



Minutes of the Board meeting hosted on the Zoom video conference application at 10:30 on Tuesday, 9 March 2021.

## PRESENT

### Board

Joy Carter (Chair) (JC)  
 Yawar Abbas (YA)  
 Kate Bedwell (KB)  
 Nick Donald (ND)  
 Mark Jeffreys (MJ)  
 Heidi Leseur (HL)  
 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 Makinen (Head of Digital & Insight) (PM) – Digital Enablement item only  
 Paul Walters (Strategic Lead for Competitions & Events and Commercial) (PW)  
 Mark Williams (Director of Sport) (MW)

### Guests

Lauren Durkan (Sport and Recreation Alliance)  
 Hayley Foster (Sport and Recreation Alliance)

MINUTES REF.	ITEM	ACTION
M01ESB(2101)	<p><b>1. Chair's Welcome</b></p> <p>JC welcomed all to the meeting, highlighting that Lauren Durkan and Hayley Foster (Sport and Recreation Alliance), were present as part of an External Board Evaluation.</p>	
M02ESB(2101)	<p><i>CEO Departure</i></p> <p>It was noted that KW had handed in his notice to take up a senior leadership role at British Canoeing. In his 15 years with England Squash (including seven as CEO), KW led the organisation through a period of significant change that included a restructure and rebrand, as well as the delivery of a strategic plan that saw the organisation increase participation and champion initiatives focused on equality and inclusion.</p> <p>JC placed on record her sincere thanks on behalf of the Board for KW's outstanding contribution, particularly in his role as CEO.</p>	

M03ESB(2101)	It was noted that KW's last day in post would be 30 April and that a recruitment agency would be hired to find a replacement. Board agreed that an internal appointment of Interim CEO would be made to oversee the transition.	
M04ESB(2101)	<i>Roadmap/COVID recovery</i> Since the last meeting the Government has laid out plans to ease restrictions, and the implications for squash were to be discussed during the day's meeting.	
M05ESB(2101)	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>  Apologies were received from Board member Andrew Light.	
M06ESB(2101)	<b>Declarations of Interests</b>  There were no interests declared.	
M07ESB(2101)	<b>Minutes of the Board Meeting on 16/12/2020</b>  The minutes were taken as read and were agreed to be a true and correct record.	
M08ESB(2101)	<b>Matters Arising</b>  M07ESB(2004) – It was noted that an <a href="#">Environmental Statement</a> had been added to the England Squash website to underline the company's commitment to its environmental responsibilities.	
M09ESB(2101)	M18ESB(2004) – It was acknowledged that Board papers were more concise, which was appreciated by the Board.	
M10ESB(2101)	M22ESB(2004) – Preparations are underway to run Inclusion & Diversity Awareness training for Board and staff members.	<b>MW</b>
M11ESB(2101)	M27ESB(2004) – Discussions with PSA with regard to the collaboration and the protection of England Squash interests (including profile and branding) were said to be ongoing, with an update due at the next meeting.	<b>PW/PB</b>
M12ESB(2101)	M28ESB(2004) – A newly formed leisure centre working group has met and has started work in this important area.	
M13ESB(2101)	M33ESB(2004) – It was noted that Alison Henley's family had given its blessing for the Women's Senior ICC trophy to be named in her honour and requested to be sent a photograph of the trophy in due course.	<b>SJ</b>
M14ESB(2101)	<b>CEO Report</b>  Given the recent announcement of the Government's roadmap to ease lockdown restrictions, KW highlighted the ongoing communication with Sport England.	
M15ESB(2101)	In relation to membership and club affiliation, it was said to be considered very important to maintain the support and goodwill within the community following the free-of-charge benefits received by members during the pandemic.	
M16ESB(2101)	KW's written and verbal updates also included discussion of matters related to the Nominations Committee, the Commonwealth Games, an agreement with the PSA to use a glass court, the British Open, the pursuit of new sponsors, the Interactive	

