

**Minutes of Executive Board Meeting at 9am on 30 October 2021  
via Teams**

<b>Directors Present</b>	<b>Titles</b>
Adam Walker [AW]	Chair
Andres Hernandez [AH]	Independent Director
Dave Reeve [DR]	Director (Co-Opted)
Brendan Fogarty [BF]	Elected Director
Clare Francis [CF]	Senior Independent Director (Vice Chair)
Freda Bussey [FB]	Elected Director
Jake Sheaf [JS]	Elected Director
Jess Plumridge [JP]	Elected Director
Phil French [PF]	Independent Director
Richard Harrison [RH]	Elected Director
Ronu Miah [RM]	Elected Director
Simon Griffiths [SG]	Elected Director
<b>Staff Present</b>	
Sue Storey [SS]	Chief Executive
Samantha Jamieson [SJ]	Deputy Chief Executive
Daniel Ward [DW]	Project Lead – Data & Insight
Kevin Fletcher [KF]	Financial Consultant
<b>Observers</b>	
Janet Inman [JI]	Volleyball England Foundation

**EB/21-22/36 Welcome by Chair**

Chair welcomed all, both attending in person and virtually, especially the new directors who had recently joined the Board. Chair encouraged all to actively participate in the meeting.

**36.1 Apologies**

No apologies had been submitted prior to the meeting.

**36.2 Director Conflict of Interest Disclosures**

AW declared his long-standing interest as the owner of Oaks who is the business development contractor for Volleyball England.

**36.3 Approval of the Agenda**

Agenda was approved by all.

## 36.4 Previous Minutes

### 36.4.1 Confirmation

The minutes of 23 July 2021 Board meeting were approved as true and accurate record of the meeting. The minutes of 3 August Board meeting were approved subject to one amendment relating to the cover sheet explaining the status of Directors, which should be amended.

### 36.4.2 Matters Arising/Action List

There were no outstanding actions stemming from 23 July 2021 Board meeting.

Matters arising relating to 3 August 2021 meeting had either been already actioned or were part of the agenda.

### EB/21-22/37 Executive Update

The Executive Report was taken as read.

SS highlighted the following:

- SS and AW were looking to arrange a visit to CEV's offices to explore ways in which VE could engage with them more meaningfully and to improve the relationship between organisations.
- VE would receive funding from the empowerment fund from FIVB towards beach volleyball and coaching. A meeting on the following Monday would reveal the size of the fund. The original request stated £210k for two years.
- Polonia CEV cup match would not be played in the UK. One leg of this match could be played in Holland in which case the other might have to be forfeited. This was ongoing and Polonia was in process of resolving this.
- VE was meeting with Sports Set around extending the volleyball ball deal supported by Oaks.
- There had been some changes within the Membership as indicated by the most recent Membership survey, especially in terms of number of Officials that had dropped off. In terms of the community census, DW reported that this related to local and recreational levels of participation. Currently, the conversations and scoping around this were ongoing.
- Andy Jones's contract had been extended until March 2022 to support the Talent team.

Board discussed:

- The Board asked DW to prepare a paper on the evolving picture of insight within with the volleyball community including at the regional and county levels. This would include proposal of who could be approached to understand current picture and consider options for developing in the future; what they would be asked, how (in-person/call/virtual etc) and what the timescale would be. This would be circulated via e-mail. The goal of this would be acquisition of knowledge of the numbers of recreational players in the country to activate appropriate support of the various player communities. Also, to consider how the regional structure might evolve for the future, to be a community-based approach. **DW**
- RH asked for a clarification on the number of assistant coach courses. SJ would ask the GH to clarify. **SJ**
- KF observed that he had not been listed in the attendee list of the assurance meeting with the BDO. The board noted that KF had attended the meeting
- CF asked about who would lead on the work connected to the data breach.

- SJ would be completing actions received from the ICO. **SJ**
- SG asked about actions around monetising products related to education pathways. SS responded that this could become part of business development discussions with Oaks the following week. **SS SJ**
- AW reported on the CEV Congress visit alongside SS. AW and SS had a valuable meeting with the CEV Executive team and this relationship could be further developed.
- AW thanked the Executive team for the update.

