



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board meeting hosted on the Zoom video conference application at 10:30 on Wednesday, 16 December 2020.

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)
 Keir Worth (KW)

Also present

Paul Barrett (Director of Membership & Customer Experience) (PB)
 Neil Edgar (Finance Director) (NE)
 Steve Jones (Operations Officer, Minute Taker) (SJ)
 Paul Walters (Strategic Lead for Competitions & Events and Commercial) (PW)
 Mark Williams (Director of Sport) (MW)

MINUTES REF.	ITEM	ACTION
M01ESB(2004)	<p>1. Chair's Welcome</p> <p>JC welcomed all to the meeting, with an especially warm welcome for YA on the occasion of his first Board meeting following the recent Council election.</p>	
M02ESB(2004)	<p>Congratulations went to Board members HL and WN, who at this meeting began their second three-year terms following the Council election (HL) and Board appointment (WN). It was agreed that a public announcement would be made following the meeting with regard to WN's appointment.</p>	SJ
M03ESB(2004)	<p>JC also expressed her congratulations on behalf of England Squash and the Board to Zena Wooldridge following the great news of her</p>	

	election on 5 December 2020 to President of the World Squash Federation (WSF).	
M04ESB(2004)	Apologies for Absence There were none.	
M05ESB(2004)	Declarations of Interests HL declared an interest in relation to item 7 on the agenda: 'Membership & Affiliation Beyond 2020'. It was noted that HL has an interest due to her role as chair of Buckinghamshire Squash Association, which receives an annual rebate based on England Squash affiliation fees.	
M06ESB(2004)	Minutes of the Board Meeting 29/09/20 It was agreed that the minute reference M01ESB(2003) should be amended in order to state that the start time of Board meetings will revert to 11am in the case of offline meetings. The minutes were otherwise taken as read and were agreed to be a true and correct record.	SJ
M07ESB(2004)	Matters Arising M12ESB(2003) – Mark Williams is to arrange, ahead of the next meeting, for the addition of a Vision Statement to the Environment and Sustainability section of the website.	MW
M08ESB(2004)	M13ESB(2003) – It was noted that a partnership agreement is in place with the brand Gearbox for the next financial year. The agreement will form part of a campaign to encourage greater use of eye protection.	
M09ESB(2004)	M32ESB(2003) – Consideration in relation to the collection of relevant Inclusion & Diversity data through social media was said to be in hand.	
M10ESB(2004)	M33ESB(2003) – With regard to the Board-approved key principles around Inclusion & Diversity, the requested change to stronger language in the fourth principle was said to have been made.	
M11ESB(2004)	M35ESB(2003)-M42ESB(2003) – It was noted that all of the matters relating to the Strategy item had been completed.	
M12ESB(2004)	M43ESB(2003) – It was said that the request for England Squash to keep up to date with other NGBs in the area of Innovation was covered in the Board paper 'ESB(2004)15b CRM Update & NGB Benchmarking'.	

M13ESB(2004)	M45ESB(2003) – It was confirmed that the planned House of Sport project at Etihad Campus had been cancelled due to the impact of Covid-19. YA updated the Board on the subject and said that he is looking forward to working on future plans for the office space within the building.	
M14ESB(2004)	M46ESB(2003)-M49ESB(2003) – The matters relating to the Articles of Association were said to have been addressed.	
M15ESB(2004)	M51ESB(2003) – It was noted that England Squash will continue to be involved in discussions around collaborative campaigns to support the 2022 Commonwealth Games .	KW
M16ESB(2004)	CEO Report KW provided an update on a wide range of areas in addition to the large volume of Board papers produced for the day's meeting. It was noted that the England Squash team had responded well to the challenges of Covid-19 and had increased engagement with the squash community during the pandemic despite the decrease in opportunities for people to play.	
M16ESB(2004)	On the elite game, KW reported on an outstanding performance from Sarah-Jane Perry, who won the CIB Black Ball Squash Open in Cairo earlier in the month. The tournament is a World Tour Gold Event.	
M17ESB(2004)	There were also updates on areas such as staffing, strategy, the increase in dialogue among sports CEOs on the environment and ecological emergency, the planned refresh of the England Squash website and an external Board evaluation.	
M18ESB(2004)	JC praised the breadth and depth of the work. There was also a request for future Board papers to be more concise.	Executive team
M18ESB(2004)	There followed some discussion of how best for England Squash to position itself on physical and mental health. There was agreement that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This topic would be given consideration ahead of the next meeting • It would be useful to be proactive on physical and mental health in terms of dialogue with Sport England 	KW
M19ESB(2004)	2. Finance: Financial Year 20/21 NE introduced this item and summarised his two Board papers, the first of which was in relation to the financial year to date. The second paper was about a November 2020 reforecast that had been prepared after an in-depth review of all department budgets.	

