

Meeting: BOARD
Location: Virtual
Date / Time: Monday 18th December 2023 – 15:00 – 17:00
Present Kate O’Sullivan (KOS) (Deputy Chair)
 Alastair Marks (AM)
 Liz Behnke (LB)
 Tina Kokkinos (TK)
 Karena Vleck (KV)
 Martin Claxton (MC)
 Peter Milholfer (PM)
 Clare Briegal (CB)
 Mohamed Sbihi (MS)
 Nick Hubble (NH)

Other Attendees: Rebecca West (RW) – Minutes
 Chris Conway (CC) – COO for whole meeting
 Louise Kingsley (LK) - Performance Director for agenda item 5.1
 Marieke Hagemans (MH) – Director Membership and Community for agenda item 5.2
 Seb Walker (SW) – Observing

Apologies Mark Davies (MD) (Chair)

	<p>Chair’s Introduction KOS welcomed all to the meeting. Welcoming SW to his first Board meeting, after being elected at the AGM in November, he observed this meeting, whilst he steps down as the Regional Chair and Representative of the Eastern Region.</p>
1	<p>Apologies for Absence and Quorum MD gave apologies prior to the meeting, and therefore KOS chaired this meeting as Deputy Chair.</p> <p>The Board meeting was announced as quorate.</p>
2	<p>Declaration of Interest MS declared that since the last Board Meeting, he has now become a Steward of Henley, and he also wanted it noted that he is an ambassador of Fulham Reach.</p> <p>There was a discussion as to why the declarations of interest was no longer a standing item. It was agreed that there had been some confusion as to a previously agreed action and that the declarations will be reinstated for future meetings.</p> <p><i>Decision:</i> The Declaration of Interest will be added into Board Packs from now on.</p>
3	<p>Approval of Minutes from previous Board Meeting The minutes were discussed, with Board members noting changes, which they will request via email. Following these changes, the minutes will be emailed around the Board for approval.</p>
4	<p>Action Tracker AM explained that a number of the actions were originally going to be on the agenda for this meeting but due to the shorter meeting they will now be discussed at the February Board in 2024.</p>

	<p>Action 30 – in the status it is written that '33 Regattas had been cancelled' it should be written that '33 Competitions had been cancelled'.</p> <p>Action 7 – PM updated the Board that AM had come to ARC and that the action would be brought to the February Meeting.</p>
5.1	<p>LA28 Performance Strategy <i>Summary of Agenda Item:</i> LK presented the paper of the UK Sport LA Investment Strategy for approval ahead of submission to UKS in early January 2024</p> <p>LK outlined that the performance strategy for the next cycle includes four main strands: sustaining performance, high-performing people (athletes, coaches, and staff), enabling the future, and pursuing opportunities. These pillars aim to maintain success, support the development of athletes and staff, create a sustainable pathway, and continue to innovate in sports science and sports medicine.</p> <p>The core strengths of the sport include a history of delivering consistent results, with 147 Olympic and Paralympic medalists produced since Sydney. The presence of a national training center at Caversham has also been a significant advantage, providing high-quality facilities and a dedicated training environment. These strengths need to be maintained and developed to ensure continued success.</p> <p>The Board was informed that funding for beach sprints could be available from a separate UK Sport funding stream for new disciplines and athletes. So, we will be submitting a cause and change submission to see if that can be supported outside of our core funding in the future.</p> <p><i>Key Discussion Items:</i></p> <p>LB raised a question as to why the diversity of different groups had dropped off in the U19 level in Beach Sprints.</p> <p>MS also asked whether a defined process is in place to ensure that we meet the EDI targets set out for the 2032 cycle. His concern was that if something is not implemented soon for the U19s, the organisation would not see the impact on the team at the 2032 games. TK also added that a wider EDI plan still needs to be brought to the Board as soon as is practical.</p> <p>The Board also asked about what efforts were being made to create opportunities for female coaches. LK assured the Board that this is a top priority and she is working hard to increase the numbers of female coaches at a high performing level of the sport, however, it will take time to bring the pathway through. BR's SE plans also have a specific strand focused on this area.</p> <p>AM explained that many of these questions would have been addressed by the SE agenda item which has been pushed back to the February 2024 meeting due to time constraints and where our plans for increasing diversity in the sport would be presented by the Pathways Director (NROD). Everything that is being delivered across our Sport England Plans are designed to create more opportunities for those that traditionally wouldn't get the chance to row with full talent ID systems in place to develop those who could reach the highest levels.</p>

