



BOARD MEETING MINUTES

(Meeting held by “Go-to-Meeting” conference call on 20 January 2019)

PRESENT:

John Bell (JB) – President/Chairman
John McArdle (JM) - Regional Director
Wayne Moffatt (WM) - 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.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

The President asked for declarations of interest not already recorded.

Three changes require to be recorded as follows:-

Garry Collins appointed as Secretary of Bowls Guernsey and in addition has been appointed as a member of the European Commonwealth Strategic Working Group. On 13th March 2019, he stands down as Vice Chairman and Treasurer of the Guernsey Commonwealth Games to be elected as Chairman/President.

There are no further changes to that previously recorded.

3 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Tabled: Minutes of October 2018 Board meeting.

The minutes of the October 2018 meeting were approved unanimously as a true record.

4 BUSINESS ARISING

There were no matters arising that would not be covered in the main agenda items.

Resolved:

GC referred to the appointment of the two Development Directors, Scott Roberts (USA) and Claudius Lam (Hong Kong) and the Board agreed, going forward, that they would participate in subsequent conference meetings.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The President's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

He welcomed Scott Roberts and Claudius Lam to their positions of Development Directors hoping that their enthusiasm, knowledge and experience would enhance the role of WB as a proactive and credible Governing Body.

JB referred to his written report to the Board and reminded the Board that at the last meeting he highlighted the need for the Board to concentrate and focus attention on the key priorities which would contribute the greatest benefit to the development and well-being of the sport; were clearly achievable within the resources available; could attract support from the global bowls community and would involve the allocation of clear responsibilities for their implementation along with timescales and target dates.

He was delighted to report that progress had been made on the identified key priorities, together with the continuing establishment of a healthier financial position. He was also particularly pleased to report progress on the creation of a new WB "Mega" event and that discussions were being undertaken with the IIBC to assist in the promotion of a 2019 World Under 25 Championships event.

He commented on the need to continue to work on all priority areas and the need to re-visit the Operational Plan to present it in a more dynamic way in order that it reflected the significance and relevance to the key priorities. Directors were asked to consider other additional priorities and provide suggestions and feedback as a matter of priority after the meeting. Two examples of added priorities included social media engagement and the generation of external funding

In response to a comment and question from WM as to what was the one most important and main achievement that WB could expect to achieve, JB responded by commenting that finding the effective means to achieve a much higher profile and successfully market the sport would be of great advantage in terms of increasing membership, media attention and sponsorship. However, the difficulty in achieving this was obvious. Marketing and promoting the sport was necessary but many MNA's contributed little in this area. A universal approach to marketing would be to the benefit of everyone and a great step forward.

Equally, JB reiterated the importance of implementing the development strategy as it gave the opportunity to provide much needed assistance to "smaller" countries, and indeed help emerging countries to achieve full membership status.

GS added that one practical way to achieving these initiatives was through the coaching syllabus and the introduction of a proposed mega event which would provide opportunities to enhance the profile of the sport. GS also referred to the current joint venture between BA and WB of the creation of a brand positioning strategy to assist both organisations, which would hopefully assist other MNA'S and provide guidance in

how to market the sport, make it more attractive to potential participants, sponsors and media and facilitate the adoption of effective “best practices”.

JB provided an update on the progress of the current branding and profiling exercise to the Board.

GC thought that the move to reaching the minimum number of countries for Olympic recognition should also be a major priority. He also proposed that a sub-committee be set up to investigate the possibility of increasing the number of member countries to achieve the minimum number required for IOC recognition.

Action:

GC to prepare a discussion working paper along with initially JB and GS on how to develop and increase membership of World Bowls in order to satisfy the GAISF requirements prior to application for IOC recognition. Non-Commonwealth Games countries, for example in Europe, could potentially receive considerable grants if World Bowls was recognised by the IOC.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN & OPERATIONAL PLAN 2018-2021

Tabled: Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021.