	<p>Squash court in Manchester, developments of outdoor courts, the potential creation of a Hall of Fame for England players, and staff and office news.</p>	
M17ESB(2101)	<p><b>2. Return to Play</b></p> <p>PB presented this item, highlighting the eagerness of the community to return to play.</p>	
M18ESB(2101)	<p>There was discussion around the Executive’s proposed approach for the post-COVID-19 positioning project, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A phased approach, which initially focusses on existing players/core market <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There was agreement that the definition of ‘core market’ should be considered. A definition is to be prepared for the next meeting.</li> <li>○ Social media influencers were discussed and it was noted that England Squash is open to partnerships and collaboration.</li> <li>○ It was agreed that contacting with charity Rackets Cubed should be a priority to develop further the existing relationship.</li> <li>○ There was agreement that environmental aspects of the return to play should be “front and centre”.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Overall tone/campaign themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Board approved the proposed tone of voice, ‘cautious yet excited’.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>PB</b></p> <p><b>MW</b></p> <p><b>MW</b></p>
M19ESB(2101)	<p><b>3. Return of Competitions</b></p> <p>Competitions remain suspended. PW said that there are some tough decisions to be made regarding the return of competitions and it was noted that there is a need to review the scheduling of major competitions for the remainder of the 2020/21 season.</p>	
M20ESB(2101)	<p>The Executive sought approval for the cancellation of the British Junior Championship (May) and English Junior Championship (July) as restrictions will remain for a few months. Cancellation would allow England Squash to focus on local, small-scale competitions and build towards a return of more inclusive major competitions from September onwards.</p>	
M21ESB(2101)	<p>The Board approved the cancellations and plan of action.</p>	<b>PW</b>
M22ESB(2101)	<p><b>4. Membership &amp; Affiliation (M&amp;A)</b></p> <p>PB presented an update, emphasising the importance of aligning with the Government timeline for easing of restrictions, and being empathetic towards clubs that have been so impacted by the pandemic.</p>	
M23ESB(2101)	<p>It was noted that the interim findings of the insight project (Return to Play) found that knowledge amongst members of the freeze on M&amp;A renewals was low at 36%. It was agreed that more should be done to increase awareness.</p>	<b>PB</b>
M24ESB(2101)	<p>There was discussion of offering flexible payment methods for M&amp;A. It was agreed that now is not a suitable time to introduce additional changes (such as new flexible payment schemes), however it should remain a consideration for 2022/23.</p>	

M25ESB(2101)	There was agreement that communications with stakeholders should include information on how income from M&A is used, to show the importance of the income.	<b>PB</b>
M26ESB(2101)	<p>The Executive requested approval from the Board of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delay the reinstatement of M&amp;A fees from 1 April to 1 September 2021</li> <li>2. Proceed with a phased approach of charging clubs for court membership first, with payment of member fees deferred for 3 months allowing clubs to re-establish the number of paying members</li> </ol> <p>Both items were approved by the Board.</p>	<b>PB</b>
M27ESB(2101)	<p><b>5. Finance</b></p> <p>With the close of the challenging 2020/21 financial year approaching, NE spoke to update the Board on actuals, reforecasting and the 2021/22 budget.</p>	
M28ESB(2101)	The need to consider figures over a 24-month period was highlighted.	
M30ESB(2101)	NE requested approval of the 2021/22 budget, which was confirmed by the Board.	<b>NE</b>
M29ESB(2101)	It was agreed that it is important to consider communications with stakeholders in terms of how the annual accounts ending 31/03/2021 are presented, i.e. language, because of the impact of Sport England flexibility on funding.	<b>NE</b>
M30ESB(2101)	<p><b>6. Event Update - PSA Partnership</b></p> <p>PW gave an update on the potential collaboration with the PSA and provided further clarity on details with regard to the future of the British Open.</p>	
M31ESB(2101)	A concern was raised about whether the profile of England Squash could be diminished because of a partnership, but PW was confident that the current profile would be retained and potentially enhanced.	
M32ESB(2101)	A further concern was raised in relation to the potential that exposure to risk could return in future years should the British Open be unable to take place (due to financial reasons). It was acknowledged that there is a risk, but it was agreed on balance that the PSA collaboration is the best way forward.	
M33ESB(2101)	PW requested approval to establish a task-and-finish working group to finalise a long-term licensing agreement between England Squash and the PSA.	
M34ESB(2101)	The request was approved by the Board, and it was agreed that the agreement must be approved by the Board.	<b>PW</b>
M35ESB(2101)	<p><b>7. Digital Enablement</b></p> <p>PM joined the meeting and gave a digital update on plans for the next 1-2 years.</p>	
M36ESB(2101)	It was agreed that there is a need to be flexible when it comes to digital project work. It was noted that good digital progress had been made and that plans are exciting.	

