

Minutes of the
British Weight Lifting Board Meeting

Date: Wednesday 16 December 2020
Start: 13.00
Venue: Video Conference Call

Present: Angus Kinnear (AK), Ashley Metcalfe (AM), Neill Wood (NW), Guy Taylor (GT), Matthew Curtain (MC), Rupinder Ashworth (RA), Kelly Sotherton (KS), Jane Fenwick (JF), Philip Edmondson (PE)

Apologies:

In attendance: Kath Leonard (KL), Mark Martin (MM), Tom Whittaker (TW), Ali Jawad (AJ),

1 Welcome and Apologies

AK opened the meeting, noted the attendance and that there were no apologies, welcomed everyone, declared the meeting quorate and explained the purpose of the meeting was to review the financial and organisational robustness in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, to discuss amongst other items, the adoption of the new UKAD rules and determine the process for appointing a new Board member, following the resignation of Dr Irani as an elected NED and Sarah Davies as the elected Athlete Representative for Olympic Lifting.

2 Declarations of Interest

AK reminded members that the proceedings of the meeting were confidential and noted no new conflicts of interest. NW advised he was leaving his current employment and moving into a new industry sector and AK confirmed that there was no conflicts of interest in relation to this.

3 Minutes from Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 16 September 2020 were agreed as read and **approved** for posting on the website. AM noted two matters arising: the AGM had been run virtually and thanked PE and his team for their help in determining the legality of this and he

advised that the TOR for the new Strategy Working Group was still work in progress. There were no other matters arising that would not be covered in the meeting.

4 Decisions Taken outside the Board Meeting

BWL AGM 2020 – AK confirmed that a successful AGM had been held virtually for the first time on 15 October 2020 with all formal matters being received including the noting of the annual report and audited accounts and the ratification of PE's appointment as a NED. There was no items under Any Other Business although AK also noted that the meeting was followed by a most productive Q&A session with a number of members. He also advised that following the breaking International news on the same evening, there had been several questions over the IWF's decisions, the appointment OF Dr Irani as the new Interim President and BWL's proposed stance. AK confirmed that BWL had released a further official statement confirming their position, which remained unchanged and called for both constitutional and Executive Board change.

BWL External S&RA Board review – AM noted that it in order to remain compliant with the Code for Sports Governance, the decision had been electronically approved to conduct an external Board review in early 2021 by the Sport & Recreational Alliance.

5 Minutes and Recommendations from the Sub-Committees

BWL Strategy update – RA updated on progress regarding the new strategy noting she had held discussions with various Board members and had developed an outline summary document "Future Fit" which was presented to the Board. RA shared the initial overview which ensured BWL would focus on two key areas:

1. To govern the sport to the very best of its ability with a new and totally appropriate scope and terms of reference and ensuring all stakeholders were fully engaged.
2. To evolve the sport to ensure it is increasingly sustainable and accessible to a broader and more diverse audience, with an offer that captures greater commercial appeal.

AK thanked RA for the work she had undertaken and asked all members of the Board to contribute to this process. RA advised that the information would be circulated and she would welcome feedback. She would then be creating working parties to focus on the different areas to move matters forward.

GT asked if this overview was in line with the Sport England consultation on the role of an NGB and what it would fund. AM confirmed that the strategy would be aligned to both Sport England and UK Sport strategies and that a wider consultation process was still to be carried out. GT agreed to forward to AM/RA the latest documents released by Sport England relating to their strategy which outlined their expected roles and responsibilities of NGB's.

RA agreed to a request from MC to attend a consultation meeting with members of the England Committee early in 2021.

McLaren review – PE apologised for the delay with this matter due to illness. He confirmed that he would aim to circulate the draft report before Christmas. The main purpose of the review was to ensure all future individuals appointed to International Federation positions understood their roles and the importance of good governance with reporting mechanisms in place that were transparent and supported by appropriate policies and procedures. He advised that Dr Irani's resignation from the BWL Board in order to take up a position with the IWF had been noted. AM added that the IWF elections were scheduled in March 2021 with nominations to be submitted by 24 January. It was noted that the BWL process and criteria in relation to this would need to be agreed in advance of this date and PE was confident this would be completed early in January. It was confirmed that any nominations would need to be submitted to the International Relations Sub-Committee for consideration before being circulated to the full Board for approval.

England Committee – MC reported from the latest meeting, noting the Committee had congratulated Dave Hembrough on his BBC Unsung Hero award for Yorkshire, acknowledging his on-going commitment to community sport, received the latest 2022 Commonwealth Games qualification procedures, which guaranteed automatic entry with a full team for the host country and noted the latest England Weightlifting 2022 Training Squad Selection Policy.

MC also added that the Committee were fully committed to support and to contribute to BWL's new strategic plan and that recruitment for an athlete representative to join the Committee was underway.

There were no further updates from other Sub-Committees.

6 Finance Matters and Update

MM gave an overview of the October Management accounts noting a positive result year to date with a current surplus of £66,000 which had resulted in the year end forecast moving to a positive position, against the original budgeted loss.

MM explained key reasons for this change were the better than forecast online education sales along with earlier cost cutting measures and on-going prudent oversight of operations proving to be beneficial. He added that a reduction in Government funding and membership income had been forecast and managed successfully to ensure minimum impact.