JB referred to the current 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, much of which he had covered in his President’s report to the Board.

JB was of the view that the Operational Plan should mainly be an internal working document and that it should be completely revised and presented in a more dynamic and positive way.

Resolved:

At the suggestion of JB, it was agreed that GS, JB and CL would have a fresh look at the Strategic and Operational Plan and present a preliminary document to the Board for future consideration.

7. MARKETING, MEDIA & PR & SOCIAL MEDIA:

GC advised the Board that an Instagram account had now been created, albeit with only a few followers to date, alongside Facebook and Twitter. Included in his detailed report were statistics which clearly indicated an increase in interest and activity during World Bowls events.

CL also provided the Board with statistics on web usage which showed during the last two months of 2018 a significant increase, thought to be down to a combination of regular news items and social media driving visitors to view the website to seek competition results.

The use of phones and tablets had now surpassed that of desk top usage looking for information. This was now following the normal pattern and highlighted the need for the website to be responsive moving forward so that visitors could view pages easily on smaller screen devices.

CL, assisted by GC, provided the Board with a paper on the requirements and scope of a future World Bowls Digital Strategy and instigated a discussion on what was needed and clarification on how WB was going to utilise the technology available to improve communication with all stakeholders.

What was clear was that everything that is done in the future required to be more attractive and dynamic in presentation and content and able to be read on a wide range of modern devices including Iphones, tablets etc. To move forward digitally was a huge task and until the results of the on-going research by the joint BA/WB exercise was published, which would hopefully point to the future, the digital strategy review of World Bowls, its brand positioning and its website etc should be put on hold. Budget, affordability and the resources available to WB were only a few of the considerations to be taken into account.

The Asset Resource Centre (ARC) was not being utilised well at present despite the issue of a reminder email to MNA's in October 2018 to encourage MNA's to make use of it. The video supplied by Bowls Canada was now available on You Tube. The video on the promotion of the Premier League in Australia still needed to be sourced for use on the website.

CL advised that there had been no response from the major companies contacted for sponsorship etc and pro-active dialogue trying to engage potential sponsors and commercial partners has been paused until the results of the joint venture with BA on brand position work has been presented and approved.

Action:
CL to check the availability of the promotion of the BPL in Australia for inclusion on the WB website.

8. FINANCE REPORT:

Tabled: All the financial documents in relation to the year up to the end of December 2018 had been issued in advance of the meeting.

GS advised that only a few hundred pounds was outstanding by way of test fees which would be received in January 2019. Thereafter all accounts would be ready for audit.

GS reminded Directors that within the Operational Plan, it was stated that each Regional Director by the end of November each year should present their action plan for the following year along with the associated budget.

In response to a question from WM, it was confirmed that all MNA's had been advised of the existing development opportunities.

CL would re-design the application form for use by MNA's requesting assistance to advertise the availability of assistance and Directors were reminded and encouraged by GS to promote the development strategy with an emphasis on development members in their efforts to become full members. GS reminded the Board that at present the development committee comprised the Regional Directors plus the two Development Directors and suggested that all should meet – possibly by skype – to focus and concentrate on development to share knowledge and priorities eg. driving and assisting development members towards full membership and bringing more countries into membership. Development members should also be monitored more closely to encourage progress to full membership. Part of the remit could also include guidance on the availability of funding, negotiations with Government funding agencies.

In response to questions raised by GC, GS clarified expenditure levels in the areas of Telephones and 2018 Commonwealth Games.

The Board accepted the layout and presentation of the accounts as shown in the relevant papers.

Resolved:

Development Members to be more closely monitored to progress advancement to full membership.

Action:

CL to re-design the application form for use by MNA's requesting development assistance and forward to Directors for approval, input and comment.

Regional Directors to submit operational plans each November for the following year along with appropriate budgets.

Development and Regional Directors to meet – suggested skype call – to share knowledge and priorities with an emphasis on Development Members.

