



Minutes of the Board meeting held remotely via the Zoom video conference application at 10:30 on Thursday, 8 June 2023.

PRESENT

Board

Joy Carter (Chair) (JC)
 Richard Cannock (RC)
 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)
 Paul Makinen (Head of Digital & Insight) (PM)
 Chris Robertson (Head of Performance Operations) (CR)
 Jo Rowbottom (Head of Partnerships & Communities) (JR)

MINUTES REF.	ITEM	ACTION
M01ESB(2302)	1. Chair's Welcome JC welcomed all to the meeting.	
M02ESB(2302)	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Board members Yawar Abbas, Mark Jeffreys and Andrew Steele.	
M03ESB(2302)	Declarations of Interests There were no interests declared.	
M04ESB(2302)	Minutes of the Board Meeting 23/03/23 The minutes were taken as read and were agreed to be a true and correct record.	
M05ESB(2302)	Matters Arising M06ESB(2301) – In relation to Dr. Allam, it was noted that his relatives were guests of honour at this year's British Open.	
M06ESB(2302)	M09ESB(2301) – There was discussion of The Prince's Trust and The Scouts. It was decided that the executive will provide an update at the next Board meeting on the Prince's Trust. MW is to discuss budget with JC in relation to this area. It was noted that the cost of creating a new Scout badge is around £70k.	MW
M07ESB(2302)		JR

	<p>M35ESB(2301) – Padel was discussed, and it was agreed that a paper would be prepared ahead of the next Board meeting, focussing on opportunities around padel and other similar sports.</p>	
<p>M08ESB(2302)</p>	<p>Other matters arising were said to be competed or would be covered on the day's agenda.</p>	
<p>M09ESB(2302)</p>	<p>CEO Report</p> <p>MW updated the Board on a wide range of topics.</p> <p><i>Sport England</i></p> <p>Active Lives data suggests that squash participation returned to 90% of pre pandemic levels within 12 months of restrictions being lifted. The next data set from Actives Lives will be an important one. England Squash continues to use various internal KPIs and is reviewing them over the summer. The required annual review has been submitted to Sport England and it was also noted that England Squash recently submitted a governance compliance statement to Sport England, this will now become an annual requirement.</p>	
<p>M10ESB(2302)</p>	<p><i>Competitions</i></p> <p>It is felt that there is work to do at the lower end of the competitions circuit, especially in the junior age groups. It was agreed that a boost is needed for the junior circuit.</p>	<p>MW</p>
<p>M11ESB(2302)</p>	<p><i>Equality, Diversity & Inclusion</i></p> <p>Work in this area has been pleasing thanks to programmes such as Squash from the Mosque. It was noted that the challenge now is to turn pilot projects into national programmes in order to scale up the impact.</p>	
<p>M12ESB(2302)</p>	<p><i>Membership</i></p> <p>The webinars and other engagement with the squash community on the new scheme had provided useful feedback. It was noted that the benefits package will be a crucial aspect of the scheme.</p>	
<p>M13ESB(2302)</p>	<p><i>Staffing</i></p> <p>Three roles are currently out to advert:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Product Officer • Membership and Commercial Partnerships Manager • People and Education Manager <p>There was discussion of safeguarding and how this area of work will be resourced moving forwards. It was noted that there are plans to create a role to cover safeguarding, culture and welfare.</p>	<p>MW</p>
<p>M14ESB(2302)</p>	<p><i>Mark Walter investment</i></p> <p>The PSA announced some significant news in May. Sports, Media and Entertainment Group, led by businessman and philanthropist Mark Walter, has committed to providing major financial investment into the PSA with a view to accelerating the development of the professional game. It was noted that grassroots squash should also benefit</p>	
<p>M15ESB(2302)</p>	<p><i>Office</i></p>	

M16ESB(2302)	<p>The business lounge, meeting rooms and refurbished café at the National Squash Centre recently opened for the benefit of England Squash staff. Feedback had been positive.</p> <p><i>Insurance</i></p>	
	<p>There are three issues ongoing and support from brokers Bluefin Sport has been excellent.</p>	
M17ESB(2302)	<p>2. Finance and Risk</p> <p><i>Year ending 31/03/23</i></p>	
	<p>NE noted that one of the main reasons for the year-end surplus was staffing and the timing of recruitment.</p>	
M18ESB(2302)	<p><i>Risk</i></p> <p>There was discussion of the contract of the company’s current financial services provider, Jockey Club Services. The contract is due to finish at the end of the calendar year, and it was agreed that choosing a replacement is high priority within the Risk Register (RR).</p>	NE
M19ESB(2302)	<p>Following discussion, there was consensus that the RR should be amended in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risk related to staff departures on the RR should be amended to ‘probable’ or ‘likely’ to more accurately reflect employment trends in any organisation • The risks highlighted in Board papers should always tie together with risks on the RR • Communications around the RR should be shared widely within the company to maximise staff awareness and familiarity with the document • Names of Non-Executive Directors should not appear on the RR as it is an executive function 	NE
M20ESB(2302)	<p>3. Membership & Affiliation</p> <p>The Board paper that PM shared ahead of the meeting provided updates on progress with this very important project. There was discussion of how England Squash can best engage the squash community with the rationale and benefits of the new membership scheme and help them to embrace the need for change.</p>	
M21ESB(2302)	<p>In relation to the benefits of membership, it was noted that the ‘lite’ versions of the offerings from providers such as Squash Levels and Squash Skills will be available to members throughout the whole duration of their memberships. This is in contrast to any potential short-term deals that might be offered by those providers at any given time to people who are not England Squash members. The Squash TV benefit on the other hand is a unique federation benefit.</p>	
M22ESB(2302)	<p>It was highlighted that other ‘unique’ ‘money-can’t-buy’ experiences would be included, for example, the opportunity for members to participate in or observe a session from the National Coach. The fact that all of the benefits go into a ‘package’ also greatly simplifies things for the squash community – everything is in one place and it’s a single transaction.</p>	
M23ESB(2302)	<p>It was noted also that a great deal of the insight from the squash community over recent years has really highlighted the desire of squash players to ‘give back’ to the</p>	