**Actions:**

**EB/21-22/37:**

- ***DW to prepare a proposal of communication with the volleyball community including at the regional and county levels to obtain information on the numbers of recreational players in the country.***
- ***SJ would supply a clarification on the number of assistant coach courses.***
- ***SJ will complete actions connected to the data breach.***
- ***SS and SJ to discuss monetising products related to education pathways (Volley2) with Oaks.***

**EB/21-22/38 Implementation Plan & Management Reporting**

SJ highlighted the following:

- in terms of the implementation plan, there had been several actions stemming from the last board meeting, and some crossover actions discussed at FSR
- in terms of those actions, attempts had been made to evolve the management reporting tool to include more metrics allowing a more quantitative view of the progress made against the implementation plan. A view had also been taken on this from Damien Stevenson.
- In terms of improvement of the RAG rating and displaying overview/highlight of key celebrations/areas of concern, Damien Stevenson had informed SJ that some work had been done on this in the past with DW and RP. Damien's suggestion was the addition of the key performance questions. SJ noted that the challenge was the lack of the quantitative data to be reported on that would assist in answering those key performance questions. This also linked to the census data that DW had been working on. The breakdown of the management reporting tool included some of those questions for when this would move forward.
- At its last meeting, FSR had looked at the priority one and priority two areas. The direct development of the existing work including competitions and the HEVO programme were on track or complete. Some new areas of work were behind the schedule at the moment and marked in amber. A lot of that new work was around the gap analysis and the pathway visuals. The issue related to this was around staffing but the expectation was for this work to pick up in the coming months about the January board meeting expecting good progress and get back on track.
- Progress was expected to take place in Get Keep Grow in the coming weeks.
- An Ace Service is at peak now due to competitions launching in particular the NVL and junior competitions
- Under an Ace Service, the facility development and full cost analysis are behind schedule but again progress was expected to happen in due course.
- The digital and communications area has been heavily focussed on digital transformation as a major strategic project in addition the day-to-day communications are going well.

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- CF asked for an elaboration on the red RAG rating for Get Keep Grow which was picked up under the finance update
- SJ would present on the structure and contents of the implementation plan at the next Board meeting which would aid the understanding of the new directors of how it worked. **SJ**
- RM asked and whether there was a timeline for each objective? SJ responded that the timelines were allocated via the Strategic Managers objectives and will be reviewed as part of the Sub-Group. AW suggested that SJ present on the structure and contents of the implementation plan at the next Board meeting in January which would aid the understanding of the new directors of how it worked.
- RH asked whether the plan was a fixed document AW responded that the plan was not a rigid document, and it would evolve and change alongside the activities of the subgroups. RM asked whether timelines would be implemented in the plan. SS answered that this could be added as a column and taken from the objectives. **AH SJ**
- **SJAW** asked whether a mechanism to track and monitor progress of objectives could be put in place. This would be linked to the design of RAG rating. **AH SJ**
- RM suggested that the layout could be more reader friendly. SJ to redesign the layout of the document. **SJ**

**Actions:**

**EB/21-22/38:**

- ***SJ would present on the structure and contents of the implementation plan at the next Board meeting in January which would aid the understanding of the new directors of how it worked.***
- ***AH and SJ to add dates to the implementation plan.***
- ***AH and SJ to create an implementing mechanism to monitor progress of actions in the implementation plan.***
- ***SJ to redesign the layout of the document.***

**EB/21-22/39 Finance Update**

KF reported on the key highlights in relation to the finance update:

- KF drew the director's attention to the fact that the figures were presented according to the new strategic format of financial reporting
- Overall, the financial position of the organisation was good:

£286k revenue had been generated which was £112k more than in quarter one VE was ahead of the budget in this quarter

- In terms of Get Keep Grow, the HEVO conference had been held which had impacted the budget significantly although the event had been great for promotion of the sport
- in terms of commercial income, it would normally be received as a lump sum, but it would be distributed and spent across the whole year which impacted the budget as well
- a good sum of funds was still available in the bank halfway through the financial year. This total did not include the other half of Sport England funding due to be received
- HR costs had exceeded the initial provisions, but they would be comfortably covered going forward.
- KF would continue to run both formats of financial reporting until the end of the

financial year 2021-22. AH agreed.

Board discussed

- AW asked whether we intend to present both old and new formats of the management accounts. KF responded that we will maintain this for the financial year.
- AH observed that it was helpful to see variations in the reporting and the fact that the organisation was back to business as usual. Also, this year's numbers would help to plan the budget for next year more accurately.
- CF asked whether the cost for the HEVO conference had been originally budgeted for. KF answered that it had been catered for in the budget as a conference and that Sport England funding would cover these costs. The Sport England funding has been forecast in a later month. CF further stated that any significant expenditure should be authorised by Board. KF reinforced that this had been a phasing issue related to the approved budget.
- KF explained that £229,788 were unspent, carried forward Sport England funds that could be put forward for paying for projects such as digital transformation. SS confirmed that currently there were no restrictions on how those funds could be spent.
- RM asked about the budget-setting process. SS explained the timeline of the budget planning by the hub team and consideration and sign off by the Board.
- It was agreed that KF and AH would organise a Board finance induction for new directors. **KF and AH**
- AH thanked KF for his work on the reporting.