	<p>CB asked about UK Sport’s appetite for risk in relation to funding for beach sprints given this discipline involves racing in an environment that is more difficult to control and where success may be harder to deliver. LK confirmed that funding for new disciplines is considered separately and that beach sprint performance does not put other funding at risk.</p> <p><i>Actions:</i> NROD to bring a full presentation to the next Board meeting outlining our plans for increasing diversity in the sport and the activity to support those already underway</p> <p><i>Approvals:</i> The Board approved the UK Sport LA 2028 Investment Bid.</p>
5.2	<p>24/25 Membership Pricing <i>Summary of Agenda Item:</i> A paper was presented outlining possible options for increases to Club Affiliation and Competitions fees as well as individual membership fees. Several options were presented. The Board was asked to discuss and approve the approach for the next financial year and beyond.</p> <p><i>Key Discussion Items:</i></p> <p>LB raised the importance of attracting more of the club members that exist in BR’s statistics who are not individual members of British Rowing and suggested if this was successful this could enable a longer term option of reducing membership costs for everyone as there would be larger pool of people.</p> <p>A number of other options were suggested by SW suggesting that we could explore in the longer term including moving towards a model focused more on Club Affiliation and not directly to members. PM suggested the club affiliation plus model presented could be a good vehicle through which to encourage clubs to sign up more members and to set in place an amnesty period to capture all the members who participate in clubs. At an individual membership level, the notion of having multi-year membership options were also discussed.</p> <p>A further paper would be tabled at the February Board meeting</p> <p><i>Actions:</i></p> <p>MH to continue to explore alternative options for membership models going forward</p> <p><i>Approvals:</i> The Board agreed direction of travel for the year ahead.</p>
5.3	<p>2024 Calendar and Rules of Racing <i>Summary of Agenda Item:</i> The Board is asked to approve the content of the Rules of Racing for the 2024-25 season & recognise the ongoing work of the NCC & the RoRP.</p> <p><i>Key Discussion Items:</i> MC raised a concern that digital only membership cards might be problematic for individuals without smartphones. The Board noted that there is the option for printed membership cards to be used and whilst very few complaints have been received the use</p>

	<p>of alternative identification methods at events can if needed be in place, albeit digital has been in place for some time and no material issues of note have been reported.</p> <p>There was a discussion about if it was practical to of create a formal welfare officer role for events and if this approach was not over burdensome for smaller clubs. It was explained that this has been in place for many years at a local level but that this year it has been formalised in the Rules to give it due prominence alongside other areas such as Safety and this was not overburdensome and being done already.</p> <p>KOS also noted that it would be good to see all Beach Sprints competitions on the annual calendar in the future. Other future changes to the calendar were also discussed and NH assured the board that the calendar would be up dated every 12 months to reflect those.</p> <p><i>Approvals:</i> The Board approved the content of the Rules of Racing for the 2024-25 season & recognised the ongoing work of the NCC & the RoRP.</p>
5.4	<p>AB Severn Affiliation <i>Summary of Agenda Item:</i> CC presented the paper, taking the paper as read.</p> <p>Issues with the club and its compliance to British Rowing’s affiliation requirements have previously been discussed. An action plan has been put in place for the club to address them. Subsequently they have responded well to the plan and significant improvements have been made. Although it must be noted that several requirements are still only provisionally met so there is further work to be done.</p> <p>The Board was asked to approve for AB Severn to remain as a British Rowing Affiliated Club as a result.</p> <p><i>Key Discussion Items:</i> NH asked if there was a plan to put a monitoring period in. AM explained that British Rowing would continue working with them for the next few months. MC asked whether any action was being taken to learn from this issue and to ensure that in future a club seeking affiliation is subject to suitable checks that they meet the necessary requirements.</p> <p>AM advised that a review of how the affiliation process is managed is underway and that ways of affiliating such a large number of clubs consistently to the required level are being explored.</p> <p><i>Approvals:</i> The Board approved the recommendation for AB Severn to continue to be affiliated to British Rowing acknowledging the progress they had made in meeting BR requirements.</p>
5.5	<p>Other Affiliations <i>Summary of Agenda Item:</i> The Board is required by the Articles to approve Affiliations and Resignations.</p> <p><i>Key Discussion Points:</i></p>