He further outlined the current financial opportunities and threats, gave an overview of the current reserves, which had increased to just over £200,000 and cash flow which remained positive.

Finally, he provided a forecast for 2021/22, which remained work in progress and currently highlighted a year end loss of approximately £50,000. Although in line with current expectations, he added it was more appropriate to further re-assess this figure in light of imminent UKS and Sport England funding decisions and re-present what would hopefully be a more positive forecasted position to the Audit Committee and the Board early in 2021.

RA asked about confidence levels in achieving the revised breakeven 2020-21 forecast and AM responded that he felt a modest profit could be achieved, although noted there was no

track record for online education sales and there were still several unknowns including future funding decisions, as well as the longer-term impact of Covid-19. KS asked for details on the CWG funding requested and AM responded noting indicative figures had been provided but not yet confirmed by Sport England. JF queried the membership income figure in the 2021/22 budget seemed high in light of current membership levels. It was noted that as physical competitions return, there was a confidence gained from membership insight that there will be greater opportunities to re-engage with lifters, coaches and clubs and increase retention rates.

6 Operational reports

Performance Update - TW provided an update on the progress of athletes returning to training which included both home training environments and utilising Loughborough facilities due to the second lockdown period. From a performance perspective, he noted that most of the athletes were in good shape and on track from both WCP and Talent Confirmation squads and provided individual performance levels and projections compared to anticipated medal zones for both Tokyo and Paris. He advised that the recent culture health check was very positive and the future funding decision from UKS was due on 18 December.

Olympic Lifting and Talent Pathway Update - AM provided an update on the athletes training for Tokyo, an overview of the qualification procedure for the Commonwealth Games, the ongoing development of the Talent Pathway, elite athlete training progress and the recent funding submission to UK Sport for weightlifting.

Operational Update - KL provided an update on operational updates including developments and progress relating to Workforce, Competitions, Communications, Relationship Managers and Governance matters. It was noted that there had been several positive developments highlighting successes around online education products and virtual competitions and the increased number of external communications implemented to maintain engagement with the membership.

7 Board Matters

Recruitment of BWL Board Member – Due to the recent resignations of Dr Irani and Sarah Davies to take up International posts, it was proposed to merge the appointment of a new NED with the Athlete Representative role. **This proposal was approved and recruitment will commence in the New Year.**

Adoption of UKAD 2021 Rules – AM advised that the last significant update to the UKAD rules was in 2015 in line with the introduction of financial sanctions by the IWF and the need for BWL to have the ability to seek compensation from athletes for any doping violations. UKAD has now removed this option and also introduced a new category of recreational athlete, which was also noted. **The Board agreed to adopt the new UKAD rules whilst it was also agreed that athlete agreements should be amended to cover the changes of the impact of any sanctions imposed by the International Federation.** AJ noted

the confusing messages from WADA about the Covid-19 vaccine and it was noted this situation would continue to be monitored.

BWL Staff Survey – JF updated the Board on the findings of the recent 2020 survey noting that the results were very positive and there had been significant improvements in the key areas, which had previously been outlined. AM thanked JF for overseeing the independent findings and her report on the survey, which ensured continual operational learning and improvement.

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

Complaints Log – The current complaints log was noted.

BWL Foundation – It was reported that the Charity Commission had approved the establishment of the Foundation which allowed the opportunity for a 2021 launch.

CEO Report – The Operational Scorecard for November and updated Operational Plan were reviewed and no comments were raised.

Forward Agenda – The forward agenda was noted.

BWL Policies – The updated policy review document was reviewed noting a number of policies were due for updating shortly.

UK Sport/Sport England's Future Funding – These matters had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Action Plan – The updated EDI plan was noted and no questions raised.

BWL New Concept Competition – RA reminded the Board that an outside agency (TMA) had been commissioned to put forward recommendations for a new concept competition but noted that resources (both human and technical) required to deliver this was still a key issue.

RA highlighted that TMA had identified a number of current operational weaknesses and had made a number of recommendations including a full upgrade to the digital infrastructure (website, CRM system, App and video). However, the costs involved considerable and would need further determination as they were not within current budgets.

Due to the financial investment required to make it successful in the anticipated timescales, it was noted that the preference was to secure a viable commercial partner to activate the new concept competition.

AK added that if partnership income could not be sourced then an alternative method of launching the idea would need to be proposed as the concept remained key to BWL's longer term success.

It was agreed that AK would discuss partnership opportunities with TMA and all further recommendations from TMA would be shared with the Board once they had been fully evaluated.

10 Any Other Business

There was no other business raised.

11 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held in March 2021 and AM would propose dates early in 2021.

12 Private Board Member Update

The Executive left the meeting at this point to enable a Private Board Member meeting to be held.

The board unanimously approved the recommendation from the Audit Committee (who had taken independent HR advice) to streamline the performance process of the executive and introduce an incentive plan directly linked to individual and company KPI's. This requires staff to be bought out of their existing employment contracts but can be managed in existing budgets and it was agreed would ultimately drive productivity, revenue and the growth of the organisation over the medium term.

The meeting closed at 1530 pm.