

Minutes of Executive Board Meeting at 9am on 24 April 2021 via Teams

Directors Present	Titles
Adam Walker [AW]	Chair (Independent)
Brendan Fogarty [BF]	Director
Clare Francis [CF]	Senior Independent Director (Independent)
Freda Bussey [FB]	Director (present for part of meeting)
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
Kevin Fletcher [KF]	Financial Consultant
In attendance	
Simone Turner [ST]	Volleyball England Foundation (present for item 15)
Agata Sromecka [AS]	Minute taking

EB/20-21/11 Welcome by Chair

Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

11.1 Apologies

Andreas Hernandez had submitted apologies prior to the meeting.

11.2 Director Conflict of Interest Disclosures

The following Board Members declared the following interests:

- CF declared she was Pinsent Masons' Partner, and her interest was in relation to Pinsent Masons assisting with the VE policy review.
- AW declared interest in connection to the current business development tender, which his company may decide to bid for, AW confirmed he had removed himself from discussions both at work and with Volleyball England relating to this tender.
- Several Board Members affiliated to clubs were recorded as interested parties in connection to the discussion around membership fees.

11.3 Approval of the Agenda

Agenda was approved by all.

11.4 Previous Minutes

11.4.1 Confirmation

The minutes of 30 January 2021 and 15 March 2021 Board meetings were approved as true and accurate records of the meetings. They would be signed off by AW remotely.

11.4.2 Matters Arising/Action List

Matters arising were discussed and the status is noted below. Those actions noted below were carried forward and will be noted in the actions for this meeting.

Actions	Who
30 January 2021 Board meeting actions	
EB/20-21/94 ST and JI to be invited to the April 2021 Board meeting (Carried forward from January meeting).	Complete
95.1 SS and SJ to prepare a business case (scoping) around next steps regarding digital infrastructure transformation for the April Board meeting (Carried forward from January meeting to an additional Bord meeting).	Outstanding SS SJ
95.2 AW, SS and SJ would consider a decision-making process proposal to be considered at the April 2021 Board meeting (carried forward from January meeting).	Complete
EB/20-21/99 Executive Team to consider how the plan could become a working document that would be reported on, used on a day-to-day basis, and updated regularly. SS, SJ and ST to design internal and external communication around the plan for the April 2021 Board.	Complete
EB/20-21/1 - Executive Team to consider how the implementation plan and budget would be used as a management tool and in reporting and present to Board at the next Board meeting.	Complete – see agenda item EB/20-21/13 below
EB/20-21/4 – Phase 1 and 2 of BDO recommendations to be reviewed at the April Board meeting.	Complete – see agenda item EB/20-21/17 below
EB/20-21/6 - SS to discuss the diversity action plan with CEOs of other NGBs and report back at April board meeting. SS/SJ to identify a team member, RH to progress the review of the diversity action plan, however it is expected that progress will be limited until new SE guidance is published.	Complete Vicki Carr identified as Team Member supporting
EB/20-21/8 – The Risk Register would be reviewed by the FSR group at each of its meetings with a bi-annual review by Board	Implemented and ongoing – action complete for Board purposes.
EB/20-21/9.2 - SS, SJ and ST to consider a response to the Board in terms of offering Volley 2 including pricing and roll-out strategy.	Volley 2 would be launching in May and promotion comms would be

	designed around this event - – action complete for Board purposes
15 March 2021 Board meeting actions	
12.2 Board to discuss consultation with volunteers around the new governance framework.	Ongoing
EB/20-21/13 CF to follow up with SS about the Nominations Committee's Terms of Reference.	Complete – CF provided notes to SS after March meeting

EB/20-21/12 Executive Update

The Executive Report was taken as read.

