

Minutes of the
British Weight Lifting Board Meeting

Date: Thursday 09 September 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), Matthew Curtain (MC), Jane Fenwick (JF),

Via Video Call: Kelly Sotherton (KS) – from 1.30pm

Apologies: Ali Jawad (AJ), Tom Whittaker (TW), Kath Leonard (KL), Emily Campbell (EC)

In attendance: Mark Martin (MM), Sue Ward (SW)

1 Welcome and Apologies

AK opened the meeting, noted the attendance and that apologies had been received from AJ, EC, KL and TW. AK welcomed everyone to the Board meeting and declared the meeting quorate. AK added his congratulations on behalf of the board to all the athletes, support teams and general staff following the fantastic performances at the Olympic and Paralympic Games. AK gave special praise to the four medal winners, Micky Yule, Louise Sugden, Olivia Broome and Emily Campbell noting the acknowledgements sent by UK Sport and other stakeholders.

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 15 June 2021 were agreed as read and **approved** for posting on the website. AM provided updates on matters arising in particular around the potential Anti-Doping liability issues linked the Home Nations and the Commonwealth Games, as BWL would be held responsible for any positive tests from Home Nation teams. It was agreed that AM and PE would communicate with Home Nations to ensure full understanding of the risks and liabilities.

4 Decisions Taken outside the Board Meeting

It was noted that AM and MC had attended the IWF Constitutional Congress in Doha and had in line with Board demands voted to approve a new IWF Constitution which was considerably stronger than the previous governing document that the IOC had requested changing. AM commented it may not be as strong ethically as BWL may have liked but it was a step forward that would hopefully appease the IOC and ensure Olympic Lifting would remain an integral part of the IOC programme.

5 Minutes and Recommendations from the Sub-Committees

BWL Strategy 2021-25 Update – RA presented the latest copy of the new strategy document and invited further final challenge. RA explained that the final draft had been well received by BWL's key stakeholders. 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 were no major challenges or questions that required any further amends and **the strategy document was approved.**

AM **agreed to update the current Operational Plan**, which would be represented to the Board for discussion and approval at the next meeting. **AM also agreed to ensure the launch** of the new strategy would highlight in any communications the reasons why it has evolved and benefits to BWL's community of members and clubs.

Performance Committee TOR – KS stated that post the Tokyo period it was now opportune to focus on the next cycle and consequently would be contacting all members shortly to agree next meeting. Further updates would be shared at the next Board Meeting. It was confirmed that JT had agreed to join the Performance Committee as Vice-Chair.

England Committee

MC explained that the committee had held its first face to face meeting, added their congratulations to all the athletes and support teams in Tokyo, support of the new strategy and outlined much of the meeting had been taken up discussing key international issues.

The key action **agreed was to prioritise roles and responsibilities** of its members at the next meeting.

Audit Committee

NW confirmed that the Committee had recently met and approved in principle the annual accounts and the new risk register policy and updates. NW added that there was still on-going communication with the auditors regarding the BWL donation to the newly formed foundation due to the challenges of opening an independent bank account. The auditors had proposed a workable solution that would not impact the AGM or release of the annual accounts in the appropriate timeframes.

International Relations Committee

GT reported that there had been no physical meetings although there had been much discussion on the build up to the IWF Constitutional congress and the forthcoming elections. Following IWF Elections, there would be a further update at the next meeting.

Commercial & Development Committee

AM provided an update on the new concept competition, explaining that the first pilot day had recently taken place in Sheffield. He added that the feedback from those involved had been most positive but there was still work to be completed on simplifying the scoring system to ensure easy understanding of the results.

JT, who had taken part in the pilot, pointed out that the concept would need to offer distinct competitive and recreational groups (elite v open amateur) and look at the impact of age on the scoring system.

AM confirmed a further pilot day was scheduled for 29 September and AK recommended that Board Members would be most welcome to attend if possible.

AM agreed to forward further information and updates, including the initial video coverage to all Board Members.

7. Finance Matters

Year End 2020/21 - MM advised that as previously BW had received a clean audit with no significant risks identified. The year-end figures and annual report passed earlier to the Audit Committee. The year-end figures showed a profit of £89,500 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. There were no further questions and **the Board approved both the accounts and annual report**. AK thanked the Audit Committee and the executive team for ensuring another successful year.

Management Accounts for July 2021 - MM gave an overview of the July management accounts noting another modest profit, which further supported a positive first 4 months of the financial year. 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. AM added the biggest risk as always was the reliance on increased course sales in the second half of the year.

