

**Executive Board Meeting 24th September 2020 @
5.30pm via Microsoft Teams**

Directors Present	Titles
Adam Walker [AW]	Chair (Independent)
Brendan Fogarty [BF]	Director
Clare Francis [CF]	Vice Chair (Independent)
Freda Bussey [FB]	Director
Ian Wall [IW]	Director (Independent)
Andres Hernandez [AH]	Director (Independent)
Richard Harrison [RH]	Director
Seyram Atubra [SA]	Director
Simon Griffiths [SG]	Director
Jefferson Williams [JW]	Director
Staff Present	
Sue Storey [SS]	Chief Executive
Samantha Jamieson [SJ]	Deputy Chief Executive
In attendance	
Agata Sromecka [AS]	Minute taking

EB/20-21/82 Welcome by the Chair

Chair welcomed all present.

82.1 Apologies

There were no apologies submitted.

82.2 Director Conflict of Interest Disclosures

No declarations of interest were submitted.

82.3 Approval of Agenda

An additional discussion around competitions would be held as part of the Executive update.

82.4 Previous Minutes

82.4.1 Confirmation

All outstanding minutes of Board meetings were taken as a true and accurate record of these meetings (June, July and September). SJ would use AW's electronic signature to authorise those.

82.4.2 Matters Arising/Action List

All matters arising were reported to have been carried out accordingly.

EB/20-21/83 Executive update

83.1 Executive Report

SS reported on the key highlights of the update:

- England beach volleyball athletes were at the CEV u18 and u22 championships in Turkey; girls' team finished 9th; the social media following for the championships received good profile
- CWG working groups are being set up. Recruitment for CWG 2022 Beach Volleyball Competition Manager is ongoing with shortlisting currently in progress.
- BVF submission for phase 3 progression funding for circa £2M to support beach and sitting volleyball is close to being finalised; the decision is expected by Christmas 2020.
- SS and AW are in discussions with kit suppliers about a 3-year contract to commence on 1 January; the supply would cover staff, national squads and volunteers. The option for members to purchase kit directly from a supplier is also being considered.
- Annual Awards have been delivered virtually over the week 21-25 September. The feedback has been very positive so far.
- Sport England are due to hold a series of consultation meetings around their new strategy in the coming weeks. As soon as the strategy is released, a Board discussion will be organised to consider an official response to the consultation.
- PDTO Petra Szollosyova would complete her fixed term contract with Volleyball England at the end of September. Another PDTO Erin Pruettt has recently resigned. Going forward, recruitment would need to be considered carefully in light of the impact of Covid-19 on the organisation.
- Due to an injury Freddie Bialokoz replaced Joaquin Bello in Bello/Bello in CEV U22 in Turkey.
- work on the VolleyZone continues.
- the safeguarding case would be heard in court on 19 October 2020; it remains confidential and all Board members have been asked to direct any questions they might be asked to the Hub team.
- work on the Risk Register continues.
- the launch of the new Strategy has been received very well with very positive feedback including from some high-profile members of the volleyball community.
- SJ reported there was an error on the front page of the exec report around this year's and last year's figures related to coaches and officials.

Board discussed:

- AW commented on the feedback received from the Board around Keith Nicholl's paper. Board agreed an approach going forward.

83.2 Competitions

AW congratulated the Executive Team for running the organisation as best it has been possible considering the current landscape.

Following the recent news about the Covid-19 related restrictions put on indoor sports countrywide, AW met with the Executive team to discuss what should be the guiding principles around VE's response to the situation. The following is a set of recommendations:

- it is vital to keep the sport alive, but this should happen in accordance with the current government rules related to indoor sports
- Volleyball England, alongside other indoor sport NGBs, will look to challenge and influence the government to change its position in relation to the current restrictions.

SS also reported that she has sent a letter to DCMS asking the Sports Minister to reconsider this decision.

Board agreed the recommendations.

83.3 Covid-19

SS updated the Board related to the most recent Covid-19 guidance:

- a portion of VE employees have been put on furlough leave, which will facilitate further saving; new job support scheme is due to come into place at the beginning of November and the Exec team will investigate whether it can be applied to VE employees.
- Return to office plan has been moved back a level, which means that the whole team have reverted back to home working
- The exception to the rule of 6 does not apply to all who participate in disability sport such as sitting volleyball; this means that if disabled people play with non-disabled people the rule of 6 would apply.
- SS explained that an u18 is defined as such by their date of birth rather than their academic year. Up to 30 u18s can participate together but if any adult takes part in the session the rule of 6 comes into force.
- there is no limit on the number of adults running a junior event
- multiple player bubbles of 6 are allowed within one hall as long as the 2-metre gap between them is maintained; this could be facilitated at a badminton court with a long net running across the hall
- clubs a membership fees for 2020/21 will remain in place since clubs will be able to run some activities and will require insurance and support to do so.
- a decision has been made not to send age group athletes to international competitions, which affects the competition in Italy in December; this is to reduce the risk of contracting/spreading the virus by the athletes and team staff.
- Polonia would travel to Italy the following Monday subject to meeting all international travel medical requirements

