



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

(Meeting held by “Go-to-Meeting” conference call on 24 May 2017)

PRESENT:

John Bell (JB) – President/Chairman
John McArdle (JM) – Regional Director
Karen Murphy (KM) – Regional Director
Garry Collins (GC) – Regional Director
Claire Leonard (CL) – Appointed Director

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gary Smith (GS) – Chief Executive
Roger Black (RB) - minute taker

1. WELCOME:

The President opened the meeting at 09.00 hours (UK time) and welcomed all to the Board meeting with a particular reference to Claire Leonard, newly appointed Director attending her first meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

The President asked for declarations of interest not already recorded.
Claire Leonard – employee of Hunter Johnstone Marketing Solutions Ltd, a company with which World Bowls has an association in relation to website design and marketing.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Tabled: Minutes of December 2016 Board meeting.

The minutes of the December 2016 meeting were approved as a true record.

4 BUSINESS ARISING

No matters arising that are not covered in the agenda other than the appointment of CL to the Board was confirmed as being for a period initially of two (2) years. As well as bringing her considerable business expertise and skills to World Bowls, her appointment now met the Company requirement of having a minimum of two Directors of both genders on the Board. This led to a general discussion on the length of terms of office of current Directors, it being highlighted that the current Articles could potentially mean that all directors could see their terms of office terminate at the same time. GS advised that when World Bowls was first incorporated this had not been the case as Directors were initially appointed for different periods of time (two and four year periods initially and thereafter for four years) thereby ensuring continuity as only two Directors retired from office at any one time.

5. STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020 & 2017 ACTION PLAN

Tabled: Draft Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020.

JB referred to the current draft 2017-2020 Strategic Plan, which had been copied to the Directors in advance of the meeting. The Board fully discussed the content and agreed to prepare a final document for agreement but bearing in mind that the current Strategic Plan was 2014-2017 the revised Strategic Plan should now cover 2018-2021. GS advised of the requirement to further progress the establishment of a Players' Commission.

The 2018-2021 Strategic Plan to be finalised at the next Board meeting to be held in September 2017. The regional development strategy was geared primarily to benefit lesser developed 'smaller' MNA's.

Resolved:

It was agreed unanimously that the Strategic Plan to replace the 2014-2017 should be for the period 2018-2021, not 2017-2020. The plan would require to be revised with appropriate amendment and timelines. The Articles to be scrutinised and reviewed with a view to considering proposals to ensure continuity of experience on the Board when Directors were appointed. The Board would consider and review the existing Regional Director organisation with a view to considering and establishing two new Regional Directors, specifically for the Americas and Asia in order to further discussions at the next Council meeting. Player's Commission to be progressed. WB also recognise that the Court of Arbitration for Sport is the ultimate body for deciding any disputes, a requirement for Sport Accord/IOC recognition. The Regulations to be amended to include a clause recognising the Court of Arbitration for Sport. The Board are empowered to amend Regulations and reference would be made to WB's legal representatives to ensure the correct wording.

Action:

The draft Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2021 to be further evaluated and examined by the Directors for further input and comments and any submissions from Directors to be received by 31st May 2017.

The Board also agreed to formulate a letter for issue to all MNA's seeking responses as to how the MNA's see the future of the sport of bowls and to ascertain what they wished World Bowls to achieve during the period 2018 – 2021. CL to provide the Chief Executive with suggested input for a suitable letter for issue to MNA's seeking their input as part of the Strategic Plan consultation process .

5 BOARD 2017 DRAFT ACTION PLAN REVIEW

Tabled: World Bowls 2017 Annual Action Plan.

All Board members had been issued with the WB 2017 Draft Action Plan, with a request from JB to the Board to ensure that nothing was missed from the extensive and detailed document. The first item under "Profile and Image" related to achieving membership of Sport Accord and then subsequently obtaining recognition from the IOC. GS updated the Board with a change to the timescale for submitting our membership application to later in the year and outlined the arrangements for the next meetings in June with officials of Sport Accord.

CL updated the Board on the development of the web site with regard to the Asset Resource Centre and inputting the relevant videos and You Tube content. Work on these items was scheduled for early June 2017. Sponsorship would be sought to cover the costs which would otherwise be levelled by Hunter Johnstone for the work that was required to complete the Asset Resource Centre, which may delay the preparation of this aspect of the website.

Changes were also in the pipeline to alter the home page of the website, particularly when WB events were in progress to ensure the end user could more easily access results.

It was recognised from the statistics recorded that the website was visited more often during WB events.

The production of a promotional DVD had been raised at a meeting with the IOC and it was thought that it would be a useful tool to give the general public an idea as to what bowls was all about. Mention was made of the Bowls Canada production which was in the public domain and thought to be as near as to what was required. CL mentioned the considerable costs involved in such a production.

