



**Minutes of Executive Board Meeting at 9am on 21 November 2020
via Teams**

Directors Present	Titles
Adam Walker [AW]	Chair (Independent)
Brendan Fogarty [BF]	Director
Clare Francis [CF]	Vice Chair (Independent)
Freda Bussey [FB]	Director
Ian Wall [IW]	Director (Independent)
Jefferson Williams [JW]	Director
Richard Harrison [RH]	Director
Seyram Atubra [SA]	Director
Simon Griffiths [SG]	Director
Staff Present	
Sue Storey [SS]	Chief Executive
Samantha Jamieson [SJ]	Deputy Chief Executive
Rob Payne [RP]	Core Market Coordinator
In attendance	
Janet Inman [JI] (for part of meeting)	Volleyball England Foundation
Simone Turner [ST] (for part of meeting)	Volleyball England Foundation
Kate Ball [KB]	BDO
Agata Sromecka [AS]	Minute taking

EB/20-21/89 Welcome by Chair

Chair welcomed all present including KB from BDO and RP.

KB introduced herself to the Board and reported she would observe the Board meeting on behalf of Sport England. RP was also observing the Board meeting as part of his continuous professional development.

89.1 Governance review of VE

KB noted that Volleyball England are due a finance and governance assurance review by BDO on behalf of Sport England. CF offered to share the VE policies ongoing internal review with KB.

SS and AW confirmed they welcomed and supported the review.

KB encouraged all to utilise her as a resource to improve the organisation.

Action:

EB/20-21/89 CF to send the list of policies KB.

89.1 Apologies

Apologies were submitted by Andres Hernandez.

89.2 Director Conflict of Interest Disclosures

No declarations of interest were submitted.

89.3 Approval of the Agenda

Agenda was approved by all.

89.4 Previous Minutes

89.4.1 Confirmation

AW asked all to submit comments on the Annual General Meeting 2020 minutes to SJ by the end of the following week. These would be published at the next AGM in the ordinary course.

The minutes of 24 September 2020 Board meeting were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. SJ would send the minutes to AW and AW would sign them off virtually.

89.4.2 Matters Arising/Action List

Matters arising were discussed and the status is noted below. No actions were to be carried forward.

Actions	Status
83.3 (New government salary scheme)	Complete and implemented
83.3.1 (Reduction in the length of camps)	Complete
83.3.2 (NVL)	Complete – NVL was ultimately cancelled for the 2020/21 season due to the impact of the pandemic
83.3.3 (Junior Comps)	Complete - the CWG reported to a special meeting of the board convened on November 2 nd , 2020 [decision to cancel all junior events for 2020/21 season was taken].
84 - (CEV presidential election)	Complete – the Presidential election is now complete and Aleksander Boričić was appointed for another four-year term.
85.1 – (Registration fee for non-member)	Complete - this has been implemented.

players)	
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Action:

89.4.1. All to submit comments on the Annual General Meeting 2020 minutes to SJ by the end of the following week.

EB/20-21/90 Executive Update

90.1 Covid-19 Update

Following the announcement of the second lock down, VE HUB staff continued to work from home. All staff except SS, SJ and Stewart Thorpe had been furloughed part time with all staff in work two days per week and full office closure in place on Fridays. This would be in place until at least 2 December 2020 pending further decisions from the government.

Since the furlough scheme had been extended until March 2021, a meeting was going to be held the following week to discuss next steps in terms of staffing. The future of the organisation was secure until the end of this financial year. However, SS commented that the income from the furlough scheme was to help secure the long-term existence of the organisation.

90.2 Return to Play.

Following the announcement of the second lockdown, the season 2020/21 had been officially cancelled. Following this, DCMS had encouraged indoor sports to submit a proposal of what they felt would work in relation to how the respective sports could be facilitated depending on the tier. The Return to Play group had met and created a submission. This had been sent off to DCMS.

The Return to Play group had also considered and submitted a Return to Sitting Volleyball Plan to DCMS and are awaiting the outcome of the discussions.

VE and other sports had been in discussions with Sport England this week. Sport England had reported on their discussions with DCMS and the constant changing situation in relation to sport. Currently there are concerns about risk of transmission across indoor sports. Sport England, VE and other sport continue to push for measures to support community sports.

