

**Minutes of Board Meetings at 6.00pm on 4 May 2022 via MS Teams**

<b>Directors Present</b>	<b>Titles</b>
Adam Walker [AW]	Independent Chair
Andreas Hernandez [AH]	Independent Director
Brendan Fogarty [BF]	Elected Director
Freda Bussey [FB]	Elected Director
Clare Francis [CF]	Senior Independent Director (Vice Chair)
Jessica Plumridge [JP]	Elected Director
Richard Harrison [RH]	Elected Director
<b>Staff Present</b>	
Sue Storey [SS]	Chief Executive
Samantha Jamieson [SJ]	Interim Chief Executive
Rob Payne [RP]	Interim Deputy Chief Executive
Bertrand Olie [BO]	Project Lead/Anti-Doping Lead
Simone Turner [ST]	Volleyball England Foundation
Agata Sromecka [AS]	Minute taking

**EB/22-23/76 Apologies**

AW welcomed all to the meeting especially SS for whom it was the last Volleyball England (VE) Board meeting, SJ – the new Interim Chief Executive and RP – Interim Deputy Chief Executive.

Jake Sheaf, Phil French, Dave Reeve, and Simon Griffiths had submitted their apologies.

**76.1 Directors Conflict of Interest & Disclosures**

There were none.

**76.2 Approval of Agenda**

Agenda was approved.

**76.3 Previous minutes and 76.4 Matters arising**

AW and SJ would meet after the meeting and go through the list of actions stemming from the minutes of Board meetings to ensure they had been or would be actioned or bring any residual actions forward. **Action AW and SJ**

**76.3.1 Minutes of 29 January 2022 Board meeting**

76.3.2 Minutes of 17 February 2022 Board meeting

76.3.4 Minutes of 2 March 2022 Board meeting

76.4.4 Minutes of 22 March 2022 Board meeting

Minutes were all taken as a true and accurate record of the meetings.

### **EB/21-22/77 Executive Update**

SJ highlighted the following:

- Staffing update contained information on changes within the hub team. The organisational structure remained the same.
- VE had been awarded funding via the Sport England Digital Fund and that was £224,000. SJ thanked Oaks and Janet Inman for their respective supporting in securing the bid.
- The Cup Finals on 23 April were a remarkable success. SJ thanked the Board for attending. SJ thanked RP who had been an event lead.

SS thanked the Board for attending the Cup Finals.

Board discussed the Executive Update:

- CF asked what user groups had been consulted in connection to the work with Seven League. SJ responded that meetings with two suppliers were happening the following week. SS updated that James Murphy had added additional members to the IT panel as well as contacting clubs. SS encouraged the Board to come forward with ideas of who else could be consulted. AW stressed that this work needed to pass through Finance, Strategy and Risk group chaired by AH to ensure thorough approach and due diligence. CF's concern was around the design so that VolleyZone was fit for purpose and the volleyball community was part of this journey. It was also important that Board had a good oversight of each step in the development process.
- AW asked whether the cascade had finished in terms of the staff structure. SJ responded that the internal cascade had concluded but there was one role to be recruited for which would be a replacement of placement student. The vacancy was planned to be filled with another placement. AW asked for the cost breakdown of staff changes to see what the costs had been, were and would be in terms of various staff arrangements.
- SS reported that the advert for the CEO vacancy would become live the following day (5 May 2022).
- AW thanked SS for all her work as VE CEO on behalf of the Board and wished her success in future endeavours. SS thanked all.

## EB/21-22/78 Governance Process – Articles

SJ highlight the following in relation to this:

- one of the actions from the previous board meetings was to consider whether VE should go out to public consultation on whether the Articles should alter. The advice received on that was against this approach. Instead, it should be the Board who should lead on this including a communications piece around any changes.
- VE had been working with an independent lawyer over the last few months on issues concerning governance. That lawyer had been engaged to provide recommendations regarding changes to the articles. These were still under review and being finalised. However, CF summarised the key changes as being:
  - To expand the definition of who constitutes an affiliated individual. CF explained that the base definition was correct however this should be re-visited now to reflect Volleyzone and the wider categories of membership (such as volunteer, HEVO etc). Therefore, the intention was to expand it to be inclusive. It was noted though that this would not introduce an individual registration requirement and those safeguards would remain in the articles – if there was a desire to introduce this going forward it is recognised consultation would be required. Board agreed this recommendation.
  - To make changes to the appointment of directors section to more closely align it to the Code for Sports Governance. The Board were reminded on the definition of Independent and Elected Director and noted the overlap. The changes would require an open transparent recruitment process across any category with a statement that the Noms Com and Board must consider the skills required including skills around volleyball knowledge. The exact form of words was still being finalised by the articles working group. Board agreed this recommendation.
  - To make clear that the requirements had to be met at the time of appointment but recognise these may change over time (e.g. in the case of an independent director on re-election). There would also be ancillary changes around co-opted directors and their terms, re-appointment of directors and term limits. These were all to more closely align to the Code for Sports Governance. The Board agreed this recommendation.
  - Under the Code the Board can be up to 12 directors (and therefore could be less). Therefore, options have been considered on how to build in this flex (rather than a rigid 4 to 8 which is hard to maintain at all times in practice). One solution would be to provide that the number of Independent Directors should not be less than a third of the total and the total number of Elected Directors should not be less than a third of the total. Board agreed this recommendation.
  - To allow Board the choice to hold any general meeting either virtually, hybrid or face to face. Board agreed this recommendation.

