



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board meeting held remotely via the Zoom video conference application at 10:30 on Wednesday, 6 December 2023.

PRESENT**Board**

Joy Carter (Chair) (JC)
 Yawar Abbas (YA)
 Richard Cannock (RC)
 Mark Jeffreys (MJ)
 Heidi Leseur (HL)
 Andrew Light (AL)
 Nick Murrills (NM)
 Wendy Newlove (WN)
 Mayuri Nigam (MN)
 Andrew Steele (AS)
 Mark Williams (CEO) (MW)

Also present

Neil Edgar (Finance Director) (NE)
 Steve Jones (Minutes) (SJ)
 Paul Makinen (Head of Digital & Insight) (PM)
 Jo Rowbottom (Head of Partnerships & Communities) (JR)

MINUTES REF.	ITEM	ACTION
M01ESB(2304)	<p>1. Chair's Welcome</p> <p>JC welcomed all to the meeting and congratulated YA and HL on their re-election by Council members to serve further terms on the Board.</p>	
M02ESB(2304)	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Board member Eamonn O'Rourke.</p>	
M03ESB(2304)	<p>Declarations of Interests</p> <p>There were no interests declared.</p>	
M04ESB(2304)	<p>Minutes of the Board Meeting 19/09/23</p> <p>The minutes were taken as read and were agreed to be a true and correct record.</p>	
M05ESB(2304)	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>M16ESB(2303) – There was discussion of insurance, and it was noted that the increase in premium cost paid by England Squash for 2023/24 was reflective of the current insurance landscape as a whole as well as the claims history following 2022/23 claims. England Squash decided to renew with Marsh Sport, formerly known as Bluefin Sport.</p>	

M06ESB(2304)	M28ESB(2303) – The promotion of optimal squash ball usage was discussed and the notion that changes should start at home. It was agreed that the Executive would report back on the subject at the next Board meeting.	MW
M07ESB(2304)	<p>CEO Report</p> <p>MW updated the Board on a number of topics including notably the following.</p> <p><i>Olympic Games</i></p> <p>As noted in the paper written ahead of the meeting, the response to the news of Los Angeles 2028 had been hugely positive and there had been some excellent publicity. England Squash have been working closely with Scottish Squash and Squash Wales to understand the implications and opportunities around the requirement for Olympic athletes to compete together as part of Team GB. Communication with UK Sport has also begun.</p>	
M08ESB(2304)	<p><i>Commonwealth Games</i></p> <p>It was reported that Victoria had pulled out as host for the Games, and Perth and Gold Coast had withdrawn their interest. MW will report back to the Board with further news as and when it is available.</p>	MW
M09ESB(2304)	<p><i>Membership & Club Affiliation</i></p> <p>Joey Barrington, who joined the England Squash team around the time of the September Board meeting, had been doing excellent work on progressing the Membership benefits packages.</p>	
M10ESB(2304)	<p><i>Participation</i></p> <p>There had been the great news that a £75k funding application had been successful. The money is to be used for the construction of outdoor squash courts at five sites in Birmingham. Well done to JR and the team for this success.</p>	
M11ESB(2304)	<p><i>Competitions</i></p> <p>Entry numbers for recent competitions had been positive compared to the equivalents in previous years. Likewise the number of squash players in the rankings list was up by more than 500 compared to 2022.</p>	
M12ESB(2304)	<p><i>Staffing</i></p> <p>It was noted that England Squash is looking to bring in more resources in the coming months, to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding, Culture and Wellbeing Manager • Content Manager • Finance Assistant (given that the agreement with Jockey Club Services for finance will be discontinued) <p>There is also the intention to change the Community Engagement Manager role of Asma Ajaz-Ali to a permanent one due to Asma’s success in the role and impact in the West Midlands.</p>	
M13ESB(2304)	The Board is keen to see the financial implication of the proposed roles once the Remuneration Committee has reviewed them.	MW