Board discussed:

- IW asked how many staff have been furloughed – SS answered that 7 out of 14 have been put on furlough leave; On FB's request, SS named all staff that continue to work as usual.
- IW asked about the possibility of obtaining a refund for the office rent – SS confirmed that there would be a reduction in the utility payments, but the rent

would need to be paid as usual

- AW advised that VE would operate within the boundaries of the government guidance and would seek clarity on any areas of confusion. Any new information and guidance would be widely communicated to the community as and when.

Actions:

83.3 SS and SJ will investigate whether the new government job support scheme starting in November can be applied to VE employees.

Any new information from the government would be widely distributed.

83.3.1 Camps

SS asked the Board to consider reducing the length of camps from two days to one-day camps due to the specifics of logistics of such events in the face of Covid-19 restrictions. This would potentially mean a loss in income due to not using Kettering for the whole length of original booking. SS also advised that athletes travelling from local lockdown areas would still be able to attend camps unless otherwise advised by authorities.

Board discussed:

- FB asked for this decision to be sent to clubs
- JW asked whether, in light of potential loss of days in Kettering, the space could be used for something else. SS confirmed that this would be advisable and asked all to put a proposal forward in relation to this.

Board agreed the approach regarding reduction of the length of camps. Communication about this would be circulated to the whole community.

Actions

83.3.1 Communication about reduction in the length of camps would be circulated to the volleyball community.

83.3.2 NVL

In line with the current government guidance, NVL cannot start. SS asked the Board to consider whether we should plan for resuming the season in January as previously discussed or whether it should be cancelled. If Board decides to prepare for resuming the season, this decision would need to be taken by the start of December.

Board discussed:

- BF noted that the government could still perform a u-turn on its decision
- SG asked what the cost of planning was in terms of resuming the season in January. SJ answered costs would be committed mainly to the administration of the process and the venue booking. SG observed that considering the frequency at which the government has been changing its approach, it might be premature to cancel the season just yet.
- JW stressed that from the club perspective, cancelling the season might pose a threat to being able to keep venue bookings which could be used for alternative activities even if the season is not taking place.
- IW noted it was paramount to stay positive and not take any premature drastic

decisions.

- AW stressed it was important to manage expectations in the community regarding this; CF advised that this could be facilitated via communication with the membership.
- FB observed that volleyball players enjoy the training element of volleyball just as much as matches, which is why they should be maintained if possible.

Board agreed that VE would release communication to the whole volleyball community that will confirm that under the current guidelines the season cannot be run. However, should the guidance change or be successfully influenced by lobbying as discussed earlier, VE would mobilise as quickly as possible to resume the NVL.

The Return to Play working group would decide what the date for the decision whether to resume or cancel the season would be. BF would communicate this to the group. Board meeting would be organised before that date.

Action:

83.3.2 NVL

- **Board agreed that VE would release communication about NVL.**
- **BF would communicate to the Return to Play group that they are required to set the date by which VE needs to decide whether to resume or cancel the season. Board meeting would be organised before that date.**

83.3.3 Junior competitions

SS advised that under the government guidelines, junior competition can still be run. However, costs related to running the event in Covid-19 secure way and the fact that NVL would not be running means that junior competition are at risk of not being run in the format previously agreed and at a financial loss to the organisation.

Board discussed:

- SA commented that this should be investigated by the Competition Working Group who could consult on this matter and feedback potential solutions to the Board
- SG agreed with the approach to put this to the working group which could produce more creative solutions; Board echoed this

Board agreed that this would be taken to the Competition Working Group that would then bring recommendations to the Board.

AW stressed it was important to manage expectations. In relation to this, SS, SJ and SG would work on messaging around this.

Action:

83.3.3 Competition Working Group would bring recommendations to Board regarding junior competitions.

EB/20-21/84 CEV Presidential Election

SS reported that the CEV President was due for election this year. There were two candidates for the post - the incumbent president Aleksandar Boričić and a current vice-president Hanno Pevkur. AW and SS had met them together and then individually. Based on their programmes, AW and SS recommended that the England Federation vote for Hanno Pevkur. AW and SS would not be going to the conference in Vienna, where the voting would be held, and would be voting by proxy.