M20ESB(2004)	<p>It was noted that Sport England had been supportive and flexible about funding.</p> <p>On behalf of the Audit & Risk Committee, NE invited discussion on how best to report the operating position of the company in the year-end accounts.</p> <p>Following discussions there was agreement that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to consider how other NGBs are going to be reporting their operating positions • If a loss is to be reported, there is a need to rigorously review and decide how the remaining Sport England grant is to be spent • NE is to provide an update at the next meeting 	NE
M21ESB(2004)	<p>3. Inclusion & Diversity</p> <p>MW introduced his Board paper on a subject that has high priority within the company's 2021-25 Strategy. MW went on to seek approval for the following proposed steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus initially on female and BAME participation 2. Agree the principle that 'inclusive environments' are critical 3. Build appropriate data collection into all relevant areas of work (e.g. membership) 4. Finalise an Inclusion & Diversity action plan with aims, objectives and targets 5. Review and update policies, procedures and statements, where required 6. Create materials and content to support clubs and coaches 7. Conduct pilot projects with existing and new partners and stakeholders 8. Share stories and content that challenge perceptions of squash 9. Develop education and training opportunities <p>Discussions concluded that a culture change across the sport is required, however long that might take.</p>	
M22ESB(2004)	<p>There was agreement that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Disability' and 'lower socio-economic groups' should be added into step 1 • Board and staff training should be arranged • There is a need to consider diversity in terms of future Board and staff appointments • More data on the following would be useful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the ethnic/disability profile of communities 	MW/SJ

M23ESB(2004)	<p>the socio-economic profile of communities, as well as the perceptions of squash by those in lower socio-economic groups</p> <p>4. Climate and Ecological Emergency</p> <p>MW introduced his Board paper and asked for approval of the following vision statement:</p> <p><i>“England Squash will lead the sports sector nationally and internationally in responding to the Climate and Ecological emergency.”</i></p> <p>It was agreed that the wording would be adjusted to read “England Squash will take a lead within the sports sector...”</p>	MW
M24ESB(2004)	<p>MW also requested approval of the following next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a dedicated webpage highlighting England Squash work on the Climate and Ecological Emergency, housing relevant content. This will be in addition to the information currently in the ‘About Us’ policies section. • Create a new ‘toolkit’ of resources for clubs and tournament organisers, supporting them to do what they can to join us in achieving our vision. This will include case studies, links to external support and information on environmentally friendly alternatives to key areas such as lighting, energy, and competitions. • Launch the new toolkit and vision (if approved) via a campaign in the spring of 2021, linked to National Green Week, or linked to world Earth Day on 22nd April. We want to launch at a suitable time, which will be led in part by the status of the pandemic. • Include content on the environment in all that we do including coaching courses, club support and CPD initiatives. • Give due attention to environmental successes and milestones through the company’s communication plan. • The English Junior Championships will be delivered as our first ever ‘single-use plastic-free’ event, with the plan to make all England Squash Silver events and above, single-use plastic free from the 2021-22 season. <p>The steps were approved by the Board.</p>	MW
M25ESB(2004)	<p>5. PSA Collaboration Proposal</p> <p>PW introduced his Board paper (co-written with PB), which proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A collaboration with the PSA to enhance delivery across a range of activity, improve efficiencies, reduce costs and 	

	<p>remove commercial exposure across events that run at a significant deficit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceasing production of the England Squash Magazine, to be replaced with a new membership benefit 	
<p>M26ESB(2004)</p>	<p>Discussion ensued, and there was concern as to what the potential risks of such a collaboration might be.</p>	
<p>M27ESB(2004)</p>	<p>In conclusion, approval of the PSA collaboration was granted “in principle” by the Board, however it was agreed that England Squash branding should be protected so that the company retains the prestige from the events.</p>	<p>PW</p>
	<p>Regarding the magazine specifically, there was a consensus that its production should be <u>paused</u> for now with a view to developing a new potential member benefit with SquashTV and related media. The Membership Working Group will be consulted by PB on this matter.</p>	<p>PB</p>
<p>M28ESB(2004)</p>	<p>6. Squash in Leisure Centres</p> <p>A Board paper made the recommendation to the Board that a Leisure Centres Working Group be created. YA had agreed to be part of the Group. During discussions, VP also put herself forward to be involved in the Group.</p> <p>The following points were noted during discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is recognition of the difficulty in engaging with leisure operators • Potentially there could be an England Squash staff member to take on the role of managing partnerships with the leisure operators • There is concern within the community, particularly outside of London, as to what the future holds for squash in leisure centres, and there is a need to address these concerns 	<p>MW, YA, VP</p>
<p>M29ESB(2004)</p>	<p>7. Membership & Affiliation Beyond 2020</p> <p>It was noted that the Board had approved a freeze on England Squash membership and affiliation fees for a 12-month period, a move that was well received and appreciated. In this context, the current time was therefore felt to be an opportune one to potentially recalibrate how membership and affiliation are delivered. PB’s Board paper invited discussion around the proposals put forward.</p>	
<p>M30ESB(2004)</p>	<p>On behalf of the Membership & Affiliation Working Group, PB requested feedback in relation to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The appetite for change to the M&A scheme 	

