



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board meeting hosted on the Zoom video conference application at 1130 on Tuesday, 29 September 2020.

PRESENT

Board

Joy Carter (Chair) (JC)
 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

Guests

Simon Perks (SockMonkey Consulting) for the Strategy item (SP)

Staff

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

| MINUTES REF. | ITEM | ACTION |
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| M01ESB(2003) | <p>1. Chair's Welcome</p> <p>JC welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Given that online meetings have the advantages of reduced travel and added flexibility, there was a request for future Board meetings to begin at 10am. It was agreed that meetings will revert to an 11am start once they move offline.</p> | SJ |
| M02ESB(2003) | <p>Compliments were given to the England Squash team for the work done (as detailed in the Board papers), the regularity of updates and</p> | |

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| | the management of the challenging situation brought about by the pandemic. | |
| M03ESB(2003) | <i>Council Meeting & AGM</i> It was confirmed that these meetings will be hosted online and be held in late November or early December. | |
| M04ESB(2003) | <i>Board elections</i> JC highlighted that elections will take place this year, with the Nominations Committee currently working to finalise the process to enable two Council-elected positions and one Board-appointed position to be filled. It was noted that HL and WN both wish to continue their roles as Board members. | |
| M05ESB(2003) | <i>Working groups</i> There was agreement that now is a good time to review the various groups that have been set up. | KW |
| M06ESB(2003) | Apologies for Absence There were none. | |
| M07ESB(2003) | Declarations of Interests There were no interests declared. | |
| M08ESB(2003) | Minutes of the Board Meeting of 2 June 2020 The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read and were agreed to be a true and correct record. | |
| M09ESB(2003) | Matters Arising M08ESB(2002) – After not hearing back from Garmin, it was agreed that the pursuit of a collaboration would not continue for now. | |
| M10ESB(2003) | M09ESB(2002) – It was agreed that MW would schedule a further meeting for the environmental working group, part of which would cover tackling the challenge of green competitions in COVID-19 conditions. It was noted that the draft (environmental) Vision is ready to be shared with the working group. | MW MW |
| M11ESB(2003) | M10ESB(2002) – No response had been received from Center Parcs, and after multiple attempts there are no plans to further pursue their court-usage data. | |
| M12ESB(2003) | M12ESB(2002) and M13ESB(2002) – The addition of a Vision | MW |

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| | Statement to the Environment and Sustainability section of the website, and the updating of the bank mandate, were both said to be in hand. | |
| M13ESB(2003) | M14ESB(2002) – It was noted that a partner is due to come on board for the planned campaign to encourage greater use of eye protection. | PW |
| M14ESB(2003) | <p>CEO's Report</p> <p>KW had shared an update paper ahead of the meeting to update the Board in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 • World Squash Day • Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) • World Squash Federation (WSF) • Digital - The Global Squash Collaborative • European Squash Federation (ESF) • High Performance • Talent & Performance • Sport England | |
| M15ESB(2003) | On Sport England funding, KW highlighted that flexibility of spend is confirmed through until the end of the FY2020/21, with the potential for flexibility also in 2021/22. | |
| M16ESB(2003) | Regarding DCMS, it was noted that England Squash is awaiting feedback in relation to the submitted Phase 3 plan for the Return to Play. | |
| M17ESB(2003) | A letter has been sent to CEOs of the major leisure operators with squash courts to offer support and encourage the reopening of courts. | |
| M18ESB(2003) | For the upcoming WSF election for President, it was reported that England had nominated Zena Wooldridge. The election will take place in December at the AGM, which will be held via a video conference. | |
| M19ESB(2003) | Conversations were said to have been had with England Lacrosse, leading to the possibility of further collaboration. (England Squash and England Lacrosse already share a Finance Director.) | |
| M20ESB(2003) | Considering the challenges of remote working brought upon by the pandemic, staff morale was said to be positive. The Executive team and line managers are offering support, and video meetings involving all staff continue to be held multiple times per week. | |
| M21ESB(2003) | There was some discussion of World Squash Day, and it was noted that, although the focus is on encouraging the core market back to play, work continues as ever on attracting new players to the sport. | |