<p>M24ESB(2302)</p>	<p>game they love and be part of 'a community'. There was agreement that England Squash membership should put strong emphasis on these aspects.</p> <p>Following discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the squash community must be brought along on the journey and supported to fully embrace the change. It was felt that feedback from the May 2023 webinars and written feedback pointed towards the need for more engagement with the squash community before the scheme is launched. Having as many people on board as possible is considered essential. The decision was made to move the launch of the new scheme to spring 2024. Communication will go out to all members and stakeholders in the coming days and a revised communication and engagement plan would be drawn up.</p>	<p>PM</p>
<p>M25ESB(2302)</p>	<p>4. Talent & Performance</p> <p>Chris Robertson (CR), Head of Performance Operations, was in attendance and spoke about the Board paper he shared ahead of the meeting. CR is fully focused on England's aspiration to be the world's top-performing squash nation at the elite level, and in that context shared what he believes to be the most pressing challenges currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The depth of quality players in the junior pathway • The adherence of players within the pathway to the expectations and processes • The consistency of performance of the senior players, particularly with the men <p>It was noted that considerable work is taking place to address those challenges.</p>	<p>PM/MW</p>
<p>M26ESB(2302)</p>	<p>The Talent and Performance (T&P) team are working closely with Competitions Manager Vickie Prow because grassroots participation has a significant impact on the future of T&P.</p>	<p>CR</p>
<p>M27ESB(2302)</p>	<p>There was consensus that the shift in recent years, towards an environment at elite level that focusses on player welfare, has been extremely positive. However, it was agreed that still more needs to be done so that the voices of athletes are heard.</p>	<p>MW</p>
<p>M28ESB(2302)</p>	<p>Following discussion, the following actions were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being conscious of the Golden Thread of 'Young People', there should be a <u>balanced approach</u> between improving the depth of talent within the junior pathway and supporting current senior players • The Board paper on Young People for the next meeting should have a section on T&P 	<p>CR</p> <p>JR/MW</p>
<p>M29ESB(2302)</p>	<p>5. Young People</p> <p>The Board paper shared ahead of the meeting requested approval of the Young People Strategy.</p> <p>The Board approved the Strategy with the caveat that the following changes are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring out 'fun and belonging' to a greater extent in the Strategy • In relation to the targets in the Strategy, a target date should be added for each one • Performance and participation should not be separate, therefore these should be merged in the Strategy 	<p>JR</p>

M30ESB(2302)	<p>6. Community Engagement Plan</p> <p>Linked to the Code for Sports Governance is the requirement to document a strategy for engagement with stakeholders, including elite athletes. The team are currently awaiting guidance from Sport England on their requirements for the engagement strategy. It was noted that a suitable plan would be drafted for consideration by Board at the September 2023 Board meeting. The plan should be implemented no later than April 2024.</p>	MW/JR
M31ESB(2302)	<p>In order to guide the drafting of the plan, input was sought from the Board on where the priorities should lie.</p> <p>It was agreed that the following stakeholder groups should be included as part of a balanced approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members • Junior pathway players • Parents of junior players • Senior programme players (elite) • Programme participants • Coaches • Clubs • County associations • New audiences and groups • Staff • Referees • Sponsors • Volunteers • Leisure centres 	MW/JR
M32ESB(2302)	<p>There was agreement that the Community Engagement Plan must link closely with the Squash in a Changing World strategy.</p>	MW/JR
M33ESB(2302)	<p>7. Any Other Business</p> <p><i>Code for Sports Governance</i></p> <p>The Board approved the following Compliance Statement.</p> <p><i>“The Board has considered and is content to confirm England Squash continues to comply with A Code for Sports Governance in respect of all the Requirements covered by this form (section 1) with the potential exception of the Requirement(s) outlined in section 2.”</i></p> <p>N.B. the references to ‘section 1’ and ‘section 2’ relate to the document to be submitted to Sport England.</p>	
M34ESB(2302)	<p><i>Board update papers</i></p> <p>JC thanked 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate & Ecological Emergency • Competitions • Inclusion & Diversity 	



Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....25/07/2023.....