SS also informed that the winter package from SE would not be available to VE. CF added that the Winter package was a loan rather than a grant in any event.

SS confirmed that member registrations remain open but were considerably lower in comparison to last year. RP reported that to boost numbers of registrations discussions had been held and a new membership package had been considered, which could include:

- adding strength and conditioning coaching programme including a series of videos that people could do from home.
- supporting coaches to work with clubs and athletes to keep people interested in returning to volleyball.
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Board discussed:

- on FB's question, RP confirmed that the paying members would have access to the additional products for the membership.
- SG asked what frequency the new high-quality content could be produced at as part of boosted membership package and how sustainable this approach would be going forward. SS responded that this was sustainable in terms of the contents production. RP added that this had a potential to hold great added value to the membership, also this would be reviewed after lockdown to see if there is value in continuing,
- SA noted that both the offer and long-term expectations had to be carefully managed.
- SG supported this approach and agreed that this was a great way forward, but it was also a considerable undertaking in terms of high-quality contents production and the frequency of its release.

90.3 Commonwealth Games 2022 Birmingham.

CF reported:

- four working groups were up and running.
- due to Covid-19 related restrictions, the National Technical Official training event had been postponed until the New Year.
- recruitment for CWG 2022 Beach Volleyball Competition Manager was now complete and would be reported on in due course.

90.4 BVF

SS reported that VE were awaiting information regarding £2m funding to support beach and sitting volleyball. The outcome would be due to be released mid - December. Should VE receive this, this would entail considerable work to support BVF performance development structure. UK Sport enquired about the governance and staffing structure of BVF that would support management of this funding. As a follow up, more work would be carried out by BVF to reassure UKS.

90.5 VE kit

AW and SS met with several kit suppliers and had made a decision. AW and SS would be meeting with the chosen supplier to discuss the contract the following week. Both AW and SS were confident that the chosen kit would raise the sport's profile.

90.6 Communications

Stewart Thorpe continues to positively engage the volleyball community in the communication, most recently with initiatives such as 'Volley Chat' and a coach webinar.

SG asked whether there would be any available funds for the website innovation. This would be discussed later in the agenda.

90.7 Staffing

SS reported that Erin Pruett had left VE since the last Board meeting. No recruitment was planned for the foreseeable future due to Covid-19. However, consideration was being given to the introduction of a contractor to take on some

consultancy work to help set up a framework to support data collection and insight generation processes.

90.8 VolleyZone/4 Global

The VolleyZone platform was in its final stages of development but challenges were still being faced in terms of meeting deadlines by the developer. The original deadline was March 2019 and work is ongoing on original features. VE would continue to work with 4 Global to try and improve the system.

Board discussed:

- CF commented on the challenges of work with 4 Global and questioned the merit in continuing to work with them. Also, the contractual terms should be investigated which could impact further work. This should be discussed when considering innovation in terms of communication and digital transformation.
- SA asked whether the impact of this partnership and learnings re this work had been captured. SS confirmed that challenges had been recorded. CF echoed this and noted that learning should be built into future projects around the digital transformation.

90.9 Safeguarding

The court date for the ongoing safeguarding case had been moved to January due to Covid-19. SS confirmed this case remain confidential and the previous briefing document still stood should any board members be approached about the case. One new safeguarding case had been recorded and was being dealt with.

90.10 Risk management

This work was ongoing.

Action:

90.10 SS and SJ to review and update the Risk Register.

90.11 Complaints

SS reported that one complaint related to junior competitions and player eligibility was being investigated. A meeting was held to investigate the process for dealing with this complaint as the scope extended beyond the Competitions Working Group who would normally deal with such issues. SS is continuing to liaise with the CWG, and a suitable process has been developed. AW reported that AW and CF were being supportive of the SMT team in this process.

90.12 Strategy

SS reported that work continued re the Strategy. A meeting with managers and the team had been held in relation to the implementation plan. Another similar meeting would be held in December. Following this, the team's input would be fed back to the Strategy working group.

AW thanked SS and SJ for their work on the Strategy considering the wider context as well as for the continuing focus on the mental health and wellbeing of all staff. SS was pleased to confirm that all staff were doing well, and the team spirit was strong.

