



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board meeting hosted on the Zoom video conference application at 10:30 on Tuesday, 14 September 2021.

PRESENT**Board**

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

Also present

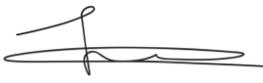
Paul Barrett (Director of Membership & Customer Experience) (PB)
 Neil Edgar (Finance Director) (NE)
 Steve Jones (Operations Officer, Minute Taker) (SJ)
 Jo Rowbottom (Head of Partnerships & Communities) (JR)
 Paul Walters (Strategic Lead for Competitions & Events and Commercial) (PW)

MINUTES REF.	ITEM	ACTION
M01ESB(2103)	1. Chair's Welcome JC welcomed all to the meeting.	
M02ESB(2103)	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Board members Mark Jeffreys and Eamonn O'Rourke.	
M03ESB(2103)	Declarations of Interests There were no interests declared.	
M04ESB(2103)	Minutes of the Board Meeting on 10/06/2021 The minutes were taken as read and were agreed to be a true and correct record.	
M05ESB(2103)	Matters Arising M05ESB(2102) – The naming of the Women's Senior ICC trophy was said to have been arranged, with the family kept updated.	
M06ESB(2103)	M28ESB(2102) – There was discussion on the subject of the sport of padel and the cost of courts, the potential for a partnership and a forthcoming meeting with a manufacturer.	

M07ESB(2103)	Remaining matters were said to be covered in the day's meeting agenda and Board papers.	
M08ESB(2103)	<p>CEO Report</p> <p>In his update MW covered staffing matters including the imminent departure in October of Digital Project Manager, Catherine Donnelly, who was said to have been a highly valued member of the team and had made a significant contribution. Plans were said to be in place to fill the void Catherine's departure will leave.</p>	MW
M09ESB(2103)	It was noted that three wellbeing workshops were made available for staff in September and that a suite of training opportunities had been set up to allow staff to continue to learn and develop in a variety of areas.	
M10ESB(2103)	There was an update on the progress with the application for funding to Sport England, as well as on the launch plans for the new England Squash strategy, including a microsite. There was also an update on outdoor courts, the Commonwealth Games, support from England Squash for the World Squash Federation in terms of future Olympic bids, and on the county association governance review.	
M11ESB(2103)	Current challenges were said to include safeguarding (with plans to complete a review), increasing the number of players in the upper echelons of the world rankings, lingering pandemic-related matters, staff resources and technological aspects of tournament running.	MW
M12ESB(2103)	<p>2. Finance</p> <p>NE gave a summary of the paper and figures he had presented in advance of the meeting, covering the management accounts for the first quarter of the financial year, the statutory accounts through to the end of the most recent financial year, and a forecast based on the year to date.</p>	
M13ESB(2103)	<p>3. Return to Play</p> <p>With the sport still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, PB ran through the essentials of the paper, seeking the views and input of the Board on which new audiences should be prioritised for engagement.</p>	
M14ESB(2103)	There was discussion of what is considered to be a relatively low number of England Squash junior members. It was noted that, anecdotally, junior members join to gain eligibility to play in competitions. In accordance with the strategic objective to engage with new audiences following the sport's return from COVID-19 restrictions, it was agreed that junior-age participants should be an initial focus. Supported by the Membership Working Group, PB is to prepare a proposal for the next meeting on how growth in junior memberships might be achieved.	PB
M15ESB(2103)	<p>4. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)</p> <p>JR welcomed thoughts and views from the Board on how England Squash can encourage the traditional squash community (clubs/coaches/counties) to engage fully with our strategic objectives around EDI and those of Sport England's Uniting the Movement strategy.</p>	
M16ESB(2103)	There was discussion of the walk-in experience that people have when going into	