Board discussed:

- AW noted a typo in the point 6 of the report. SS would correct.
- CF asked to recognise Phil Smith's contribution as Beach Lead programme around beach volleyball.
- RH asked whether diversity of membership had been part of the research referenced in point 9 of the report. SJ reported it had not specifically but had been inherent within the insight work. AW suggested that action plan was reviewed so that diversity would receive a suitable profile in any projects going forward. SS/SJ to progress.
- RH asked about development of coach education product and whether VE would hire a consultant to assist with this work. SS reported that Sport Structures Agency had been brought in to support Gillian with this area of work.
- SG observed that VE should increase its involvement with the CWG Legacy planning group especially in setting up legacy venues. SJ reported that some progress had been made and discussions were being held in relation to this. AW added that he would be keen to join the group to see whether he could assist in any way in progressing this further. AW offered his company's services in obtaining information on available grants. AW suggested that there was an additional standing Board meeting agenda item concerned with CWG. CF as the lead on CWG that noted that any business cases for discussion would be brought to Board as and when necessary. Therefore, we would continue with CWG update in Exec report rather than a separate board item unless specific discussion was required.

Action:

EB/20-21/12 – SS to correct a typo in the report in point 6 (£260k).

SS and SJ to consider diversity as part of action plan on development of insight framework.

EB/20-21/13 Implementation Plan & Management Reporting

As an action from the previous Board meeting, SS and SJ prepared a management reporting tool for Board's approval. If approved, this plan would be implemented in a day-to-day work. SS noted that the front page (first tab) of the Management Reporting Plan spreadsheet acted as a dashboard presenting an overview of actions and their progress against budget/objectives in the form of the RAG rating.

Board discussed:

- SA asked whether the column with objectives in the second tab would include more detail. SJ answered that this was the entire content at the minute. SG continued to ask whether there would be metrics added to KPIs. SJ responded that this would be included later.
- SG asked what the Key Performance questions would look like. SJ reported that they were still being considered.
- AW asked what the timeframe of this plan was. SJ answered that the document was created according to a full strategy period in mind. CF observed that some of the actions in the plan would have a shorter timeframe. SJ answered that some actions might be staggered and take place within different points of that period, some actions are short-term and some long-term. AW suggested that at the end of each year, completed actions should be taken out/archived and the plan revisited. SS and SJ to review how the plan would be refreshed going forward.
- AW commented on actions in progress being difficult to assess/rate in terms of the RAG scale and asked whether there was any way in which they could be scored. SA added that such metric should be added to the overview tab. SJ to investigate this.
- Overall, the board confirmed agreement with the proposed reporting process with the minor amendments listed above.

Action:

EB/20-21/13 - SS and SJ to review and decide how the Implementation Plan & Management Reporting spreadsheet would be refreshed going forward.

SJ to investigate adding the "in progress" metric to the overview tab of the plan.

EB/20-21/14 Finance Update and Budget 2021/22

KF reported on the key highlights in relation to the finance update:

- good progress had been made in terms of the year end and the balance sheet was in a healthy position
- a surplus of £32k against the 2020/21 budget had been recorded. This was due to the savings created by claiming furlough and due to events, that had been impossible to run.
- any SE underspends from year 1 and 2 had been kept on the balance sheet and carried forward to next financial year
- Duncan and Toplis are going to run the audit in May (3-17 May) rather than June due to accounts being ready.

Board discussed:

- FB congratulated the team for achieving this positive financial position. (FB left the meeting at this point).
- IW thanked for the clarity of explanation and commented on the positive financial position of the organisation
- AW asked about the Sport England underspends. KF answered that VE would need to discuss carrying the underspends forward with Sport England and support this request by evidencing solvency of the organisation. KF noted that in view of the positive financial situation of the organisation, he thought that it was highly likely that Sport England would grant this request.

SS noted that the board had previously agreed to use the underspends to fund the digital transformation. KF noted that the accounts could be signed off as early as the end of June subject to a well processed audit.

- CF asked KF to pass thanks onto Adam Freundlich for his input into this work.