EB/20-21/91 Finance Update

91.1 Q2 Management accounts & forecast to year end.

SJ reported that the accounts circulated as part of the Board pack had been prepared by Kevin Fletcher (KF). KF had also provided a forecast and guidance tab on the accounts as part of submission.

The key highlights were:

- SJ drew the Board's attention to the bank balance.
- re-profiled SE funding was available to be used and was included in the bank balance.
- furlough scheme funding was included in the figures.
- the figures were in line with the current context and expectations.

Board discussed:

- IW queried the variance between business costs and income. SJ answered that this was due to a drop in membership income. SS added that savings generated by furlough had not yet been added to the balance. IW added that the balance was positive considering the current situation.
- SG asked how long the organisation was likely to survive if the lockdown was to continue long-term. SJ responded that a situation was continually monitored in relation to securing the future of the organisation without compromising the progress that had been made in terms of the Strategy.
- AW noted that the frugal approach of the SMT had resulted in the current healthy financial position of the organisation in the context of Covid-19. Board echoed this.
- CF added that despite the challenges, initiative and maintaining momentum were vital to keeping the sport alive and keeping the community on this journey.
- SS noted that she was confident that the organisation would continue this positive course until the end of the current financial year. Beyond the end of the financial year and looking towards next season, SS confirmed there would be significant challenges if the country was still in lockdown and volleyball had not resumed to the pre-pandemic levels.
- CF requested clarification on whether income from the NVL had been included in the renewed forecast – SJ to respond.
- CF queried whether it was possible for KB to share how other sports deal with the current circumstances that might be a helpful approach to be adopted by VE. KB would share as part of their ongoing review.
- AW reported that the finance committee was functioning well and KF was an asset to the organisation.

Action:

91.10 SJ to respond to CF on NVL income included in the financial forecast.

EB/20-21/92 Innovation

AW observed that the current context could potentially present the opportunity to commit resources to innovation. Over the foreseeable future, it would be helpful to consider areas where the organisation could innovate.

Board discussed:

- SG asked how we could set a framework to allow ideas for innovation

especially from those members of the community who had not been engaged so far? Innovation work was part of the VE Strategy.

- AW noted that it would be important to be brave, open, and experimental in terms of ideas for innovation.
- SG wondered whether we should encourage the community to come forward with ideas for innovation with a working group to be set up to manage this process.
- SS reported that a discussion had been held within the team around the idea for an open campaign around a specific area of innovation, rather than generally, and shaping it into an event such as an innovation webinar.
- SG added that it was important that innovation solved a real problem and was not taking place just for the sake of it. It also needed to fit within the Strategy.
- FB added it was important to explore ideas around people playing volleyball such as playing outdoors all year round. The existing expertise within the community to facilitate the potential new offer should be called upon.
- RH observed that practical considerations and approach were important such as what the value we want to create through the innovative thinking was, would it fit within the Strategy, how much time the innovation would take to be implemented and what would be the cost of the implementation.

Board was in support of innovation subject to it being supportive of strategic aims and being structured. Board would meet and discuss what “the exam question” should be and how the debate could be structured. SS and SJ would find a suitable date for this meeting before Christmas.

Action:

EB/20-21/92 – SS and SJ to organise a Board get-together to discuss ideas for innovation.

EB/20-21/93 Sport England (SE) Strategy Consultation

SS reported that Sport England were in the latter stages of consultation ahead of the release of their new 10-year strategy. It should be published in January 2021. The Strategy priorities were:

- recover and reinvent the sector and all activity.
- healthy life revolved around strengthening connection between sport and activity, and health sector.
- positive experiences for children and young people – recognising that activity presented several benefits for children and young people that help them thrive in the future.
- stronger communities – new priority, focused on the role of sport and activity in communities and its role in social integration.
- active environments being places that enable activity.

SS reported on the feedback from the sports community re the SE Strategy:

- clearer reflection of the role and position of sport in this strategy was needed.
- more clarity was required on the connection between physical activity and sport.

Board discussed.

EB/20-21/94 Volleyball England Foundation (ST and JI joined meeting)

AW welcomed ST and JI to the meeting. AW highlighted the Board's keenness to have a successful partnership with the Foundation. ST introduced herself and briefed the Board on the structure and main areas of operation of the Foundation:

- ST presented a fundraising and income generation model of the foundation which included raising funds through annual events, legacy/major gifts, grants distribution and working with trusts, corporate and trading, partnerships, in-kind donations, individual donations.
- work on ensuring growth and sustainability of the Foundation was ongoing.
- all Foundation's activities would be planned to align with VE strategic goals.
- volunteer management was an immediate priority of the organisation.