9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT:

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

GS had provided an update on 2019 registered membership figures and reported that, encouragingly, most MNA's had now submitted their annual returns and paid the affiliation fees and listed those MNA's that remained outstanding. Unfortunately, Swaziland had withdrawn their membership.

GS reported 24 male entries and 20 female entries for the 2019 World Cup, about the same number of entries as last year.

IOC/GAISF:

GS referred in particular to the GAISF/IOC correspondence, all of which had been copied to the Board.

Confirmation had been sought by GAISF from CMSB that there was no conflict of interest in World Bowls applying for membership of GAISF but no reply had been received from CMSB.

World Bowls Performance Standards for Bowling Green Surfaces.

Revised standards for artificial surfaces had been finalised and published and booklets printed. Keith McAuliffe had been thanked for his excellent work and expertise in relation to the complex considerations required in the detailed revision process.

Laws Committee Matters.

Kerry Clark provided a written report to the Board on matters dealt with by the Laws Committee since the previous meeting. These included responding to a question from Bowls England (BE) and Bowls Australia (BA), on domestic regulations and a reprint of the Laws; the appointment of ITO's for IDB approved events; the approval of a measure in New Zealand; footwear enquiry from USA and a ruling given on a question from Bowls Scotland on an incident at their National Championships.

In relation to the 2022 Commonwealth Games to be held in England, Kerry Clark advised that the greens, facilities and surrounds to be used at Leamington Spa had

been visited by a number of interested and involved bodies, including the local authority. Consideration was now being given to a programme of work that would ensure the greens would be of a satisfactory standard.

Following on from this, it was agreed that, for a variety of different reasons, the tolerances on levels for natural playing surfaces in the UK, could not be the same as those agreed for synthetic installations.

The Board agreed, on the suggestion from GS and KC, that Keith McAuliffe and Dr Richard Gibbs, the STRI consultant involved at Leamington Spa, would be asked to collaborate on producing guidelines in relation to tolerance levels for natural playing surfaces.

World Bowls 2024

Kerry Clark also advised that when he attended the Opening of the International Deaf Championships in Christchurch he met with the greenkeeper from Burnside who had visited Hong Kong in early 2018 and inspected some of the greens to be used for 2024. In his view a lot of work will need to be done on all surfaces to get them to a consistent pace and level. The playing surfaces differ markedly from club to club and if there is a desire to get consistency then work was required and needed to start soon.

Within the agreement between World Bowls and HKLBA there was a need to ensure a consistency between greens and GS suggested that during visits to Hong Kong prior to 2024 on other matters, this would provide the opportunity to ensure the issue was being attended to and the greens were receiving the necessary action. The position would be monitored but it was expected that with the recognised efficiency of the HKLBA organisation, there was no cause for concern.

GS also mentioned that he had discussions with officials of the International Deaf Federation regarding eligibility to enter disabled events and they accepted that, as an organisation, they were not eligible to be represented separately in the Commonwealth Games.

GS advised the Board that an application for full membership had been received from Pakistan LBF who were currently a Development Member. This was accompanied by a letter of support from their Olympic Committee. It was resolved that the application be approved once their application fee had been received. Photographic evidence had been received showing a fully compliant bowling green.

A development application form and supporting application fee had been received from Bangladesh and the Board agreed to approve membership as a Development Member.

Events Updates:

2018 World Singles Champion of Champions:

All paperwork had been issued for the 2019 Champion of Champions. GS advised that Switzerland had been denied an entry on eligibility, as they had not held any relevant national singles competition in 2018. The Board were reminded by GS that National Championships had to take place in the relevant country.

2019 Atlantic and Asia Pacific Championships:

GS advised the Board that ITO's had been appointed to the 2019 Atlantic Championships and to the 2019 Asia Pacific Championships and as they were paying their own transport costs and accommodation, asked the Board to consider paying a daily allowance to offset their outlays. 22 ITO's had been appointed to the Atlantic Championships and 36 to the Asia Pacific Championships. WM asked about the difference in numbers and it was explained that at the Atlantic Championships, a

number of NTO's would also need to be appointed. In principle GC agreed with an allowance but GS and RB would investigate further and present a recommendation for consideration.