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| M22ESB(2003) | <p>2. Finance</p> <p>Finance Director NE introduced this item. It was noted that the audit is currently ongoing and taking more time than in previous years due to a combination of new auditors, NE being new to the role and the fact the audit is having to be carried out remotely this time.</p> <p>Appreciation was shown to the Audit & Risk Committee for their support.</p> | |
| M23ESB(2003) | <p>With regard to FY2020/21, it was noted that a loss would show in the accounts due to the impact of the pandemic and particularly the loss of club affiliation/membership income.</p> | |
| M24ESB(2003) | <p>There was discussion of how the loss would affect the next 2-3 years, and it was agreed that a reduction in Sport England funding would cause an issue. A continuation down the route of collaboration and shared services with other National Governing Bodies (NGBs) was said to be key to lessening the financial impact in the coming years.</p> | |
| M25ESB(2003) | <p>3. Return to Play</p> <p>MW spoke to summarise this item and pick out the key points from his paper. It was highlighted that Phase 2 was a vital step for the game and that Phase 3, if given the go-ahead by DCMS, would be another huge step forward.</p> | |
| M26ESB(2003) | <p>It was noted that participation in public facilities remains significantly down on pre-pandemic times and that the contact with the leisure operators (see M17ESB(2003) above) offering England Squash support is important.</p> | |
| M27ESB(2003) | <p>Preparations for World Squash Day and the Team Laura Massaro vs Team Nick Matthew month-long campaign were said to be going well.</p> | |
| M28ESB(2003) | <p>Approval was sought from the Board to allow the following to proceed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To announce that the following activities will not return before Jan 2021 and that a decision will be made towards the end of the year as to when they might: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Junior Circuit (junior sanctioned events) ii. Junior Talent Squads iii. Inter-County Championships 2. To extend the suspension of Membership and Affiliation fees until 1 April 2021 <p>Both 1 and 2 were approved by the Board.</p> | |
| M29ESB(2003) | <p>Feedback was then sought on the following two points:</p> | |

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| | <p>3. The priority of the <i>Back to Squash</i> campaign plan is to re-engage the ‘core market’ (frequent, committed club players), rather than recruit new or infrequent players.</p> <p>The Board agreed that the core market should be the focus and added that new or infrequent players must also continue to receive significant attention as well.</p> <p>4. England Squash continues to adopt a considered and careful approach with its Return to Play plans – we have not sought to ‘push’ DCMS as many other sports have but have balanced patience with timely submissions. The Return to Play should be paced and controlled by us appropriately, not rushed as some might wish, in order to ensure we can support clubs and players to return, as safely as possible.</p> <p>The Board was in support of the approach in 4. It was noted that consideration should be given also to what is the appropriate post-COVID positioning.</p> | <p>PB</p> |
| <p>M30ESB(2003)</p> | <p>There was discussion of Phase 3 and agreement that, if approved by DCMS, approval must then in turn be granted by the Board before it goes ahead.</p> | |
| <p>M31ESB(2003)</p> | <p>It was agreed that, with help from county associations, insight would be gathered from clubs on what they are doing in respect of member fees.</p> | <p>PB</p> |
| <p>M32ESB(2003)</p> | <p>4. Inclusion & Diversity</p> <p>MW introduced this item and paper that had been written.</p> <p>There was discussion of the collection of relevant data, and it was agreed that it is important to consider how social media might facilitate this data collection.</p> | <p>PB/MW</p> |
| <p>M33ESB(2003)</p> | <p>Approval was then sought from the Board for the direction of travel and approval of key principles. It was proposed that the following principles will shape England Squash actions over the coming period (considering the impact of COVID-19):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Re-engaging with existing audience/current community 2. Increasing participation by women and girls (a priority diversity target) 3. Setting out policies for diversity, which should include, but not be limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Staff b. Board | |

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| | <p>c. Counties/clubs d. Workforce</p> <p>4. Identify and begin to engage with more diverse audiences/communities, through specific pilot projects in targeted areas</p> | |
| <p>M34ESB(2003)</p> | <p>The Board approved the direction of travel, requesting however that the wording in 4 change from “begin to engage with” to something along the lines of “have a radical rethink about”.</p> <p>5. England Squash 2021 Strategy</p> <p>Simon Perks (SP) of Sockmonkey Consulting joined the meeting for this item.</p> <p>JC thanked SP on behalf of the Board for the excellent work on the project.</p> <p>It was highlighted by SP that engagement with communities throughout the process had been extensive, and it was agreed that the level of engagement in the context of work on a Strategy document had been unprecedented.</p> | <p>MW</p> |
| <p>M35ESB(2003)</p> | <p>The following were then requested of the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the draft England Squash Strategy for the period 2021-25 • Give feedback on the draft guidance for county associations and clubs | |
| <p>M36ESB(2003)</p> | <p><i>Strategy document</i></p> <p>The use of the word ‘radical’ on page 3 of the Strategy was commended, and it was felt that the word should be used elsewhere too when referring to aspects of the Strategy in order to show commitment.</p> | <p>SP</p> |
| <p>M37ESB(2003)</p> | <p>There was discussion as to whether the reference to ‘Olympic inclusion’ on page 6 should be moved from action number 6 to either 3 or 5, or whether the reference should remain in 6 but be re-worded.</p> | |
| <p>M38ESB(2003)</p> | <p>There was a suggestion that, on page 7, within the ‘Nurturing talent’ priority, a performance measure could be added on well-being or the extent to which lives are enriched by the game.</p> | <p>SP</p> |
| <p>M39ESB(2003)</p> | <p>It was agreed that, on page 8, the reference to turning squash courts into ‘smart’ courts should be removed.</p> | <p>SP</p> |
| <p>M39ESB(2003)</p> | <p>It was requested that any hard copies of the Strategy (if such a format is established as necessary) should be printed on recycled paper using sustainable dyes.</p> | <p>PB</p> |

