

Minutes of the
British Weight Lifting Board Meeting

Date: Tuesday 15 June 2021
Start: 12.15
Venue: Leeds United Legends Suite, East Stand, Elland Road, Leeds

Present: Angus Kinnear (AK), Ashley Metcalfe (AM), Neill Wood (NW), Guy Taylor (GT), Rupinder Ashworth (RA), Philip Edmondson (PE), Jenny Tong (JT)

Via Video Call: Matthew Curtain (MC), Kelly Sotherton (KS) – until 1.30pm

Apologies: Ali Jawad (AJ), Jane Fenwick (JF), Tom Whittaker (TW),

In attendance: Kath Leonard (KL), Mark Martin (MM), Emily Campbell (EC)

1 Welcome and Apologies

AK opened the meeting, noted the attendance especially those people attending their first meeting and that apologies had been received from AJ, JF and TW. AK welcomed everyone to the first face to face Board meeting for a year and declared the meeting quorate.

2 Declarations of Interest

AK reminded members that the proceedings of the meeting were confidential and noted no new conflicts of interest.

3 Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 17 March 2021 were agreed as read and **approved** for posting on the website. AM provided updates on matters arising: noting the strategy work including the new concept competition was still being driven by AM/RA and the England Group were being consulted. It was confirmed that following the completion of the annual accounts, a donation of £55,795 had been made to the BWL charity and added that that the Auditors had confirmed that there would be no tax liability on the forecasted year end profit. RA asked about spending the charity money and AM gave a brief overview of the charity's remit noting this was a decision for the Trustees of the Charity to determine and not the Board although regular updates would be provided at each meeting.

4 Decisions Taken outside the Board Meeting

It was noted that JT had agreed to take on the role of Board Champion for Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity matters and that she would sit on the Performance Sub Committee as Vice-Chair. PE had taken on the role of Board Champion for Safeguarding and Anti-doping matters.

5 Minutes and Recommendations from the Sub-Committees

BWL Strategy 2021-25 Update – RA updated the Board on progress made with the new strategy following further extensive consultations with a variety of stakeholders and included a brief presentation showing BWL's focus aligned to the new Sport England strategy.

The key aim would be for the NGB to position itself to a much broader and more diverse audience and range of partners, with a key role and voice promoting strength training and the real benefits of being strong, whilst ensuring we do not lose any focus on our key sports of Olympic weightlifting and para-powerlifting and our members and clubs remain key stakeholders at the heart of everything we do.

There was further discussion covering the strategic direction of the draft update and JT noted concern over how this change would be communicated to the current membership and GT noted as a membership organisation it was important to maintain good engagement with the members over the new strategy and ensure it was relevant and beneficial to them. It was noted that the strength market was a very competitive and crowded space which would need to be addressed as part of positioning and implementing the new strategy.

The need to have an offer for school children and teachers was also proposed and **it was agreed to explore further opportunities** and ensure it was included as part of the next strategic cycle.

RA provided a further update on the development of the new concept competition noting the need for BWL to broaden its offer in order to increase membership and overall relevance to more people. She noted that this had been in development for some time and was currently being reviewed scientifically by Dave Hembrough of Sheffield Hallam University, with the new format due to be finalised by the end of July. It was hoped the new competition would be easily accessible but maintain a serious yet simple format that was straightforward to understand and be completed in two hours. With no weight categories due to the use of algorithms, proposed, RA added that the opportunity for any individual to compete fairly against anyone else would be a major advantage.

JT noted her concern of the potential similarities to CrossFit and powerlifting and the impact this might have on current members. RA responded that a consultation process still needed to be implemented and agreed that communication with members was crucial. AK noted the competition although open to our current membership was designed to target a new audience and allow more people to become involved which might attract further funding, encourage broadcast appeal and be a potential source of future talent.