**Action:**

***EB/21-22/39 KF and AH would organise a Board finance induction for new directors.***

**EB/21-22/40 Volleyball England Foundation**

Jl highlighted the following:

- Simone Turner (as Chair of VEF) could not attend the meeting, but it would usually be her who would report on the activities of the Volleyball England Foundation.
- a report had been circulated as part of the Board pack
- an application had been submitted to the DCMS to conduct research around LGBTQ communities within sport. The idea would be for the research findings to be shared across the sporting network due to a growing number of young people who are declaring that they were representative of this community.
- the very first bucket collection had been organised at the Sitting Volleyball Grand Prix the week before last. This was part of income diversification at the Foundation.
- Five clubs had been funded to develop sitting volleyball in round three.
- There had been a positive development in Sport England Return to play application. Via 42 applications the Foundation had managed to secure just under £250k going directly into clubs. The latest application had secured £9900 to support the development of officials and £6150 pounds had been allocated to London Volleyball also for official development. Each club application included funding to support costs for level 2 and level 1 coaching awards the last six applications had been unsuccessful since those clubs had already returned to play and were active.
- the next application would be on behalf of Hampshire Volleyball to apply for the funding for officials and coaching courses.

Board discussed:

- PF asked whether it was VE or the Foundation that normally applied and what the criteria were. JI responded that organisations were directed by VE to the Foundation to obtain help with applications. It was joint working piece and both organisations were in communication around Return to Play.
- AW added that there was going to be a joint working group formed focusing on income generation. The charitable status of the Foundation enabled application for funding that VE would not be able to. The aim of the joint group would be to maximise funding for both organisations.
- JI added that the Foundation was a great avenue to try to support the sport. Also, JI expressed her hope that as a relationship with the subgroups develops, the areas of greater need for funding would be identified for the Foundation to then access various avenue of funding available to it.
- SS explained that VE and the Foundation would collaborate moving forward and jointly decide which organisation would lead on specific projects depending on the area in need of additional funds and sources of funding.
- AW thanked JI and the Foundation for their work.

## **EB/21-22/41 Sub-Group Reports**

### **41.1 Finance Strategy & Risk**

AH highlighted the following:

- budgeting for new financial year had started and would finalise by mid-December, reporting to the board in January.
- there had been no changes to the Risk Register
- AW would attend the FSR committee meetings as an observer

### **41.2 Nominations Committee**

CF highlighted the following:

- Following the resignation of Alastair Marks, a Board position had become vacant unexpectedly. According to the Articles of Association, the Board had the power to co-opt a director when a position would become vacant, and the Board considers such vacancy would be a detriment to the organisation. The board unanimously agreed to co-opt Dave Reeve to the Board until the next AGM with the same rights (including voting) as other directors.
- RM asked about different categories of Directors. SS confirmed that there were only two categories pertinent to VE Board and these were elected and independent. Any reference to Executive directors is something that has been used in the past but that the website would be updated to be clearer and reflect the language of independent and elected.

**Action:**

***EB/21-22/41.2 SJ to coordinate update of website terminology***

### **EB/21-22/42 Transgender policy**

SJ highlighted the following:

- the guidance related to the policy had been circulated as part of the Board pack
- VE were planning to publish a transgender policy which would be in line with the organisational values, aims and mission.
- transgender inclusion queries would have previously been decided in accordance with the organisational values promoting inclusion. Up until now,

clubs had been encouraged to allow players to participate as they identified. However, UK Sport and Sport England had recently sent a document to VE in which volleyball was identified as a gender-affected sport. The key part of that document sets out a framework that could be used to decide further approach to transgender participants in the sport as well as creating a policy. The Board agreed to develop a transgender policy