M31ESB(2004)	<p>2. Feedback and input into the options presented</p> <p>3. Further consideration to the risks and challenges</p> <p>Discussion followed, and there was a consensus that implementing any changes to the scheme in time for the start of the next financial year would not be possible due to time constraints.</p>	
M32ESB(2004)	<p>Other feedback included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having ‘tiered’ levels of club affiliation is a good idea to consider further • Taking stock initially is sensible in order to see what the landscape is like and what the returning numbers are like once the existing membership and affiliation schemes are restarted • The county rebate is vitally important for many county associations at present • Regarding club affiliation, the communication from clubs to their members is critically important 	
M33ESB(2004)	<p>8. Alison Henley ICC Tribute</p> <p>The related Board paper proposed that Alison Henley’s outstanding contribution to the Inter County Championships (ICC) be recognised by naming the Women’s Senior ICC trophy in her honour. It is felt that doing so would be a fitting tribute.</p>	
M34ESB(2004)	<p>The proposal was approved.</p>	KW
M35ESB(2004)	<p>9. Anti-Doping Update</p> <p>It was brought to the Board’s attention via the related Board paper that, from January 2021, the World Anti-Doping Agency is to publish the 2021 Prohibited List and 2021 World Anti-Doping Code with a greater emphasis on education. The paper requested Board approval of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of a new working group with Board representation (ND had already offered his time and support) • The upskilling of the team of England Potential & Aspire Coaches to UKAD Advisor level • The addition of anti-doping education to L2 courses and anti-doping resources to Coaches Club • An increase in education opportunities at competitions, events and throughout the competition pathway via Tournament Organisers • The sharing of information on anti-doping with the general membership via newsletters and website/social media 	

M36ESB(2004)	<p>channels, as well as the supporting of anti-doping awareness campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exploration of the potential to collaborate with other NGBs to deliver education • The development of a formal anti-doping strategy for Board approval <p>The creation of a working group was approved by the Board.</p> <p>NM referred to his experience in this area and volunteered his services as part of the working group.</p>	MW/NM
M37ESB(2004)	<p>It was noted that this area of work is likely to be a major undertaking and that there will be a large educational requirement.</p>	
M38ESB(2004)	<p>10. Competitions (Return to Play)</p> <p>The related Board paper provided a progress update on the return to play from a competitions perspective.</p> <p>The Board was asked to consider, in principle, the following, subject to there being no changes in Government regulations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The return of individual junior sanctioned competitions (non-ranking) in tier 1 areas subject to England Squash COVID guidelines from mid-January 2021 • The return of team adult and junior competitions in tier 1 areas, subject to England Squash COVID guidelines from mid-January 2021 • The return of junior sanctioned competitions (non-ranking) in tier 2 areas when/if the England Squash guidelines permit squash bubbles in tier 2 • The continued suspension of England Squash Junior Rankings <p>It was noted that all guidelines will go through the Audit & Risk Committee before going to Board.</p>	
M39ESB(2004)	<p>All of the above proposals were approved by the Board.</p>	PW
M40ESB(2004)	<p>11. Committees & Working Groups</p> <p>The related Board paper presented the Board with the basic information on each of the various committees and working groups, many of which have Board representation.</p> <p>It was proposed that the existing committees and working groups continue, which was approved.</p>	

M41ESB(2004)	It was noted that the list of groups omitted the Safeguarding group and it was agreed that this would be added to the paper.	SJ
M42ESB(2004)	As confirmed above, in items 6 and 9, two new working groups are to be created: Leisure Centres and Anti-Doping. Both working groups feature in the paper related to item 11.	
M43ESB(2004)	<p>12. Any Other Business</p> <p><i>Update Papers</i></p> <p>The following additional update papers had been circulated to Board members prior to the meeting for information, and the Board was said to be very much appreciative of the work done. Special thanks were given to PB and MW in relation to the work on the return to play.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England Squash 2021 Strategy Release Plan • Commercial Update • Return to Play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ World Squash Day - Laura v Nick ○ Bounce Back Campaign ○ New Club Development Officer Programme • Pathways Update • Digital Enablement Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CRM Update & NGB Benchmarking 	
M44ESB(2004)	<p><i>WSF Presidency</i></p> <p>There was discussion around the impact of Zena Wooldridge, who is English, becoming President of the WSF. The appointment was said to be overwhelmingly positive, and it was thought that the next WSF strategy will be key for the sport's future.</p> <p>It was felt that England Squash should support the WSF where possible over the coming period.</p>	KW
M45ESB(2004)	<p><i>European Squash Federation (ESF)</i></p> <p>It was noted that Jackie Robinson, an England Squash Vice President, is to step down from her position on the Board of the ESF in 2021.</p> <p>Signed.....  (Chair)</p> <p>Date.....01/03/2021.....</p>	