	<p>squash clubs, and it was highlighted that there would be dialogue with Council Representatives about the ‘mystery shoppers’ who engaged with clubs as part of a recent Sport England project.</p>	<p>JR</p>
<p>M17ESB(2103)</p>	<p>There followed some discussion of collecting EDI data from both new and existing website users. For new users, the EDI data fields are mandatory. For existing users, whilst they can choose to update their EDI data, doing so is not currently mandatory and therefore the Diversity Group is discussing changes to the website to make those fields mandatory.</p>	<p>JR</p>
<p>M18ESB(2103)</p>	<p>There was praise for the paper that was written for the meeting, along with a request for timelines related to the completion of tasks.</p>	<p>JR</p>
<p>M19ESB(2103)</p>	<p>5. Commonwealth Games</p> <p>MW summarised the paper and sought from the Board approval for the overall direction of travel and comments on how the wider squash community can be engaged in the work around the Commonwealth Games.</p>	
<p>M20ESB(2103)</p>	<p>There was agreement that engagement with Scottish Squash and Squash Wales should be stepped up in the lead-up to the Games.</p>	<p>MW</p>
<p>M21ESB(2103)</p>	<p>There was discussion of the potential to attract participants to squash who are currently engaged with the Games through other sports. It was agreed that plans would be put in place for additional squash roadshows prior to the Games in addition to the multi-sport roadshows already planned by Birmingham 2022.</p>	<p>MW</p>
<p>M22ESB(2103)</p>	<p>It was agreed that EDI must remain at the forefront of minds and that finding role models and influencers could be beneficial in that regard. This discussion was developed in item 7 below.</p>	
<p>M23ESB(2103)</p>	<p>6. Sport England</p> <p>MW explained that the purpose of the paper was to explain the application process related to the next cycle of Sport England funding and to seek feedback from the Board on the opportunities presented by its <i>Uniting the Movement</i> strategy.</p>	
<p>M24ESB(2103)</p>	<p>It was felt that there is good alignment between the new England Squash strategy and <i>Uniting the Movement</i>.</p>	
<p>M25ESB(2103)</p>	<p>There was discussion of keeping in focus what the strengths of squash are, such as the ability to offer weather-proof sport through the winter months and the provision of short, sharp, effective exercise.</p>	<p>MW</p>
<p>M26ESB(2103)</p>	<p>This led to discussion of disability squash and it was agreed that the EDI paper written for the next meeting should include a section on this subject and should cover the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking squash • Wheelchair squash • Give clarity on wheelchair access (court door width, regulations, etc.) 	<p>JR</p>
<p>M27ESB(2103)</p>	<p>7. Update on the England Squash Strategy</p> <p>MW referred to the Board paper on this subject, which reflected on how the <i>Squash in a Changing World</i> strategy might best be delivered whilst continuing to service</p>	

	and support the core squash market in England. The importance of getting that balance right was highlighted.	
M28ESB(2103)	It was agreed that a Marketing & Communications paper for the next meeting should consider how England Squash can collaborate with role models, influencers and ambassadors involved in playing squash (the All Blacks and George Russell were mentioned as recent examples).	PB
M29ESB(2103)	When the strategy is presented internally and externally, there was agreement that it is important to make clear that, although EDI is not described as one of the strategic objectives, it is a fundamental theme that runs through the whole strategy.	PB
M30ESB(2103)	8. Commercial Strategy Review PW referred to the range of commercial opportunities presented in his paper. It was agreed however that the present time is a challenging one, particularly due to the pandemic.	
M31ESB(2103)	It was felt that there is a need to prioritise marketing (as well as safeguarding) in terms of the skills and experience sought from the next appointed Board member. This also presents an opportunity to improve the diversity of the Board.	MW
M32ESB(2103)	There was a request for a 'below-the-line' (not for discussion/approval) Board paper ahead of the next meeting on Squash 57 and further developing the partnership with UK Racketball.	PW/JR
M33ESB(2103)	There was a request for Board members to put themselves forward for participation within the Commercial Working Group that is going to be created.	Board
M34ESB(2103)	9. Any Other Business <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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate & Ecological Emergency • Competitions & Events • Digital Enablement • Olympic & Paralympic Games Reflections • Participation & Programmes • Performance • Innovation 	
M35ESB(2103)	<i>Kate Bedwell departure</i> It was announced that this Board meeting would be KB's last following five and a half years in post. It was agreed that KB's contribution to the Board during that time had been outstanding, having provided invaluable insight, guidance and support as part of a number of different committees, working groups and at Board meetings, and that she would be deeply missed. KB shared her thanks and appreciation for all of the hard work that goes on within the organisation and expressed how much she had enjoyed being a part of it. She said that she will undoubtedly remain involved in squash and is excited to be going to the Commonwealth Games to watch the squash competition in Birmingham.	

Signed.....  (Chair)

Date.....18/10/2021.....