

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of the Board meeting hosted on the Zoom video conference application at 10:30 on Thursday, 10 June 2021.

PRESENT**Board**

Joy Carter (Chair) (JC)
 Yawar Abbas (YA)
 Kate Bedwell (KB)
 Nick Donald (ND)
 Mark Jeffreys (MJ)
 Heidi Leseur (HL)
 Andrew Light (AL)
 Nick Murrills (NM)
 Wendy Newlove (WN)
 Eamonn O'Rourke (EO)
 Vickie Prow (VP)
 Mark Williams (MW)

Also present

Paul Barrett (Director of Membership & Customer Experience) (PB)
 Neil Edgar (Finance Director) (NE)
 Louise Pickford (Performance Operations Manager, Minute Taker) (LP)
 Andy Pilling (Competitions Manager) (AP)
 Jo Rowbottom (Partnerships & Communities Manager) (JR)
 Paul Walters (Strategic Lead for Competitions & Events and Commercial) (PW)

MINUTES REF.	ITEM	ACTION
M01ESB(2102)	1. Chair's Welcome JC welcomed all to the meeting.	
M02ESB(2102)	Apologies for Absence There were no apologies.	
M03ESB(2102)	Declarations of Interests ND informed the Board of a conflict of interest.	
M04ESB(2102)	Minutes of the Board Meeting on 09/03/2021 The minutes were taken as read and were agreed to be a true and correct record.	
M05ESB(2102)	Matters Arising M13ESB(2101) – It was agreed that MW would check on the progress of the naming of the Women's Senior ICC trophy in Alison Henley's name. M18ESB(2101) – It was agreed that contacting Rackets Cubed should be a priority to further develop the existing relationship.	MW
M06ESB(2102)		MW

M07ESB(2102)	M42ESB(2101) – It was noted that no significant progress has been made to date in relation to the England Squash Awards. Work will continue over the summer period and a further update will be provided during September's Board meeting.	MW
M08ESB(2102)	CEO Report Lockdown restrictions continue to ease and MW highlighted the very positive reaction from the squash community to the return of the core game (including team squash). Further information/announcements are expected from Government and Sport England regarding the final easing of restrictions scheduled for 21 June.	
M09ESB(2102)	The staff team continue to work hard and MW noted his appreciation for their continued support. The office move is progressing although there is not a firm date as yet for when staff will be able to return to working from the office. Keir Worth, Linda Taylor and Lee Drew have left England Squash and Hannah Hodgson, Anna Vaughan-Hawkins and David Evans have joined the team as Partnership Engagement Officers.	
M10ESB(2102)	MW highlighted a particularly congested tournament calendar with three events (the British Open, Manchester Open and the British National Championships) scheduled for August following the World Tour finals in Cairo and World Championships in Chicago.	
M11ESB(2102)	MW also updated on Volunteers' Week, Pride Month, Coaching Week, the Hall of Fame project and the Faces of Squash campaign.	
M12ESB(2102)	MW and family are expecting a new baby in July and will subsequently take two weeks' paternity leave. PB will assume the role of stand-in CEO during this period and JR will assist operationally.	
M13ESB(2102)	<i>Safeguarding</i> NM summarised an ongoing safeguarding matter dating back to May 2019 and sought approval to appoint an external panel (Sport Resolutions) to make decisions on this matter moving forwards. The request was approved by the Board.	NM
M14ESB(2102)	<i>Legal Complaint</i> It was noted that a player who had not been approved to play during lockdown (under the Government's exemption for elite athletes) had made a formal complaint. England Squash has sought legal support on the issue and the matter is ongoing.	MW
M15ESB(2102)	<i>Staffing Changes</i> This subject was discussed with England Squash staff members not present.	
M16ESB(2102)	2. Return to Play PB presented this item, highlighting the continued eagerness of the community to return to play.	
M17ESB(2102)	<i>Update to Guidance/Restrictions (21 June)</i> No further information has been received to date but is expected in the week commencing 14 June. It is anticipated that the proposed timelines might be altered (delayed) but that no significant change to restrictions will be made.	
M18ESB(2102)	<i>Re-engaging the Community</i> Work continues towards reintroducing affiliation fees in September.	