Board discussed this and agreed with the recommendation to vote for Hanno Pevkur. AW and SS would contact Hanno to make him aware of the decision.

Action:

EB/20-21/84 - AW and SS would contact Hanno Pevkur to make him aware of the VE's decision to support him in the up and coming CEV presidential election.

EB/20-21/85 England Athlete Fees

85.1 Decision

SS reported to the Board on charging England squad players within any age group or discipline to register on VolleyZone and become a VE member. This would mean that all players representing England would be registered through VolleyZone. Also, Beach Volleyball players would be affected the most in terms of the cost.

Board discussed:

- AW asked how much supporting elite athlete's cost. SJ answered it was difficult to estimate that cost due to a multitude of factors. However, SJ advised that the fee if charged would be equal to what other players already contribute. SS confirmed that the fee did not cover the cost of the support the athletes receive.
- RH observed that athletes incurred significant costs to be a part of England squads already.
- SS confirmed that no surplus was generated through collection of fees from England players.

Board agreed to proceed with implementing a fee only for players who are not members of Volleyball England and who would need to register on VolleyZone. The fee would equal the amount the NVL player cover already at the registration.

Action:

85.1 – A registration fee for non-member England players would be implemented.

EB/20-21/86 Volleyball England Foundation

86.1 Update Paper

IW reported the key highlights from the report on Volleyball England Foundation:

- little change has been recorded since the last update
- the income has increased due to the receipt of a donation from the Bruce Wade Foundation
- two applications for Board member positions have been received; the

Foundation Board recruitment to be discussed at its next Board meeting

- SS and AW have been meeting with Simone Turner and Janet Inman every 6 weeks to ensure strategic alignment of the organisations and mutual support. The most recent meeting took place on 24 September 2020. Also, Stewart Thorpe is meeting every week with Janet to ensure the alignment of the communication of both organisations.

AW thanked IW for the update.

EB/20-21/87 Any Other Business

SS reported on the potential financial implications of the new restrictions:

- the organisation continues to adjust financial planning and position according to the government guidelines and maintains a flexible approach to planning
- putting staff on furlough leave will produce savings; the new job-support scheme starting in November would potentially produce savings as well
- recruitment has been put on hold including apprenticeship, and data and insight role
- saving could be produced through not spending on some Sport England funded programmes
- HEVO Programme can be potentially run
- clubs would be charged membership fee
- there is negotiation taking place around the contract with the NVC.

Board discussed:

- SG observed that coach registrations could produce additional income and should be promoted

EB/20-21/88 AGM Preparation and Briefing

SJ confirmed that the AGM was quorate, and no additional resolutions were put forward from the membership. Questions from the membership that have been submitted so far have been answered and placed on the website.

AW stated that once the official AGM business is concluded, a discussion around impact of the latest government rulings and their impact on volleyball would be had and this would take no longer than 30 minutes.

SS advised that Duncan and Toplis have confirmed their attendance. They are keen to support that it is normal practice to present statement of accounts at an AGM rather than a full audited set.

SS advised that there would be a protocol to running the AGM and this would be announced at the start of the meeting. This would ensure smooth conduct of the meeting.

SA submitted her apologies.

SJ advised that a link to the meeting would be re-circulated to the Board.

EB/20-21/89 Meeting finalisation

89.1 Review actions to be taken

89.2 Meeting close

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.30pm.

ACTIONS:

Actions	Who
<p>83.3 SS and SJ will investigate whether the new government salary scheme starting in November can be applied to VE employees.</p> <p>Any new information from the government would be widely distributed.</p>	SS SJ
<p>83.3.1 Communication about reduction in the length of camps would be circulated to the volleyball community.</p>	SS SJ
<p>83.3.2 NVL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board agreed that VE would release communication about NVL • BF would communicate to the Return to Play group that they are required to set the date by which VE needs to decide whether to resume or cancel the season. • Board meeting would be organised before that date. 	<p>SS SJ</p> <p>BF</p> <p>SS SJ</p>
<p>83.3.3 Competition Working Group would bring recommendations to Board regarding junior competitions.</p>	Competition Working Group
<p>EB/20-21/84 - AW and SS would contact Hanno Pevkur to make him aware of the VE's decision to support him in the up and coming CEV presidential election.</p>	AW SS
<p>Action 85.1 – A registration fee for non-member players would be implemented.</p>	SS SJ

Signed



Adam Walker, Chair