



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board meeting held in Room LOB 101, Birmingham Repertory Theatre, 6 Centenary Square, Birmingham, B1 2EP at 11:30 on Tuesday, 4 June 2024.

PRESENT

Board

Joy Carter (Chair) (JC)
 Richard Cannock (RC)
 Mark Jeffreys (MJ)
 Heidi Leseur (HL)
 Andrew Light (AL)
 Nick Murrills (NM)
 Wendy Newlove (WN)
 Mayuri Nigam (MN)
 Eamonn O'Rourke (EO)
 Mark Williams (CEO) (MW)

Also present

Neil Edgar (Finance Director) (NE)
 Steve Jones (minutes) (SJ)
 Jo Rowbottom (Head of Partnerships & Communities) (JR)

| MINUTES REF. | ITEM | ACTION |
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| M01ESB(2402) | <p>1. Chair's Welcome</p> <p>JC welcomed all to the meeting.</p> | |
| M02ESB(2402) | <p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Board members Yawar Abbas and Andrew Steele, as well as from Paul Makinen, Head of Digital & Insight.</p> | |
| M03ESB(2402) | <p>Declarations of Interests</p> <p>There were no interests declared.</p> | |
| M04ESB(2402) | <p>Minutes of the Board Meeting 21/03/24</p> <p>The minutes were taken as read. It was highlighted that there was a typographical error in M12ESB(2402). It was in fact MN who volunteered to be part of a committee to consider commercial opportunities. NM also wishes to be involved.</p> | SJ |
| M05ESB(2402) | <p>Matters Arising</p> | |

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| | <p>M11ESB(2401) – It was noted that the bank switch to an account with a higher interest rate had been completed.</p> | |
| <p>M06ESB(2402)</p> | <p>M12ESB(2401) – Joey Barrington is Membership & Commercial Partnerships Manager for England Squash, and now that the initial membership work is well developed, priorities are starting to switch towards the commercial partnerships work. It was agreed that there will be a discussion item on commercial opportunities at the next meeting.</p> | <p>MW</p> |
| <p>M07ESB(2402)</p> | <p>M16ESB(2401) – It was noted that England Squash will be present at the forthcoming North West Counties Squash League AGM.</p> | <p>PM/MW</p> |
| <p>M08ESB(2402)</p> | <p>M22ESB(2401) – The next phase of the work on UK Code for Sports Governance by Simon Perks of Sockmonkey Consulting is to put in place an effective process to collect the necessary data from Board members and staff in order to be compliant with the Code.</p> | <p>MW/SP</p> |
| <p>M09ESB(2402)</p> | <p>M24ESB(2401) – It was agreed that the independent listening exercise in relation to Inclusion & Diversity shall be discussed at the next meeting.</p> | <p>JR</p> |
| <p>M10ESB(2402)</p> | <p>M29ESB(2401) – On the subject of getting the message out there to young-professional people about the benefits and fun of squash, it was felt there is a need to boost competitive squash for women. It was noted that the England Squash work in partnership with Joe Magor will facilitate this by providing useful information on upcoming competitions.</p> | <p>MW</p> |
| <p>M11ESB(2402)</p> | <p>M30ESB(2401) – There was discussion of external advisors on squash in schools. A group of advisors is now active. It was suggested that Peter Billson be consulted on the schools programme.</p> | <p>JR</p> |
| <p>M12ESB(2402)</p> | <p>M34ESB(2401) – It was agreed that KPIs shall feature as a recurring discussion item on Board meeting agendas. KPIs should also be referenced in all Board papers whenever relevant.</p> | <p>MW</p> |
| <p>M13ESB(2402)</p> | <p>CEO Report</p> <p><i>Elite performance</i></p> <p>There was notable success for England at the European Team Championships in Switzerland, with the women’s team taking second place and the men’s team retaining their title from the previous edition.</p> | |
| <p>M14ESB(2402)</p> | <p><i>Competitions</i></p> <p>The Competitions staff at England Squash had ambitious plans to increase both the quality and quantity of competitive squash on offer, and their hard work has seen a year-on-year increase of around 30% in terms of the number of sanctioned competitions that were hosted across the country.</p> | |
| <p>M15ESB(2402)</p> | <p><i>Staffing</i></p> | |

