

**BRITISH WEIGHT LIFTERS' ASSOCIATION (TRADING AS BRITISH WEIGHT LIFTING)**

**Minutes** of the Annual General Meeting held at 7.00pm on Thursday 25 October 2021 held at East Stand, Leeds United FC, Elland Road, Leeds and via Virtual Conference Facility

Members Present (physically in attendance)

A Kinnear	A Metcalfe	M Martin	J Tong
T Whittaker	K Leonard	S Ward	D Kent
Z Kettle-Metcalfe	A Smeaton	O Krzyzston	S Martin
J Foster	C Williams	M Hill	G Cropper
E Muskett	K McPhee	D Sawyer	

Members Present (virtual attendance)

A Ajisafe	G Whitlow	R Tawse	R Stoner
M Hancock	G Williams	M Lynes	R Kechacha
M Irani	J Fenwick	R Ashworth	N Wood
P Edmondson	E Campbell		

Apologies

Kelly Sotherton	Guy Taylor	Matthew Curtain
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Welcome

The meeting opened at 7.00pm.

Angus Kinnear, Chair of the BWL Board, welcomed everybody to the Annual General Meeting. He noted that despite the challenging circumstances due to the pandemic, it had been a good year for BWL both on and off the platform, with a robust financial performance. He thanked everyone involved for their contribution.

1) To receive the Annual Report in accordance with Article 130.1

The Chair asked Ashley Metcalfe, CEO of BWL, to present the Annual Report.

Mr Metcalfe reported that the year had been challenging and a test of resilience. He noted that the initial focus was on ensuring the long-term protection of the organisation and key to that was the decision to transition the educational programmes online. This proved extremely popular and created better than expected revenues. He also noted that virtual competitions, although a viable alternative to physical events had taken longer to gain wider interest and traction.

He thanked UK Sport and Sport England for their continued funding and flexibility of the use of the grant in the final year along with the additional funding which had been secured to support the talent pathway and preparations for the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. He also reported that UK Sport had extended the funding to weightlifting within the Aspiration programme which helped those with Olympic qualifying ambitions. Finally, he advised that support from UK Sport Major Events and Manchester City Council had allowed a further Paralympic qualifier WPPPO World Cup hosted in Wythenshawe.

Mr Metcalfe provided an update on Sport England targets of diversity trends, influencing figures, membership numbers including those in low socio-economic groups.

Regarding elite performance and due to the cancellation of the majority of international competitions, Mr Metcalfe advised that BWL had still supported its leading female lifters, so they remained in strong Olympic qualification positions and were well managed by Stuart Martin and his team. He added that they performed well in Moscow at the European Championships, with GB athletes picking up 3 medals. Under the leadership of Tom Whittaker, the team supported the elite para powerlifting team to make huge progress despite the challenges of the pandemic. At the World Cup in Manchester, there were very encouraging performances from a number of the team members.

Mr Metcalfe reminded everyone of the winners of the Annual Achievement Awards and congratulated them all.

He advised that the financial year made a surplus of £89,835 and that a donation had been made to BWL's new Foundation. He also thanked all our commercial partners for standing by the organisation in difficult times and noted that good progress had been made with all areas of governance.

Finally, Mr Metcalfe congratulated Emily Campbell, Micky Yule, Louise Sugden and Olivia Broome for their outstanding performances in Tokyo.

- 2) To receive the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 in accordance with Article 130.2

Mr Martin reported that a surplus of £89,835 had been generated which was the best results for a generation. He advised that this had been due to a growth in online course income and due to the generosity of Sport England in the use of the grant money. He provided a high-level analysis of income and expenditure and provided an update on the current position of the reserves which were now above minimum levels determined by the organisations Reserve Policy. Mr Kent asked if there was a plan to continue increasing the reserves and it was noted that the current level of reserves gave BWL greater flexibility to re-invest back into the sport.

- 3) To formally elect Jenny Tong as a Non-Executive Director in accordance with Articles 41, 42 and 130.4

The members voted unanimously to formally elect Jenny Tong for an initial period of 4 years.

- 4) To note that there are no elected directors retiring and seeking re-election and that no other nominations have been received

The members noted that no nominations had been received.

- 5) To transact any other business that is included on the notice calling the meeting in accordance with Article 122.5.

No other business was raised.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 7.40pm.

## Open Forum

The Chair then invited questions from members on any matters not covered by the Annual General Meeting.

D Kent – asked whether BWL had plans to be part of the return to activity. Mr Metcalfe responded that BWL would be keen to re-engage with its members and welcome them back to physical competitions and training as soon as was feasible. He also added it was the aim for BWL to become a bigger and stronger voice for strength related activity which was a key part of the new strategy due to be launched. He noted that there were plans to partner with the health and fitness sector in order to reach a broader audience.

D Kent – asked about the plan to correct the recent loss of members in low socio-economic groups. Mr Metcalfe advised that projects and schemes would be developed with clubs in these areas and all individuals would be encouraged to re-engage with the sport.

J Tong – felt that BWL's social media focused on selling courses and not the sport of weightlifting. She also believed costs to enter competitions or become a member were too high. Mr Metcalfe responded that he believed all pricing was reasonable but would take on board the comments and review further. He also advised that the business model for physical competitions was to break-even and to provide high-quality, safe and fun events and it was not a priority to make a profit. However it was necessary to charge for competition entries and spectator tickets as they were a key form of income generation. It was suggested that development programmes to target particular groups and offer reduced ticket prices could be considered in future. A Kinnear advised that the social media calendar would be reviewed in order to balance commercial and athlete engagement posts.

G Whitlow – asked about the prospects for the Commonwealth Games in light of the core sports announcement. Mr Metcalfe noted that he was confident of a strong performance but accepted that following new rule changes, Weightlifting was no longer guaranteed to be part of future Games programmes. Mr Metcalfe added it was part of BWL's remit to lobby the Commonwealth Games Federation to ensure the sport remained an integral part of the Games.

R Kechacha – asked if there was a membership strategy in place for 2022. Mr Metcalfe responded that a review was underway although noted this was challenging as historically members only joined the organisation either to enter national competitions or to gain discount for undertake BWL educational programmes. He added it was a priority to bring membership levels back to pre-pandemic levels and that there was a need to find value added benefits to interest a broader audience.

He advised that it was hoped a proposal would be presented to the Board in January and it was then aimed to go out to a wider consultation process before any decisions were made.

D Kent asked if BWL could learn from changes made at other sports and Mr Metcalfe confirmed BWL's review had covered many other sports as part of the current review process.

M Irani commented that it was a difficult challenge especially due to wide range of age groups involved in the sport and the lack of the sport being included in the school curriculum.

D Kent – asked about the plans for increased participation/interest on the back of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games. Mr Metcalfe confirmed discussions were ongoing with Birmingham



2022 organisers about the opportunities to engage with the audience during the Games and their legacy plans especially to build the sport in the Birmingham area. Mr Metcalfe confirmed BWL are currently working on initial plans to capitalise on a “Home Games”.

Mr Kinnear thanked everyone for attending the AGM and for the questions raised.

The meeting was closed at 7.55pm.