Performance Committee TOR – KS noted that there had not been a meeting of the Committee recently but the TOR had been reviewed and a revised draft had been circulated to the Board in advance. **The Board approved the new TOR.**

KS apologised as she needed to leave the meeting at this point.

The order of the agenda was then changed.

9 Board Matters

Risk Register – It was noted that there were no changes to the risk register since the last meeting.

Complaints Log – It was noted that there were no new complaints. JT asked about feedback from the British Championships, and this was discussed, noting some noise on social media but that no complaints had been formally received.

IWF Constitutional Congress – A paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting and MC provided a brief overview. **The recommendations were approved by the Board.**

BWL Foundation – AM confirmed that the charity was due to be launched imminently, and an external consultant was investigating sources of funding available.

CEO Report – The May operational scorecard had been circulated in advance and it was noted overall all areas were progressing well. No comments were raised.

Forward Agenda – The agenda was noted.

UK Sport / Sport England Future Funding – AM advised that UK Sport had extended its support for BWL's International Relations strategy and **he agreed to circulate a copy of the final submission** to the Board. Additional Games Ready funding had also been **agreed by UKS** to support the elite athletes in the run up to the Games, once individuals had officially qualified.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan - The updated plan had been circulated in advance. JT noted she had recently discussed this area with KL and provided an overview of her thoughts around this subject. The Board discussed the topic at length and it was agreed that the organisation needed to identify a number of projects/campaigns that could be delivered well and enable good engagement with the whole membership to really progress this area and create impact. Due to limited resources, **the need to focus on fewer but more meaningful and impactful projects was agreed to be a key priority.** Both JT and EC thought there were good opportunities to involve athletes in these projects to help drive them forward and attract future member involvement.

7 Finance Matters

Management Accounts for April 2021 - MM gave an overview of the April management accounts noting it had been a positive start to the new financial year with the organisation making a further modest profit. He also provided an overview of the current and forecast reserves along with the financial risks and opportunities faced for the rest of the year. MM outlined that the balance sheet remained healthy and that despite the on-going covid related challenges the organisation was in a strong position to face any future uncertainty.

Year End 2020/21 - MM advised that the year-end figures were currently being audited. The draft figures showed a profit of £90,000 after a £56,000 donation to the charity. He explained this was mainly due to the success of the online educational opportunities that had proved popular during lock down periods.

8 Operational Reports

Para-Powerlifting Performance Update

AM provided an update on the qualification process and current athlete rankings in advance of the Paralympic Games. He also gave an overview on individual performances from the Georgia World Cup and preparations for the Dubai World Cup. The Board congratulated Tom Whittaker, his support team and in particular all the athletes on their continued commitment and progress.

GT asked KL to provide a final update from the Manchester WPPO World Cup (April 2021). She advised the event had run with athletes from over 20 countries and Covid protocols were well implemented to enable a safe and well-run international competition. She confirmed that all post reporting to UK Sport and WPPO had been completed. GT commented that he felt the event had been very well managed and congratulated the team on a professional delivery under difficult circumstances.

Olympic Lifting and Talent Pathway Update

AM provided an overview of the plans to prepare Team England lifters to deliver success at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth games noting the first face to face camp had recently been held in Nottingham. There was a discussion about anti-doping education for Home Countries' athletes and **it was agreed that AM/PE should investigate** the implications of this further. AM also advised that the Talent Pathway was continuing to develop and deliver above target. It was reported that 3-4 female athletes should qualify for the Tokyo Olympics but final decisions would not be known until the end of the month.

Operational Update

KL provided an update on operational delivery for this year noting the new plan was being managed closely and priorities reviewed as necessary. She then covered further operational updates including developments and progress relating to Workforce, Competitions, Communications and Governance matters.

10 Any Other Business

British Championships - There was a further discussion over the communications and the entry process around the forthcoming competition. AM provided an update explaining the reasons why it had been structured in the way it had for 2021.

11 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held in September and dates would be circulated.

The meeting closed at 4.25 pm.