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| | <p>It was noted that appointments had been made to fill the Content Manager and Safeguarding, Culture and Wellbeing Manager roles.</p> | |
| <p>M16ESB(2402)</p> | <p>The recruitment process to appoint a new National Coach is progressing well. It was said to be disappointing that there were no female candidates interviewed for the position, and it was agreed that a female presence amongst future candidates for the role is essential.</p> | <p>MW</p> |
| <p>M17ESB(2402)</p> | <p>The new National Coach will have a broad remit and be very much supported as much as possible by the rest of the team to give them every opportunity to succeed in the role. It is felt to be important for sustainability to be a key part of the National Coach’s induction, especially in terms of reducing long-haul flights taken by the elite England players and coaches.</p> | <p>MW</p> |
| <p>M18ESB(2402)</p> | <p><i>Climate and Ecological Emergency</i></p> | |
| <p>M19ESB(2402)</p> | <p>An 11-point plan will be ready for September. The Board placed on record its thanks to the England Squash team for the work in leading and driving change in this area.</p> | <p>MW</p> |
| <p>M19ESB(2402)</p> | <p><i>Complaints</i></p> <p>It was noted that there has been a marked increase since the pandemic in people approaching England Squash to help resolve conflicts, an example being squash-club members who feel they have had their club memberships terminated unfairly by their clubs.</p> <p>There was discussion of where England Squash’s jurisdiction should lie in this regard. It was agreed that some work should be done ahead of the next meeting to provide more clarity to the community. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A communications piece, including clarification of the difference between safeguarding and misconduct matters, which is felt to not be well understood currently • A check of the Terms & Conditions of Membership and Terms & Conditions of Affiliation to see whether those documents make it clear that arbitration between parties is not included as part of the service | <p>MW</p> |
| <p>M20ESB(2402)</p> | <p>2. Finance</p> <p>NE introduced this item and discussed year-to-date figures, staffing and financial reserves.</p> <p>It was noted that the Competitions deficit in the year-to-date figures was due to be resolved once British Junior Open funds are transferred from PayPal.</p> | |
| <p>M21ESB(2402)</p> | <p>A Finance Officer has been recruited and will report to NE (Finance Director).</p> | |
| <p>M22ESB(2402)</p> | <p>Two actions were agreed ahead of the next meeting:</p> | |

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the reserves policy 2. Propose a platform to use to mitigate the risk of any loss of funds due to a bank account holding funds greater than what is covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme | NE |
| M23ESB(2402) | The revised budget deficit was agreed unanimously. | NE |
| M24ESB(2402) | <p>3. Membership & Affiliation</p> <p>MW introduced this item in the absence Paul Makinen (PM), Head of Digital & Insight.</p> | |
| M25ESB(2402) | PM is to report back on when the current system can be 'switched off'. | PM |
| M26ESB(2402) | There was discussion around ensuring that there are sufficient staff resources available during the week of launch and the lead-up to it. | MW |
| M27ESB(2402) | There shall be consideration given to recording educational walk-through video/s for members and clubs so that they can observe the correct way to purchase a membership, renew or upgrade. | PM/MW |
| M28ESB(2402) | <p>The Board then voted by show of hands in relation to what shall be the implementation date of the new scheme and the approach.</p> <p>All votes were in favour of the Option A proposed in the Board paper:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Option A – agree an implementation date of 15 August. This builds a two-week contingency period onto the scheduled completion of the changes to the digital platform.</p> | PM |
| M29ESB(2402) | The Board requested advance notice of the key communications to members and clubs being sent out. This is to allow a short window of time for any feedback. Similarly, the Board would like to feed back on the branding before release. | PM |
| M30ESB(2402) | <p>4. Olympic Games</p> <p>This item was introduced by MW. It was noted that the outcome in relation to funding is currently pending. To a large extent, the look and feel of the Great Britain squash federation that will be established will be determined by the level of funding provided.</p> | |
| M31ESB(2402) | It was highlighted that the selection policy needs contribution from all federations from Great Britain. | |
| M32ESB(2402) | There was also discussion of the 2026 Commonwealth Games. It is hoped that squash will be included in the Games, in which case related funding will be made available. | |
| M33ESB(2402) | Discussion followed in relation to a recommend approach to the issue of funding. There was consensus that a 'discrete influence' approach should | |

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| | be taken. The English and British squash position is not well or widely understood, and seeking to rally advocates to influence from within is recommended by the Board. | MW |
| M34ESB(2402) | The Board would like Olympic players to be advocates for environmental and ecological issues, and consideration shall be given to how this can be best achieved. | MW |
| M35ESB(2402) | 5. Young People JR introduced this item for discussion by the Board. There was a request for university-age and the young-professional demographic to have a section in Young People Board papers. There was suggestion that this would equate to an age range of 18-34. | JR |
| M36ESB(2402) | It was agreed that there shall be consideration given to how England Squash can ensure that this 18-34 age group can find the necessary information to get them and keep them engaged. | JR |
| M37ESB(2402) | The Board would like to hear more feedback from young people themselves, allowing them to lead the way in the direction of travel with the projects. | JR |
| M38ESB(2402) | The Board would like to see the KPIs reported in Board papers. It was noted in addition, however, that the quality of the experience is just as important as the number of young people that participate. This will lead to higher retention. | JR |
| M39ESB(2402) | With regard to competitions, it is felt that, as ever, a strong emphasis on 'fun' and 'belonging' is very important. There is a risk in overemphasising the competitiveness of squash. | JR |
| M40ESB(2402) | 6. Any Other Business <i>Generative AI tools</i> Consideration should be given ahead of the next meeting as to how best to ensure staff become appropriately trained in the use of these tools. | MW |
| M41ESB(2402) | <i>Board update papers</i> JC closed the meeting by thanking MW and the team for the great work since the last meeting, with thanks also to the writers of the supplementary Board papers, which included the following and which were presented for information only and not discussed specifically during the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate and Ecological Emergency • Commercial and Sponsorship • Competitions • Inclusion & Diversity | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marketing & Communications• People & Education• Talent & Performance | |
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Signed..... (Chair)