EB/20-21/15 Volleyball England Foundation

ST joined the meeting. Board members and attendees introduced themselves to ST. ST updated the Board on the key developments related to the VE Foundation:

- funding model had been developed (legacy, individual giving, grants, fundraising events)
- infrastructure was in place but continued to be refined
- volunteer base was being developed including via a Board leadership training programme "Step into my shoes"
- volunteer opportunities for students were being developed
- strategic alignment with VE was key for the Foundation and was being actively planned for.
- ST encouraged board members to get involved in the work of the Foundation and provide feedback on its work.
- IW added that newly recruited Board members were being inducted into the organisation
- IW added that the second round of sitting volleyball applications was being put out and encouraged Board Members to promote this among clubs.

Board discussed:

- BF noted that the partnership with Aston Villa could tie in with CWG. CF would follow up with ST around CWG.
- CF noted that board members participation in the "5km for £5" initiative could be a great way of promoting VE Board's support for the Foundation.

AW thanked ST for updating board members on the developments in the Foundation. AW confirmed he was happy to attend the Foundation's Board as and when needed, and to discuss the strategic alignment. ST left the meeting.

Actions:

EB/20-21/15 Volleyball England Foundation CF to follow up with ST around CWG.

AW to attend the VEF board meeting at the relevant point to discuss strategic alignment

EB/20-21/16 Membership Fees

SJ referred the Board to the paper on the membership fees included in the board pack. SMT's recommendation to the Board was as per Option 1:

- to freeze membership fees for 2021/22 (as per the budget figures in March 2021)
- to launch membership early on 1 May 2021

Board discussed and agreed this recommendation. Board also agreed that the fees would be reviewed annually and would be included in the longer-term budget forecasting going forward.

EB/20-21/17 Governance & Finance Assurance – Action Plan

CF reported on the key highlights related to the BDO's audit of VE:

- the audit had consisted of a governance review and a finance review
- the review included interviews with all board members

Board discussed:

- AW congratulated CF and the staff team involved in this work, and board members for their input during individual consultations, which all had contributed to a successful conclusion of both reviews.
- SS/SJ to report back to the board on progress against the action plan.

EB/20-21/18 Diversity and Inclusion

Firstly, RH advised that the two final elements of the Strategy in terms of diversity were the stakeholder survey and the staff satisfaction survey. Originally, they had been diaries for March. Feedback from both surveys would inform any action plans for improvement.

Further, new guidance regarding the use of word BAME had been emerging. RH had sent links to two guides (government and Sporting Equals) referencing the use of terminology referencing racial and ethnic minorities to SJ so that the comms team could start thinking about developing a style guide within VE community. Lastly, several Board members were reaching the end of their four-year term so diversity should be considered as part of succession planning. Board was compliant with current Sport England diversity and inclusion requirements and any potential changes in the VE Board structure was likely impact on the diversity of the board.

Board discussed:

- Board agreed that the stakeholder survey would be conducted in the next 12 months, but it would be informed by the requirements of the new guidance to be soon released by Sport England.
- AW asked whether training on the use of new terminology around racial and ethnic minority groups was required for the Board. RH would send links to two documents for Board members to access and peruse. Following that, a decision could be taken about next steps.
- In relation to Board succession, CF reported that this would be picked up in the work currently being undertaken by the Nominations Committee. The findings of the skills matrix survey sent by CF would inform the next Nominations Committee meeting which would be looking into the general makeup of the Board and Board Member terms taking into consideration diversity.

Actions:

EB/20-21/18 RH would send links to two documents for Board members to access and peruse.

EB/20-21/19 Volleyball England Policies

CF reported on the progress in relation to the review of several VE policies, which had been included in the board pack for Board's approval. Board was invited to approve them. Once approved, they would be placed on the website.

Board approved all policies and the implementation of them.

Further, as part of the policy review, the working group had identified that the disciplinary committee's Terms of Reference determined that two Board members

would be required to become part of this committee as the standing members. Board members were asked to appoint two Board members onto the Disciplinary Committee. AW and BF were appointed standing members of the Disciplinary Committee. Other Board Members/expertise would be co-opted as and when needed.

