committee has worked on the recruitment of the CEO and is now helping GU with the Grow Director appointment. The Committee is organising elections for two more Directors and recruiting one new Independent director. For the election process, the Chair asked for the Board to approve the reappointment of Teddy Bourne as Electoral Officer - the Board so approved. The Board also gave approval to the proposed Election process, with the proviso that JC completes the Board Skills Matrix and then Board decisions are taken (in writing) on the skills to be sought in the election and recruitment process.

TC will redraft the Election announcement, DT will circulate to the Board.

**ACTIONS: TC, JC, DT, KR**

**10. Committee Review Report**

Chair spoke to the Committee Review summary approved by the Nominations Committee, after further consultation with Committee Chairs. The Review summary should now be signed off by the Board and published on the website. GU asked for time for her to review the roles of management and that of the IYC and the Competitions & Calendar Committee - this was agreed, but the Board felt there should be at least an interim announcement, which DT will draft, with GU, for confirmation by the Board before putting online.

The AGRC Committee will officially invite Milind Pradhan of England Fencing to sit on the committee; the Chair should be an observer.

**ACTION: DT, GU, JT**

**11. Any actions off line**

There were no actions off line.

**12 Matters arising from February minutes**

*IT strategy* - work continues, by GU and PS, into the commercial risks, and cost effective changes to meet BF and EF objectives. The CRM system has been signed off and the invoice paid, the club site system is not yet ready. There will be an update for the April Board meeting.

*Competition issues* - already picked up in earlier discussions.

*The Sword* - already picked up in earlier discussions.

*Honours* - proposals due from the Marketing Group as part of its plans for an awards event.

*Disciplinary, case progress* - a new deputy chair has been appointed who will be asked to get together a panel to hear the case in question. One suggestion is we seek help from Sport Resolution.

**ACTIONS; GU, PS, WP, PA, DT, PK/GU.**

**13** **AOB**  
None

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and wished GU luck in her new appointment and again expressed the Board's grateful thanks to PK and PM. He thanked Beazley for the excellent hospitality.

**The meeting closed at 20:40**

***Next Board meeting 10<sup>th</sup> April, at Beazley***

**MATTERS ARISING FOR THAT MEETING**

- any further reports/actions from Marketing Group
  - budget decisions
  - financial update
  - Grow update
  - Election announcement
- Competitions & Calendar Committee.

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