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| M40ESB(2003) | <p><i>'Guidance for county associations and affiliated clubs' document</i></p> <p>It was felt that there should be consideration of whether the information in the 'Squash Community' diagram could be presented in a different way.</p> | SP |
| M41ESB(2003) | <p>There was agreement that the reference to "county associations" in the diagram and elsewhere in the document should incorporate Regional Forums as well.</p> | SP |
| M42ESB(2003) | <p>With the tweaks above taken as included, both documents were then approved by the Board.</p> | SP |
| M43ESB(2003) | <p>6. Innovation</p> <p>PB presented this item, which focussed on two operational aspects:</p> <p><i>1. E-learning</i></p> <p>It was noted that e-learning plans for exploring online delivery of education courses and CPD had been accelerated due to COVID-19. Two candidates were said to have now passed the pilot Level 1 Coaching Award, with a further dozen or so candidates taking part in the course as part of the pilot.</p> <p><i>2. CRM</i></p> <p>It is an aim to send more targeted, relevant and personalised communications to users, and it was said that England Squash's use of CRM is therefore being reviewed.</p> <p>The Board was happy with the direction of travel. It was requested that England Squash keep up to date with other NGBs in this area where appropriate.</p> | PB |
| M44ESB(2003) | <p>7. Annual Report</p> <p>A draft of the Annual Report had been presented to the Board prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The draft was approved by the Board, with feedback that accessibility is key and that the more integrated reporting there can be, the better.</p> | KW |
| M45ESB(2003) | <p>8. Head Office Development & Ways of Working</p> <p>The paper shared ahead of the meeting requested approval for England Squash to remain based at the Etihad Campus in Manchester and to be involved in the House of Sport project. The paper also provided information on a pilot that will take place related to more flexible working hours for staff.</p> | |

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| M46ESB(2003) | <p>'In principle' approval was given by the Board for England Squash to remain at Etihad Campus.</p> <p>9. Proposed Changes to the Articles of Association</p> <p>A revised, draft version of the Articles of Association was shared with the Board ahead of the meeting. Approval from the Board was requested.</p> <p>The most significant changes made relate to express provisions allowing for (and providing guidance on) the holding of members meetings and Council meetings remotely using electronic communications.</p> <p>The Board also expressed its sincere thanks for the excellent contribution of Merseyside Council Representative Andrew Beeston. Andrew was said to have contributed considerably by way of recommendations, which were said to have been taken on board for the revised document.</p> <p>The Board also placed on record its gratitude for the fine work done in this area by NM and ND.</p> <p>It was noted that the marked-up document would go to Andrew Beeston and later go to the AGM in December.</p> | KW |
| M47ESB(2003) | <p>There was discussion of Article 26.5 and a need for re-wording to have a stronger call to action on the part of county associations, i.e. it would be the responsibility of counties to coordinate five or more counties interested in the inclusion of a particular Council agenda item.</p> | NM |
| M48ESB(2003) | <p>It was agreed that NM would also check the wording in Article 31.4.</p> | NM |
| M49ESB(2003) | <p>With the above amendments taken as made, the revised Articles were approved.</p> | KW |
| M50ESB(2003) | <p>10. 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitions & Events Update • Membership & Customer Experience Update • Pathways Update • Digital Enablement Update | |

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| <p>M51ESB(2003)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commercial Update <p><i>Commonwealth Games</i></p> <p>There was discussion of what support England Squash may be able to give specifically to clubs interested in being involved in aspects of the Commonwealth Games in 2022. There was agreement to keep this in consideration in the lead-up to the event.</p> <p>Signed.....  (Chair)</p> <p>Date.....02/11/2020.....</p> | <p>KW</p> |
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