AW thanked all involved, including colleagues from Pinsent Masons for this piece of work.

EB/20-21/20 Management Reporting (linked to standing agenda)

As discussed earlier in the meeting.

EB/20-21/21 Future Governance Structure

AW and CF had discussed how the Board could continue to improve moving forward to create the very highest performing board among NGBs. The plan would be to hold individual conversations with Board members around their perception on the performance of the board, how they were contributing on the individual and collective basis, how effective the chairmanship of the board was, how effective board papers and the content were as well as board meeting discussions. Board members were encouraged to provide feedback ahead of the commencement of this piece of work. Board agreed to move ahead with this piece of work.

The skills matrix would help to identify whether there was a skill gap that needed to be addressed via Board member recruitment which would help to implement the Game Plan. Nominations Committee would support and drive this forward.

SS added that Delivery Leads would require considering in relation to terms of office prior to the AGM.

Actions:

EB/20-21/21 In relation to Board Member's terms of office, AW and CF would have individual conversations with the individuals who would be coming to the end of their terms about their future aspirations. AW and CF would be contacting those Board members.

EB/21-22/22 AOB

The following points were discussed as part of AOB:

- SJ reported that the Board had previously agreed via email (outside of a formal meeting) for the contract with NVC to be renegotiated without going out to tender. This decision was recorded for the minutes.
- The last time Staff survey had been conducted was in 2019, as an outcome of the BDO report, the findings were reported to the board. AW asked about the value of conducting the survey in the group of 14 staff and whether there was any other way to obtain meaningful feedback from staff around organisational improvement. SJ confirmed that in addition to the survey, focused conversations were being held on a regular basis in the form of monthly one-to-one meetings. CF added that the survey was a requirement of the Code for Sport Governance. AW asked the SMT to investigate other ways of obtaining staff feedback next time the survey would be planned for.

Future Board dates were approved by the Board and the Board approved the

blended approach to holding meetings: face-to-face and virtual meetings. Board agreed the “ad hoc” additional Board meetings. The numbering of agenda items would be kept consistent across all meetings. Board also discussed whether AGM could be held virtually, however CF confirmed (absent any post Covid legislative changes) this would require a change to the Articles of Association which can only be changed at an AGM. CF advised that the membership would need to agree this during a face-to-face meeting. To be considered further. It was agreed this year’s AGM would be held face to face as this was the only current legal basis, should the law change again, a virtual AGM may be considered.

**Action:
EB/21-22/22 AOB**

SMT to investigate other ways of obtaining staff feedback next time the survey would be planned for.

It was agreed to consider proposing a change to the articles at the AGM to allow virtual AGMs in the future.

Actions	Who
EB/20-21/12 – SS to correct a typo in the report in point 6 (£260k). SS and SJ to consider diversity as part of action plan.	SS
EB/20-21/13 - SS and SJ to review and decide how the Implementation Plan & Management Reporting spreadsheet would be refreshed going forward. SJ to discuss with Damian adding the “in progress” metric to the overview tab of the plan.	SS SJ SJ
EB/20-21/15 Volleyball England Foundation CF to follow up with ST around CWG.	CF
EB/20-21/16 Membership Fees Board agreed to freeze membership fees for this financial year and launch membership on 1 May 2021. Board also agreed that the fees would be reviewed annually and would be included in the budget forecasting going forward.	SS
EB/20-21/18 RH would send links to two documents for Board members to access and peruse.	RH
EB/20-21/21 In relation to Board Member’s terms of office, AW would have individual conversations with the individuals who would be coming to the end of their terms about their future aspirations. AW would be consulted as well. AW and CF would be contacting those Board members.	AW CF

<p>EB/21-22/22 AOB</p> <p>SMT to investigate other ways of obtaining staff feedback next time the survey would be planned for.</p> <p>AGM would be considered further in terms of whether to change the Articles to allow running the AGM virtually in the future</p>	<p>SS SJ</p>
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Adam Walker, Independent Chair