Topics covered and discussed included a review of the events programme. World Bowls events had proved to be popular as did innovative events held and run by BA. It was considered that the incorporation into membership of WB of the WIBC would generate a discussion on an enhanced world spectrum of events including indoor events.

JB reminded the Board that the results of the world survey indicated a desire by MNA's to have more world events.

JB also referred to the generation of advertising and sponsorship but that over the past two years not very much was achieved. A realistic commercial plan was needed that would achieve some additional income. Headline sponsors for events such as the World Champion of Champions are needed. Achieving sponsorship income was recognised as a problem for World Bowls.

GC was in the early stages of trying to find additional sponsorship from his contacts. In response to a question from KM concerning approaching potential sponsors such as travel companies, the President advised that contact had been made with the owner of the travel company holding the UK franchise for travel to the CG and who also dealt with Bowls England with a view to advertising on the WB website but nothing transpired. As GS explained there was inevitably a conflict between WB and MNA's when it came to travel to host countries and CL indicated host countries were generally better organised and resourced and benefitted greatly from local sponsorship.

JB also added the fact that there was a massive gulf between the Northern and Southern Hemisphere in resources available. Clubs in Australia were able to host events due to their considerable income.

In conclusion and to bring the discussion to an end President JB asked that the draft annual plan be re-circulated, taken as a base document and each Director to provide further input and comment by 31st May 2017.

Resolved:

Sponsorship to be investigated to mitigate the costs of further additions to and the development of the website.

Amendments to be made to the opening page of the website when events were in progress to enable visitors to link direct to results. CL to organise.

During the playing of WB events, the display of results would feature prominently on the website and other news items would be moved.

A detailed commercial strategy was needed and it was accepted that time was required to develop such a strategy. CL to formulate and present prior to September Board meeting.

Action

Directors to revisit the draft 2017 Action Plan and to provide further input and comment by 31st May.

6. FINANCE REPORT

Tabled: Income and expenditure statement, balance sheet and actual v budget for the current financial year to 30th April 2017 and updated financial forecasts.

GS advised the board that the 2016 audited accounts had now been approved and the relevant documents would now be filed at Companies House by the WB accountants and auditors. Once finalised bound copies are received the Chief Executive would distribute the 2016 audited accounts to MNA's.

Corporation tax payable in relation to 2016 amounted to £13.40.

GS outlined the agreed arrangements for future payment of the rent for the office premises and brought the board up to date with the current arrangements all of which were satisfactory.

7. DEVELOPMENT

Tabled: Comprehensive reports from Regional Directors circulated in advance of the meeting.

Each Director added to their reports where necessary with GC adding that Hungary had now applied for development membership and that discussions were being undertaken with Austria, Bulgaria and Sweden. Further progress with France had been slow but it was hoped to advance discussions in the near future. CL would be visiting the French officials next week in her capacity with Hunter Johnstone and would refer them to GS and GC for further contact on WB matters.

KM updated the Board with issues in her Region. Despite email reminders India had not progressed their development requests or made any major steps forward despite reminders to do so by JB & GS. India is to host the Asian Lawn Bowls Federation Championships in October 2017.

KM had travelled to Fiji as reported to the Board where meetings had taken place in regard to the establishment of Bowls Oceania. The constitution for Bowls Oceania was being amended with experienced individuals to serve on the board and to manage the organisation having been identified with any further updates being issued to the Board as and when required. Revenue would be raised via annual membership fees of \$100 per country.

KM had also made contact with others in connection with the establishment of an Athlete's Commission. More work was being undertaken to progress this new development.

Tonga had pulled out of hosting the multi sports Pacific Games due in 2019, in which lawn bowls was one of the sports, and another host country was now being sought. GS raised the continuing problem of payment of fees and submission of returns from Samoa and asked KM to try to identify additional contacts in Samoa.

RB asked KM to make enquires of GOLDOC to enable WB to issue appropriate letters to those ITO's that had applied to officiate at the 2018 CG. Names had been submitted to GOLDOC in February 2017 and many were now seeking a response and the up to date position so that arrangements could be made for time-off work etc.

In relation to the Americas and African regions, JM reported that two requests had been made for development but despite the issuing of the relevant documentation, nothing further had been received.

Pakistan, a development member, were to be reminded of the 5 year condition to establish a viable green and facilities.

Liberia had decided not to progress their Development Membership and this had now been terminated.

Nigeria had also made contact with WB but nothing further had been received from them.

There continued to be a problem with contacts in Swaziland. Zambia's fees had been received but not their annual return but encouragingly Malawi are to participate in the African States event later in the year.

All contact had been lost with Brazil and enquiries would be made of neighbouring MNA's for up-to-date email addresses.

Resolved

The Hungarian Bowlsport Federation was formally accepted as a Development Member by the Board.