	<p>MC questioned whether or not the use of the term ‘Amateur’ was still appropriate for a newly named club. The Exec stated that they would try and steer future clubs away from the word ‘Amateur’ in any future names.</p> <p>The Board noted the following: Resignations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HSBC - Whitgift School Boat Club <p><i>Approvals:</i> The following were approved:</p> <p>Club Affiliations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brentford Boat Club - Brentford Masters Boat Club - Royal Dolphins Rowing Club <p>Competition Affiliations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White Rose Head <p>Name Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oxford Academicals Rowing Club, to become Oxford Amateur Rowing Club - Exeter Boat Club to become University of Exeter Boat Club - Evesham Autumn Head (WM) – formerly Evesham Junior Head - Evesham Winter Head (WM) – formerly Avon Masters and Evesham Autumn
5.6	<p>Safeguarding Committee TOR <i>Summary of Agenda Item:</i> This paper was for the Board to approve the new Safeguarding Committee TOR and for the Board to receive a regular update of Safeguarding within the sport.</p> <p><i>Key Discussion Items:</i> The terms of reference for the Safeguarding Committee were discussed and approved, with changes made to clarify the role of the Chair and the membership of the committee. MC firmly recommended that protocols for sharing information with the other home nations on safeguarding matters should be put in place.</p> <p>More widely there was a discussion as to how information could be shared more widely to surface concerns across the sport whilst ensuring confidentiality.</p> <p>AM explained the simplest way to manage this would be through a CRM system with a single view of the customer and a red flag system put in place for individuals who might have causes for concern against their names.</p> <p><i>Approvals:</i> The Board approved the Safeguarding Committee TORs</p>
5.7	<p>Home Nations Nominated Director <i>Summary of Agenda Item:</i> This paper was for the Board to approve Welsh Rowing’s Nomination for the Home Nations Nominated Director.</p>

	<p><i>Key Discussion Items:</i></p> <p>The Board discussed the appointment of the new member and the potential conflicts of interest, particularly regarding their role on the Board of Welsh Rowing.</p> <p>MC raised several points around the ongoing inclusion and representation of the Home Nations Director on Committees and highlighted the skills and expertise required for the Committees on which they would sit as stated in the current terms of reference (for those Committees). However, the Board agreed the Committee Structures and members would be reviewed through the Governance Review work which is being undertaken and were not part of this decision.</p> <p>The Board discussed the appointment of the new member and the potential conflicts of interest, particularly regarding their role on the Board of Welsh Rowing.</p> <p>TK expressed her reservations regarding the financial skills of the nominee in the context of their role as a member of the Finance Committee.</p> <p>MC drew attention to the fact that there was a valid historical reason relating to the fact that Wales and Scotland each used to have a seat on the Board and when the role was combined the seats on the FC and the ARC were established in lieu and this should not be disregarded when considering the composition of the FC. The Board acknowledged that the Committee Structures were being reviewed as part of the overall Governance Review.</p> <p><i>Approvals:</i></p> <p>The Board approved Welsh Rowing’s Nomination for the Home Nations Nominated Director.</p>
8	<p>AOB</p> <p>There was no official AOB.</p> <p>The Board congratulated James Lee and the team involved for a successful BRIC event.</p> <p>KOS thanked Martin for all his hard work and contribution on the Board and Finance Committee over his time as Nominated Director at British Rowing. His last meeting was this meeting.</p> <p>The Board congratulated KOS on her Sports Personality of the Year NW Volunteer Award.</p> <p>KOS wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New.</p>