M14ESB(2304)	<p>2. Olympic Games</p> <p>MW introduced this item and summarised the paper written ahead of the meeting.</p>	
M15ESB(2304)	<p>The paper requested approval from the Board for England Squash to work closely with the Wales and Scotland National Governing Bodies to form a UK-wide squash organisation to comply with UK Sport requirements. A request was also made for England Squash to sign an MOU outlining our shared intent to work together. The requests were both approved by the Board.</p>	MW
M16ESB(2304)	<p>3. Inclusion & Diversity</p> <p>JR introduced this item. The paper written ahead of the meeting had a request in relation to the Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), which was for a decision on one of the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option A: Approve the DIAP with no amendments • Option B: Approve the DIAP with recommended additions/modifications • Option C: Defer approval until early 2024, allowing for significant amendments and additional areas to be sufficiently covered in the DIAP 	
M17ESB(2304)	<p>Following discussion, the Board gave direction towards Option B, i.e. approval of the DIAP but with the following additions/modifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The addition of KPIs ➤ A greater link to the strategic vision and pillars ➤ Consider whether there is sufficient emphasis on the ‘why’, i.e. the motivation to want to diversity 	JR
M18ESB(2304)	<p>4. Membership and Affiliation</p> <p>PM introduced this item and noted that there can be considered three main areas of work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Benefits package 2. Digital platform 3. Branding 	
M19ESB(2304)	<p>There followed some discussion of the timeline, specifically the date that the new scheme will go live. It was agreed that an exact date can’t yet be communicated to the squash community because of unknowns such as when the digital platform can be ready. It was noted however that aspects of the forthcoming benefits package can continue to be shared to keep the communications continuous and regular.</p>	PM
M20ESB(2304)	<p>5. Young People – Increasing Participation</p> <p>JR introduced this item. As per the Board paper, there was a request for direction from the Board in terms of Option A or Option B as follows, with the Executive recommending Option B.</p> <p>There was discussion about whether England Squash should prioritise a ‘broad’ value proposition or develop different propositions for specific ‘target audiences’ based on the Young People Strategy. For either option, specific campaigns and programmes would be created, or products based on the selected approach.</p>	

<p>M21ESB(2304)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option A - Develop a broad value proposition that alludes to the versatility of the sport • Option B - Identify and define specific audiences for which to develop different value propositions, campaigns and products <p>Following discussion, there was consensus from the Board that Option B should be pursued. The work by JR and the team to date was commended. There was a reminder for the benefit of all that <i>young people</i> is a 'golden thread' of England Squash and as such it is essential to talk about it as much as possible.</p>	<p>JR</p>
<p>M22ESB(2304)</p>	<p>6. UK Code for Sports Governance</p> <p>MW introduced this item, and it was noted that there are three tiers to the new Code, and England Squash is required to meet the demands of Tier 3 (the most comprehensive).</p>	
<p>M23ESB(2304)</p>	<p>England Squash is 'partially compliant' with the new Code (as are many other NGBs) and have until the end of March 2024 to achieve full compliance, having received a list of required actions from Sport England in October 2023.</p>	
<p>M24ESB(2304)</p>	<p>The Board was then asked to approve the following draft documents, which had been shared before the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Board Self-evaluation Policy</i> <p>It was agreed that appraisals of the performance of individual Directors will be documented in writing and be retained on file by England Squash.</p> <p>It is also important for the Chair to be appraised. The process for this would be that the Vice Chair/Senior Independent Director will meet with the other Directors, usually in a pre-Board meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Board Welfare Lead Role description</i> <p>The document should also outline a process to deal with a potential welfare and safety issue involving the CEO, other senior member of staff or Board member.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continuity and Succession Plan</i> <p>The document sets out how England Squash will continue to operate during an unplanned disruption in service, but it should also give guidance on how the plan can be tested. (I.e add a testing protocol) .</p> <p>As part of the scenario in section 2.4 (or perhaps as a separate section), an incident involving England Squash staff or a director should also be documented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Factors affecting Board decision-making</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Approved • <i>Proposed update to Board Skills Matrix</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Approved • <i>Stakeholder Engagement Strategy</i> 	<p>MW</p> <p>MW</p> <p>MW</p> <p>MW</p> <p>MW</p> <p>MW</p>