KM to advise on the next steps in the formation of the Athlete's Commission, hopefully before the next meeting with Sport Accord in June 2017.

A request for assistance for a set-up grant for Bowls Oceania of £1000 was approved by the Board.

8. WEBSITE.

CL advised that she and her colleagues at Hunter Johnstone were aware of the requirements for the website and the agreed work due to be undertaken had been scheduled for the end of May 2017.

CL thought it would be beneficial to provide a proposal to the Board as to a strategy for future website development.

9 COMMERCIAL

JB advised the Board that Aceit had agreed to provide additional uniforms, casual wear and clothing under the agreed commercial arrangements.

Action

The Board members and staff were asked to supply individual measurements to JB for onward transmission to Aceit.

10. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

Tabled: Chief Executive's written report was circulated to all Directors prior to the meeting.

GS brought the Board up to date with the next step in the Sport Accord/IOC recognition process and that he and JB would be attending on 15th June an information session for all applicants and on 16th June, one-to-one discussions and meetings with the membership commission of Sport Accord.

The revision of the Articles and Regulations were tied into the Strategic Plan and as they included the possibility of new Directors for Americas and Asia, and a possible rotation of Directors, the Council would first be required to vote on any proposals made to change the existing Articles.

Voting rights were also an issue that could require some consideration because of the differing voting criteria written into the Articles. JB also thought that there needed to be a debate on the creation of further regions and that the biennial meeting was seen as being the appropriate time for discussions, consultation and views on any future changes.

It was agreed to revisit any potential changes at the September 2017 Board meeting as, with WB moving forward with a new strategy, there was a greater potential commercial activity in areas such as America, Canada, China and Asia generally who had large populations with discretionary income and more leisure time.

GS updated the Board with the position of the WIBC and that he was awaiting confirmation of arrangements for a meeting now proposed to be held in September 2017 in Scotland with the WIBC. When a response was received, the Board would be advised of any arrangements. Previous arrangements to meet with the WIBC during the International Series In Ireland had to be cancelled due to the unavailability of the WIBC Secretary.

The opportunity would also be taken to discuss a more meaningful calendar of events.

GS raised the issue of tender guidelines for the 2019 & 2020 World Singles Champion of Champions, 2024 World Championships and the 2023 Atlantic & Asia Pacific Championships. CL would look at the presentational side of these tender documents to provide a document that would be better presented and highlight the benefits of hosting such events.

GS had contacted the IBD seeking an update on their activities and advised the Board of the contents of a response from the IBD covering events to be held in the Gold Coast in June 2017 and mentioned the participation of para bowlers in the 2018 CG. Mention was also made of Asian-Para bowls due to be held in 2018 which would include para bowlers in all classifications. The International Blind Bowlers Association world championships which had taken place in South Africa in early 2017 was not sanctioned by IBD. IBD faced a problem of finding a host country for their 2019 World Championships, due in all probability to a lack of finance.

The dates for WB events for 2018 had all been agreed except for the Champion of Champions. Bowls Australia (BA) had been asked to look at the proposed dates for this event.

With regard to manufacturers and testers, GS confirmed that fees had been increased by 2% this year. There was on-going correspondence with BA as two Australian testers had expressed concerns over the lack of testing business due to domestic regulations that define the need for bowls testing and stamping at a domestic level in Australia.

GS also outlined the various arrangements that existed for testing in the various MNA's.

Resolved

It was agreed to prepare a paper for the September Board meeting to discuss more fully the pros and cons of the approach to be taken to further the potential in the areas of America, Canada etc mentioned above.

It was agreed to obtain more detailed information and clarification as to where the

various international governing bodies representing individual disabilities sit with regard to membership of IBD. It was suggested that IBD also needed to have a full review of their current processes. GS to have further contact with IBD to obtain additional information from IBD.

The final draft revised performance standards for synthetic bowling green surfaces document prepared by Keith McAuliffe had been circulated to the Board and it was agreed to ask Keith McAuliffe to send a final draft to each of the suppliers of the World Bowls approved/endorsed surfaces to seek their endorsement, or add any comment. The Board, when meeting in September, would then aim to move to finalise the document and to arrange for subsequent printing and publication.

11 MARKETING, MEDIA & PR & SOCIAL MEDIA

JB referred to the comprehensive report received from David Allen and thanked GC, CL and KM for their work that they had carried out on advancing social media activity on the website, Twitter and Facebook.

There was a general feeling that marketing need to be looked into in more depth and should be combined with commercial activity. A policy was required but was down also to available resources. CL advised that a strategy had to be achievable. There was a need to look at what was available and that there would be a need to balance the aspirations with the WB capabilities. This would be discussed and reviewed at the September Board meeting.

Future Meetings

The next Board meeting was scheduled for 14th/15th September in Edinburgh. If other go-to-meetings were required these could be arranged as necessary.

Roger Black
29th May 2017