JI briefed the Board on the Foundation's latest activities:

- website was experiencing a good traffic from all over the world with a good following of the social media.
- the organisation had 3 regular donors with a good number of one-off contributors.
- two grants were open to applications.
- JI encouraged all to nominate VF for a £1k grant from Ecclesiastical.
- an auction was up and running and could raise up to £1k with 18 items up for grabs.
- a donation from Amazon Smile had been received.
- VF would feature on Easy Fundraising in due course.
- bigger funding pots would be applied for in the foreseeable future e.g., Tackling Inequalities Fund from Sport England
- the Foundation had been supporting clubs in applying for funding.
- other sports encouraged their donors to support the Foundation.
- open Board recruitment would be held in the New Year.
- sitting volleyball application had opened with 6 clubs asking for the application.

Board discussed:

- BF asked about ideas around the fundraising event. ST answered that there had been a few ideas, but no decision had been made yet. BF suggested a replacement for an outdoor tournament but not beach.

- SG observed that VE could run a fundraiser for VF.
- SG noted that the communications approach of the Foundation could be rethought and advocated to increase the focus of the contents on the Foundation. ST answered that as the Foundation grows, there naturally would be more home-grown contents.

AW thanked ST and JI for their update and invited both to join Board meeting again in the New Year. SS and SJ to plan. (ST and JI left the meeting).

Action:

EB/20-21/94 SS and SJ to invite ST and JI to a meeting in 2021.

EB/20-21/95 AOB

95.1 Website

SS reported that the use and maintenance of VolleyZone required consideration. VE could call upon help from Seven League when scoping how to replace the website and possibly VolleyZone.

Board discussed and agreed that a business case around website transformation should be put forward. Proposal would be put forward to January Board meeting and linked to the budget discussion.

Action:

95.1 SS to prepare a business case (scoping) around next steps regarding digital infrastructure transformation for the January Board meeting.

95.2 Volley 2

SG proposed that Volley 2 was given as a freebie to exiting members as part of the membership package.

Board discussed:

- CF – if Volley 2 were to be given away for free, this would impact the budget.
- SG – hub resource would be required to manage the product.
- SA – this should be a part of the wider product management discussion as opposed to launching products in isolation.
- IW – this could be offered at a discount but should play part in income generation.
- AW – this could form a part of budget planning discussion.

AW, SS and SJ would consider a decision-making process proposal to be considered at the January 2021 Board meeting.

Action:

95.2 AW, SS and SJ would consider a decision-making process proposal to be considered at the January 2021 Board meeting.

95.3 Coach education

RH briefed the Board on the work around transforming coach education, aligning it to the professional standards in coaching and providing availability of blended learning. The costs of UK coaching who provide online learning platform had increased. In

connection to this RH would provide a Board report including number of costing scenarios.

Action:

95.3 RH would prepare a Board paper for January 2021 meeting around coach education. KF and SS to be involved in financial planning.

EB/20/21/96 Meeting Finalisation

AW thanked KB, Board Members and RP for joining the meeting.

ACTIONS:

Actions	Who
EB/20-21/89 CF to send list of policies in scope to KB.	CF
89.4.1. All to submit comments on the Annual General Meeting 2020 minutes to SJ by the end of the following week.	All
90.10 SS and SJ to update the Risk Register.	SS SJ
91.10 SJ to respond to CF on NVL income included in the financial forecast.	SJ
EB/20-21/92 – SS and SJ to organize a Board get-together to discuss ideas for innovation.	SS SJ
EB/20-21/94 SS and SJ to invite ST and JI to a meeting in 2021.	SS SJ
95.1 SS and ST to prepare a business case (scoping) around next steps regarding digital infrastructure transformation for the January Board meeting.	SS ST
95.2 AW, SS and SJ would consider a decision-making process proposal to be considered at the January 2021 Board meeting.	AW, SS and SJ
95.3 RH would prepare a Board paper for January 2021 meeting around coach education. KF and SS to be involved in financial planning.	RH

Signed:



Adam Walker, Chairman