8 Operational Reports

Para-Powerlifting Performance Update

AM added his congratulations to all our athletes, coaches and support teams who had contributed to a hugely successful Olympic and Paralympic games. To deliver 4 medals was a phenomenal effort and above UK sport expectations, which had been 1-2 medals.

In TW's absence (on leave after his recent return from Tokyo), AM covered the new Para-Powerlifting objectives as their WCP started to focus on the Pairs cycle, including the preparations for the WPPPO World Championships in Batumi, Georgia, which was currently a red list country. As it was a mandatory qualification event for Paris, it was essential all athletes with Paralympic ambitions attend despite the challenges both physical and financial associated with potential quarantine on return.

AM also added that Georgia would host a WPPPO Sports seminar to discuss and approve any new rule changes for the next cycle. TW had raised a number of concerns around these and AM confirmed BWL would be preparing to challenge those that had a negative impact from a safety and performance perspective.

Olympic Lifting:

AM recapped on the performances in Tokyo and highlighted that initial reviews had already commenced as the enforced bubble and pressures of the Games after such challenging preparations had identified that despite BWL's in-house excellent technical knowledge, there was a lack of expertise around mental health and well-being support, which may need addressing in the future. A number of questions were raised including who should be responsible for providing this support and AM agreed to discuss further with the BOA and report back to the next meeting.

AM added his congratulations to those individuals selected for the EWF Juniors and U23's in Finland and the IWF Youth event in Jeddah.

Birmingham 22

AM reported that the England squads were on track for next summer's CWG and selection policies had now been complete and were ready to share with performance committee ahead of public distribution.

AM concluded the performance report by confirming the talent pathway was on track with 30 weightlifters and 12 Para-Powerlifters achieving CWG training minimum standards.

Operational Update

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

AM covered the changes to the operational team and explained that Emily Muskett and Kristian McPhee had joined the organisation to support the UK Sport Progression programme, that Chris Williams had joined as Head of Events and Greg Cropper as Head of Strategic Engagement, with a focus on membership and establishing new partnerships within sport and also in the health and well-being sectors. Robyn Morgan has also come on board to support workforce and general administration.

AM added that from a Governance perspective, BWL remained compliant in terms of the Code for Sports Governance, Safeguarding and Anti-Doping, with the organisation focussing on a new clean sport strategy.

9 Board Matters

BWL 2021 AGM – It **was agreed that the AGM** would take place on Thursday 21 October at Elland Road, Leeds as a hybrid model offering both physical and virtual opportunities to attend and to encourage greater engagement.

IWF Constitutional Congress and IWF Elections - MC initially reported on the IWF Constitutional congress, which had agreed on a new governing document and then left the meeting to avoid any conflicts of interest as the discussion moved towards the December elections, which MC had previously been nominated as a candidate.

GT provided a brief overview of the current position expressing concerns that much of the International Relations expertise rested with MC and the CEO. AK explained that he felt the previous process to appoint the three candidates for the elections was still appropriate and after discussion **it was agreed to continue with the nominations** of MC, Keith Morgan and Heather Allison.

There was a further discussion about nominating any further candidates and **it was agreed not to do so** considering the short timeframes and the extensive process previously followed.

Risk Register – the updates to the **risk register policy document were noted and approved**. AM explained the changes to the current risk register which were all positive except the increased risk relating to the IWF and the future of weightlifting in the Olympics. It was noted **and agreed to be monitored** with AM agreeing to update the board if there were any further developments

Complaints Log – It was noted that there were no new complaints. JT asked about feedback from Championships, and this was discussed and **it was agreed to log all issues** at whatever level even if they do not escalate into formal issues.

BWL Foundation – AM confirmed that the charity had been launched and an external consultant was investigating sources of funding available. He added there was still a delay in opening the Foundation's independent bank account which remained work in progress but positively the Foundation had already received two donations for which it was most grateful. NW recommended the Foundation link to Amazon Smile and it was **agreed to explore the options**.

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

Forward Agenda – The agenda was noted.

UK Sport / Sport England Future Funding – AM advised that further support for the athletes in preparations for Paris was being explored with UK Sport and new submissions on top of the current Progression Funding would be required during October. AM also advised that the Sport England submission for future funding was also underway and needed completing by the 30 September with results announced by the end of October.

10 Any Other Business

There was no further business.

11 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held in January 2022 to coincide with the British Championships at Derby Arena on Friday 28 January. Further details regarding the meeting and the competition would be circulated in due course. It was also **agreed that a virtual meeting** would be arranged at short notice if anything significant changed internationally.

The meeting closed at 4.05 pm.