Next steps – the working group would finalise the changes with the independent lawyer. The revised articles will also be provided to Sport England for review and comment. Once any SE feedback had been taken on board they would be included in the AGM pack as a special resolution for this year's AGM. An accompanying

guidance doc would be issued to help members understand the changes and CF will record a short video highlighting the key changes.

### **EB/21-22/79 The Game Plan Management Reporting**

SJ highlighted the following in relation to this:

- One of the actions from previous Board meetings was reformatting the presentation and the management of the reporting process. The implementation plan actions were being migrated onto the planner for it to be more presentable to the board and for it to be more user friendly. This would be presented at the next Board meeting.

### **EB/21-22/80 Finance Update – Year End**

AH highlighted the following:

- In the last quarter, the income had been driven by DiSE and NVL and positively impacted the whole budget increasing the cash balance.
- Most of surplus in the budget would be used towards the digital transformation.
- AH explained that the surplus figure fluctuated but on average VE would have a healthy bank balance and meets the parameters of the reserves policy.
- AW asked whether DiSE and NVL recorded high financial performance on a regular basis. AH explained that this had resulted from cautious financial planning during the pandemic. However, we had maintained the number of DiSE places even after the pandemic. Also, RP informed that a surplus to budget could be also recorded via NVL entries this season based on entry fees received already.
- AW thanked AH for the update.

### **EB/21-22/81 Sub-Groups & Volleyball England Foundation Update**

ST highlighted the following in terms of the work that VE Foundation was doing:

- The Foundation had finalised the Sport England Return to Play activity
- The Foundation were looking to access the Sport England's Queen's Jubilee funding to fund juniors attending Commonwealth Games to volunteer.
- Easter auction had completed and raised £900.
- JustGiving page had been reactivated.
- The National Finals was a successful event. ST and Janet Inman had raised £250 toward young people volunteers' project.
- The Foundation was continuing to explore different funding opportunities.
- No sitting volleyball clubs had applied for the recent round of funding. This funding would be opened again.
- Memorandum and Articles were being reviewed and recommendations for revisions would be presented at the Foundation's next Board meeting.

- David Reeve was officially the Foundation's Trustee.

AH highlighted the following in terms of the work of FSR:

- More elements were being added to the Risk Register such as KPI owners and this will continue to evolve.
- AH noted that this had been an incredibly good exercise showing FSR as an enabler rather than owner of risks.
- A host of policies would be reviewed to check whether they were fit for purpose in view of the changes that FSR wanted to make.

JP updated the Board with the following:

- The group would meet again soon to continue the conversation about how we could extend our reach to membership and get more data in, and then potentially look to monetize that later down the line.

RH highlighted the following:

- In the player pathway the group was looking at the characteristics of each of the categories in the pathway (age and level of performance), to be able to provide better services to each of these groups.
- The group was trying to assist in looking into the referee retention by examining the FAs Respect programme, how the RFU conducted its policy for referees, and Phil French was looking into the US National Association of officials. In terms of the culture education transformation, the group had been limited in adopting the coach award because the theory part that was endorsed by CIMSPA had not yet been fully created by UK coaching. Sport Structures had a CIMSPA endorsed theory package that VE could possibly assume, which would mean that we could adopt the coach module quicker than we would by working with UK coaching.
- A mega UKCC Level Two course would be taking place at the National Volleyball Centre in June and September.