- SS/SJ had suggested some responses to the questions in the framework document and the Board discussed, they had been designed to assist NGBs in development of their transgender policy:
  - Strength, stamina, and physique would be included in the policy as volleyball is a gender affected sport
  - inclusion was a priority, but it was not the first priority
  - fairness and safety were both paramount to the sport
  - Board discussed a suggestion of a modified competition model to allow for a mixed league; the make-up of teams in such a league would be based on self-identification. There was a need for the notion of mixed volleyball to be explored further. The policy would relate to volleyball as sport and the community rather than organisation. VE set rules on behalf of the sport.
  - adapted versions of the game including rules such as changing the net height could be looked at to promote inclusion
  - yes, sitting volleyball was more specific to categorisation for competitive fairness
  - inclusion and fairness were already embedded in grassroots community participation volleyball as opposed to competitive sport. Building the policy from the bottom up would assist in better definition of inclusion and fairness at all levels of volleyball
  - identification vs gender transition in relation to competition entry in the national league were discussed
  - it was important to create opportunities for transgender players for purposes of inclusion
  - Board discussed safety of play between transgender and non-transgender players
- Board agreed that a framework of principles and a draft policy based on those principles would be created and circulated on the understanding that this would continually evolve based/in-line with experience. The intention would be for the policy to enable anyone to play in a safe and fair environment. AW asked that a small group consider the implications of the framework document and draft a policy with options for the board to consider. **SS and SJ**
- It was important to work collaboratively with other sports as they develop their approach to transgender players participating in their sports.

**Action:**

***EB/21-22/42 Board agreed that a framework of principles and a draft policy based on those principles would be created and circulated on the understanding that this would continually evolve based/in-line with experience. The intention would be for the policy to enable anyone to play in a safe and fair environment. A smaller group would meet to develop the draft policy with options SS and SJ.***

**EB/21-22/43 Digital Transformation**

SG highlighted that the paper in the pack presented the current state in relation to digital transformation and asked a question about what digital transformation activities were required

to deliver the Strategy:

- AW suggested including reference to e-commerce
- it was important for the new website:
  - to be mobile accessible
  - to be future proofed and serving the volleyball community
  - to enable effective data capture
  - to reduce pressure on hub team's time as well as clubs'
  - to be informative enough to reduce time spent by the hub team on answering queries
  - not to be modular; all elements must work well together rather than in isolation
  - to be in tune with the membership and customer focused
  - to create functionality/framework on the website to enable digital education
- building CRM would require bringing external expertise. Board discussed companies that could deliver this for VE. RH proposed considering organisations that would do this work pro bono as part of their corporate and social responsibility programmes. Following a discussion, Board agreed that Seven League would be approached for a contract to deliver the CRM build for VE as soon as possible for Board's consideration and sign-off. **SG SS SJ**

### **EB/21-22/44 Club Survey Report**

DW highlighted the following in relation to the report on the Club Health Check Survey:

- DW explained the survey timeframe (May – August 2021)
- The report presented figures connected to the membership (coaches, officials, clubs) between August 2018 and September 2021 showing impact of Covid-19 on the membership volume. The recovery had started.
- 117 responses had been recorded which was comparable to previous years
- overall satisfaction with VE had increased this year in comparison to previous years
- the perception of VE values had increased
- satisfaction with products and services had decreased slightly and this could be due to the importance score
- DW presented the areas needing future focus for VE according to the importance score. Those would be items of higher importance and lower satisfaction. This was backed up by the comments collected as part of the survey. The areas included raising the profile of sport, workforce education and club development advice. Website was not part of the area, but it had been brought up by the respondents often as needing development.
- Emerging themes had been categorised according to a club size:
  - Ambition – large clubs had been found to be more ambitious than clubs of other size
  - Satisfaction score – larger clubs had recorded higher satisfaction scores which was supported by comments from the respondents. Overall, a disproportionate number of smaller clubs felt less supported and valued by VE.
  - Covid-19 and Return to Play of VE support to clubs had overall recorded positive responses. In terms of the clubs who had been unable to return to play, venue availability had been the most quoted reason for them to be unable to return to play. This was an issue for other sports as well.
  - Increased junior participation had seen a considerable increase. The areas of improvement for VE were coach education and development around juniors.
- DW reported that some issues and feedback had already been actioned including reaching out to clubs requiring urgent support, launching venue finder, updating club profiles on VolleyZone, feeding this information to key stakeholders and analysis of



findings to inform strategic planning and the implementation plan development.

Board discussed:

- AW thanked DW for the excellent work on the collation of the insight. AW noted there was an unabridged version of the presentation and encouraged Board members to view the recording of it should they wish to. DW would circulate the recording and the extended presentation. **DW**
- RH observed that there continued to exist a disconnect in communication between the membership and VE hub in terms of the education. This was an area of growth for the sport. VE should be encouraging the volleyball community to come forward if they needed to organise a course. DW added that the feedback around education had been actioned by re-launching courses.
- CF noted that VolleyZone continued to prove to be an area of concern and affecting membership.