M19ESB(2102)	<p>“Core Market”</p> <p>The development of ‘core market’ was discussed and agreement reached that juniors should be included. There was a general consensus that the nuances and demographics of the squash core market should be considered and understood, particularly the male/female membership ratio and junior/adult membership split. PB is to initiate a new audience segmentation project accordingly.</p> <p><i>Number of junior members</i></p> <p>The percentage of the England Squash membership that is made up of juniors was queried by the Board. This is to be reported on at the next Board meeting.</p> <p><i>Membership pilot</i></p> <p>It was requested by ND that the Membership and Affiliation Working Group should revisit the direct membership pilot that was previously discussed. PB is to discuss and agree the approach to this with the Working Group.</p>	PB
M20ESB(2102)	<p>3. Return of Competitions</p> <p>The Board agreed the following plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junior Copper and Bronze sanctioned competitions will restart from 21 June (subject to UK Government guidance). This will allow localised competition to be monitored and reviewed to ensure a safety-first approach. A full calendar of competitions will return from September (subject to UK Government guidance). The junior national rankings will restart on 1 September. 	AP/PW
M21ESB(2102)	Test events (capped draws) are planned ahead of 21 June and will provide valuable insight to inform future guidance.	
M22ESB(2102)	There was discussion on the need for clarification regarding the proposed mixed U9 age category, particularly with safeguarding and gender issues in mind. A paper regarding diversity and play will be shared during September’s Board meeting to specifically address the concerns raised.	AP/PW
M23ESB(2102)	Tournament organisers will be expected to reduce single-use plastics and non-essential travel.	
M24ESB(2102)	<p>4. Innovation</p> <p>MW presented this item.</p>	
M25ESB(2102)	<p><i>Outdoor Courts</i></p> <p>There was said to be significant enthusiasm to trial outdoor courts. A potential site has been identified in Birmingham.</p>	
M26ESB(2102)	<p><i>Portable Courts</i></p> <p>A pilot portable court has been developed and will feature at the Commonwealth Games roadshows from mid-June and at the Games themselves next summer.</p>	
M27ESB(2102)	<p><i>Interactive Squash</i></p> <p>Currently there are two interactive squash sites, in Manchester and Birmingham. A portable version is currently being developed. The innovation working group has met to discuss.</p>	

M28ESB(2102)	<i>Padel</i> There was a subsequent discussion regarding padel and the potential to explore a partnership with padel via the LTA. A short paper will be prepared accordingly for September's Board meeting, to also cover the potential of working closely with court manufacturers as well as the landscape and integration of padel globally.	MW
M29ESB(2102)	5. Event Update – PSA Partnership MW presented this item. Delivery of the British Open in particular has presented a long-term and ongoing challenge as well as significant financial liability for England Squash. The proposed agreement with the PSA represents a solution that secures the future of the event, reduces the financial risk to England Squash (the contribution diminishes through the term of the agreement) and allows staff resources to remain concentrated on delivering the core components of the England Squash strategy.	
M30ESB(2102)	There was agreement that major events should be outsourced through an agreement with the PSA, provided that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the agreement be completed by August 2021 • the agreement be 'watertight' in terms of the nature and quality of event the PSA will deliver • more details on the financial model underpinning the agreement be provided to Board 	PW
M31ESB(2102)	Before sign-off, the proposed agreement will be forwarded to the Audit and Risk Committee for recommendation and subsequently to JC for final approval on behalf of the Board.	PW
M32ESB(2102)	6. Commonwealth Games MW presented this item. Thoughts and ideas regarding how best England Squash can capitalise on a home Commonwealth Games should be forwarded directly to MW.	Board
M33ESB(2102)	There was agreement that the Games should be foremost in thoughts and included in messaging as much as possible. 7. Inclusion and Diversity JR presented this item. <i>Action Plan</i> The action plan provides focus for the work on Inclusion and Diversity and will help improve the understanding of squash's current position and direct future work. The Board approved the action plan and encouraged a high level of ambition in relation to the targets. It was agreed that case studies (e.g. Northern Rebound) should be shared widely.	PB
M34ESB(2102)	<i>Board Training Options</i> The Board welcomed the proposal that they receive training on 'inclusive behaviours and cultures' and on introductory training where required.	JR

M35ESB(2102)	There was discussion regarding arranging for people from under-represented groups such as the LGBT+ community to speak at the next Council meeting.	JR
M36ESB(2102)	<p>8. Finance</p> <p>NE presented this item.</p> <p><i>Year-end Position</i> The Board paper reported a substantial loss for the 2020/21 year, mainly due to the predicted loss of all membership-related income. However, not fully utilising the Sport England grant covers the loss of membership income and therefore it was felt consideration should be given to how the year-end operating position should be presented.</p>	NE/MW
M37ESB(2102)	<p><i>Year to Date</i></p> <p>The scenario that the budget was based on was said to bear no resemblance to what has occurred in the year to date due to the COVID-19 restrictions. It was said to be pertinent therefore to focus on the end-of-year outturn and options available.</p>	NE
M38ESB(2102)	<p>9. Response to Board Audit</p> <p>MW presented this item.</p> <p><i>Action Plan</i> JC and ND will engage in structured conversations with each Board member to fulfil the recommendation of conducting Board appraisals.</p>	JC/ND
	MW will confirm in due course whether the audit findings will be shared externally.	MW
M39ESB(2102)	<p><i>Data Protection Training</i> Evalian recommend that staff and Board members receive refresher training.</p>	Steve Jones
M40ESB(2102)	<p>10. Referees</p> <p>MW presented this item.</p> <p>It was reported that a financial model has been identified in order for referees to offset the costs of adopting the WSO platform. If a referee officiates at four events per year, fees relating to England Squash membership, safeguarding and DBS checks will be waived/refunded.</p> <p>The Board approved this proposal.</p>	Chris Peach
M41ESB(2102)	<p>11. Any Other Business</p> <p><i>Update Papers</i> The following update papers had been circulated to Board members prior to the meeting, and the Board was said to be appreciative of the work done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate and Ecological Emergency • Digital Enablement • Insight Projects • Participation & Programmes (Leisure Centres) • Safeguarding 	

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shared Services Review• Talent & Performance (Staffing Changes) | |
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Any questions the Board might have relating to the update papers should be emailed to MW directly.

Board

Signed.....  (Chair)

Date..... 04/08/2021.....