M37ESB(2101)	In relation to the direction of travel, the Digital Enablement Steering Group was seeking approval from Board, which was granted.	
M38ESB(2101)	There was discussion of the potential to recruit skilled interns to assist with work around the user experience project. It was agreed that this should be investigated, though the significance of the ongoing investment in this area should be recognised and interns only used if appropriate.	PM/PB
M39ESB(2101)	<p><b>8. Referees</b></p> <p>Following the good progress with Mission 2022 to develop referees capable of refereeing at the Commonwealth Games, and to reinvigorate the referee pathway, MW gave an update on World Squash Federation developments that should boost progress further. It was noted that the World Squash Officiating (WSO) system had been developed by the WSF and the PSA.</p>	
M40ESB(2101)	<p>The Executive's recommendation was to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt the WSO system and stop the England Squash referee grading system (except for the England Squash Introduction to Refereeing Award). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This recommendation was approved by the Board.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	MW
M41ESB(2101)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer free England Squash membership to active referees at Level 3 and above <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This recommendation was also approved by the Board, and it was agreed that the following should be considered ahead of the next meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1. What can we do to reward referees?</li> <li>▪ 2. How do we define what an active referee is?</li> <li>▪ 3. How could we support active referees, e.g. free membership?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	MW MW MW
M42ESB(2101)	<p><b>9. England Squash Awards</b></p> <p>KW presented this item, which was to propose to Board that an England Squash National Awards scheme be reinstated with a revitalised format.</p>	
M43ESB(2101)	It was noted that under the proposals the categories would reflect England Squash strategic objectives, with nominations for individuals or groups. A panel would assess nominations. For some categories, it may be appropriate to seek a public vote, to raise the profile of the awards and involve the community.	
M44ESB(2101)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal was approved by the Board.</li> </ul>	MW
M45ESB(2101)	<p><b>10. Any Other Business</b></p> <p><i>Update Papers</i></p>	

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, particularly the paper on the major insight project (looking at the return to play).

- Climate and Ecological Emergency
- Inclusion & Diversity
- Major Insight Project
- Participation & Programmes
- Pathways
- Talent & Performance

M46ESB(2101)

*Legal complaint*

It was noted that a player who had not been approved to play during lockdown (under the Government's exemption for elite athletes) had made a formal complaint. England Squash is seeking legal support on the issue.

M47ESB(2101)

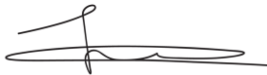
*PSA Manchester Open*

It was highlighted that this event will take place at the National Squash Centre from 19-25 April. It was agreed that the event could be an opportunity to promote the return to play.

M48ESB(2101)

*External Board Evaluation*

Hayley Foster, Governance Manager at the Sport and Recreation Alliance, who had been observing the meeting with her Governance Officer colleague Lauren Durkan, said that the evaluation report will be made available in May, i.e. before the next Board meeting.

Signed.....  ..... (Chair)

Date.....16/04/2021.....