BF and DW left the meeting.

**Action:**

***EB/21-22/44 DW would circulate the recording and the extended presentation on club survey.***

#### **EB/21-22/45 Coach Education - Update RH**

RH highlighted the following in relation to his report:

- VE was the first CIMSPA accredited NGB in relation to coach education. VE was used by UK Coaching and CIMSPA as the pioneering group in terms of course development.

AW thanked RH for the report.

#### **EB/21-22/46 Sport England Funding – Update & Next Steps SS**

SS highlighted the following in relation to Sport England funding:

- SE had changed a process of application of funding, VE had been confirmed as a system partner. The process had seen a considerable culture shift in terms of how organisations were encouraged to think and action the bidding for funding.
- Tackling inequality must be at the heart of all future funded activities of all system partners
- The amount the VE could apply for had been agreed ahead of this process.
- SS and SJ would continue to update Board on the progress of the process.

#### **EB/21-22/47 Staffing & Efficiencies – Update AW/CF**

AW and CF reported the following:

- AW, CF, SS and SJ had discussed that Board had at times been too operational as opposed to strategic.
- In terms of strategic planning and development, it had been agreed that there were sufficient resources that allowed the organisation to maintain but insufficient resource to transform.
- SS, SJ and KF had been asked to consider how the organisation could improve moving forward with the staff and funds as they were as well as what the aspirations for the future would be for the organisation if the resource was increased. This was ongoing and would be reported to the Board. SS reported that a session with staff team had already been had around efficiencies and that had been very helpful. A report would be produced for the board outlining the possible efficiencies. **SS SJ KF**
- Retention of skill and career progression were area of future consideration for the

organisation. VE should be able to provide career development for skilled workforce.

**Action:**

**EB/21-22/47 SS, SJ and KF would consider how the organisation could improve moving forward with the staff and funds as they were as well as what the aspirations for the future would be for the organisation if the resource was increased, and report back to the board**

**EB/21-22/48 Any Other Business**

AGM 2022 would take place in June 2022. SJ and SS would look at defining the date.

**Action:**

**EB/21-22/48 AGM 2022 would take place in June 2022. SJ and SS would look at defining the date.**

Actions	Who
<p>EB/21-22/37 DW to prepare a proposal of communication with the volleyball community including at the regional and county levels to obtain information on the numbers of recreational players in the country.</p> <p>SJ would supply a clarification on the number of assistant coach courses.</p> <p>KF to be added to the list of attendees of the meeting with BDO.</p> <p>SJ would be completing actions connected to the data breach.</p> <p>SS and SJ to discuss monetising products related to education pathways with Oaks.</p>	<p>DW</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>SS SJ</p>
<p>EB/21-22/38 SJ would present on the structure and contents of the implementation plan at the next Board meeting in January which would aid the understanding of the new directors of how it worked.</p> <p>AH and SJ to add dates to the implementation plan.</p> <p>AH and SJ to investigate implementing mechanism to monitor progress of actions in the implementation plan.</p>	<p>SJ</p> <p>AH SJ</p> <p>AH SJ</p>
<p>EB/21-22/39 KF and AH would organise a Board finance induction for new directors.</p>	<p>KF AH</p>
<p>EB/21-22/41.2 SJ to coordinate update of website terminology</p>	<p>SJ</p>
<p>EB/21-22/42 Board agreed that a framework of principles and a draft policy based on those principles would be created and circulated on the understanding that this would continually evolve based/in-line with experience. The intention would be for the policy to enable anyone to play in a safe and fair environment</p>	<p>SS and SJ</p>
<p>EB/21-22/43 Board agreed that Seven League would be approached for a contract to deliver the CRM build for VE as soon as possible for Board's consideration and sign-off. SG SS SJ</p>	<p>SG SS SJ</p>

EB/21-22/44 DW would circulate the recording and the extended presentation on club survey.	DW
EB/21-22/47 SS, SJ and KF would consider how the organisation could improve moving forward with the staff and funds as they were as well as what the aspirations for the future would be for the organisation if the resource was increased.	SS SJ KF
EB/21-22/48 AGM 2022 would take place in June 2022. SJ and SS would look at defining the date.	SS SJ



Signed  
Adam Walker, Independent Chairman.