RP updated the Board on the following:

- The Ace Service subgroup had met a couple of times and the number one item on the agenda both times had been around the referee crisis and trying to address that. James Murphy from competitions, Nick Heckford from Officials Working Group and Simon Griffiths were leading that change. This work was insight led.
- SJ added that a number of actions around officiation as discussed during previous transformational Board meetings, had been picked up as part of this group
- FB asked what the potential solutions could be. RP answered that to try and increase the referees' levels, it might be worth thinking about increasing the numbers of referees coming in through the grade 4 courses. Thinking was being developed around a respect campaign as well as unblocking the pathway for referees through the grades and finding better ways to progress people from completing a course to then progressing into becoming NVL referees. BF noted that the process to be upgraded was taking too long, and we were losing officials over time. RP reassured the Board

that new technological solutions were being thought of as part of this work including how to shorten the journey for referees.

### **EB/21-22/82 Transgender Policy**

RH updated the Board on the developments around the transgender policy:

- At the last board meeting Board had agreed that the key information needed to be brought to the top of the document and this had been actioned. Board approved the policy summary.
- Board agreed to take out the first sentence through to the “We are open ....”
- Board considered the wording around the development of a national mixed volleyball competition and agreed for it to be changed into something resembling: “Volleyball is fortunate in that we already have such a version of mixed volleyball which could be expanded and developed.
- Board agreed to take out the statement: “It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that policies and practices are legally compliant and implemented by the Chief Executive Officer and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination.”
- Board discussed the statement: “As per this policy, a player can be asked to disclose their sex as registered at birth by the competition organiser.” ST commented that this could invite discrimination and unfair targeting of transgender players by people potentially ill-educated in the area. SJ asked whether FAQ no 5 contradicted no 3. RH answered that rule 3 helped to deal with dishonest players. AW asked for this to be discussed outside the Board meeting. Action AW, RH and SJ.
- Board agreed the policy subject to the discussed changes being implemented.

### **EB/21-22/83 Anti-Doping Framework & Policy**

SJ highlighted the following in relation to the Anti-doping policy:

- The UK anti-doping framework needed to be complied with by VE as part of the Sport England funding. VE had been working with UKAD on getting all the relevant documents together. An Overview of those was available to Board.
- To enable VE to comply with the framework, VE was required to have an anti-doping policy which had been put together by BO and distributed as part of the Board pack. BO added that the board needed to review the policy at least once a year. JS would lead on this going forward.
- In terms of testing, UKAD organised this. BO informed that all athletes selected for Commonwealth Games would form national testing pool. BO had set up 10 anti-doping webinars for clubs to update them on anti-doping requirements.
- RH added that there was a module on the UKCC level two coaching award which included anti-doping policy.
- The Board approved the policy.
- AW thanked BO for his work on the policy. BO asked the Board to pass on the message

about the importance of anti-doping within the networks.

### **EB/21-22/84 Commonwealth Games – Legacy Budget & Update**

CF highlighted the following in relation to CWG:

- The venue continued to be a challenge. BO mentioned the Invictus academies. SJ would pick up with BO. Action SJ And BO
- SJ and AW would work to activate West Midlands Active Partnerships network to help with this. Action SJ and AW.
- A survey to look at how ready clubs were had been conducted. The group would be looking to activate the clubs with the help of a string of activities facilitated by additional funding. An additional staff member would be taken on to assist with the work around the funding activation. The funding was for the games time and for two years after. The funding would help to pay for workforce education.
- CF presented a video about the CWG Legacy group work to capture imagination and inspire the volleyball community to get engaged in the Games. Board commended the group on the video.
- The legacy objectives would be launched by the Group around the time of the selection tournament.

AW thanked CF for the update and encouraged the Board to contact CF with any questions and suggestions.

### **EB/22-23/85 AOB**

There was no other business and the meeting finished at 7.50pm.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>
76.3 Previous minutes and 76.4 Matters arising  AW and SJ would meet after the meeting and go through the list of actions stemming from the minutes of Board meetings to ensure they had been or would be actioned or bring any residual actions forward. Action AW and SJ	<b>AW and SJ</b>
EB/21-22/78 Governance Process – Articles  There would be a working group to discuss and agree the wording of the provision around relaxing the requirement an elected director be a member. This also would need to be consulted with the Board for the final version.	<b>AW and SJ</b>
EB/21-22/82 Transgender Policy  AW, RH and SJ to discuss FAQs in the transgender policy.	<b>AW, RH and SJ</b>
EB/21-22/84 Commonwealth Games – Legacy Budget & Update	<b>SJ and BO</b>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SJ would pick up with BO around the Invictus Academies</li><li>• SJ and AW would work to activate West Midlands Active Partnerships network to help with this.</li></ul> | <b>AW and SJ</b> |
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Adam Walker, Independent Chairman