2020 World Championships:

Coloured bowls:

It had been suggested that each country should have their own colour of bowls, with an emphasis of achieving this for the World Championships in 2020. WB was supportive of the suggestion made by BA but it was thought prudent to wait to see which countries actually qualified for the World Championships. It was seen as an emotive issue and it was a big "ask" to expect smaller MNA's to adhere to this requirement. Known factors in relation to players being required to use a specific colour of bowl included the cost, availability of an individual player's preferred make and model and the opportunity to practice and perform with a new set of bowls.

The Board fully supported the desire to see players from the same country playing with sets of similar coloured bowls for all the obvious reasons.

A discussion with manufacturers was a possibility due to the cost of providing all players of the same country with the same colour of bowls.

GC suggested that at the Atlantic and Asia Pacific Championships, a record should be made of the colour of bowls used by each country, creating a database to use for further consideration.

It was agreed by the Board that this was a desirable position but the time to deal with the matter and progress it was after the qualifying events.

Having qualified to participate in the 2020 World Championships, the countries could be more likely to receive funding and sponsorship support from bowls manufacturers.

Moama BC – Proposed New World Bowls Event:

Included in the CEO report was a reference to a meeting held on 1st November 2018 with representatives of Moama BC and others to progress discussions on the proposed new WB event along the lines of golf's "Ryder Cup". GS updated the Board that Moama BC was delighted to host the event, an outline budget had been produced with Moama BC covering the cost of all accommodation, meals for players and officials. BA would cover any costs relating to the BA team and a joint BA/WB announcement would be drafted and made via the BA media experts. The event was to be named the "World Bowls Challenge". The inaugural event would be billed as "Australia v The Rest of the World" with each team consisting of 5 male and 5 female players playing in a mix of disciplines. Coach for Australia would be Steve Glasson and JB the Coach for the "Rest of the World".

International Indoor Bowls Council:

JB & GS reported that a very successful meeting had been held with IIBC officials during the under 25 World Indoor Championships held in Glasgow in December 2018. The IIBC will host the official under 25 World Championships in England in December 2019. WB and the IIBC will work together to promote the event.

JB also advised that the opportunity now exists to review and enhance the status of the current World Cup to produce a truly credible Indoor World Championships in

collaboration with IIBC. Relationships with the IIBC are good and GS had allocated funding in the 2019 budget for potential costs.

Manufacturing and testing:

GS reported that there had been no further progress regarding the operational status of the Malaysian test table.

The Directors approved the 2% increase in annual licence fees for manufacturers and testers.

Coaching:

GS reported that Dr Simon Botha had indicated that he was hopeful that a draft manual report would be available in February 2019

Resolved:

Pakistan to be admitted as a full member subject to payment of the appropriate fee.

Bangladesh admitted to development membership.

GS and RB to consider the amount of allowance to be paid to ITO's at the Atlantic and Asia Pacific Championships.

Manufacturers and Testers' annual licence fees increased by 2%.

10. REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S REPORTS:

Tabled: Written reports from the Regional and Development Directors were circulated in advance of the meeting.

Africa and The Americas

JM's report indicated that very little had happened in Africa since the last WB meeting as it was holiday season and traditionally a quiet period.

JM added that he was concerned with the present internal troubles in Zimbabwe and Kenya and the demise of bowling in Swaziland was regretted.

Botswana and Zimbabwe were expected to apply for development assistance and the relevant forms were awaited.

In the Americas, Canada continued to work on implementing new strategies to promote coaching and the MNA was pleased to report a small 1.2% growth in membership, which was put down to their annual "National Bowls Day" campaign which was run for the second time. A new approved Strategic Plan for 2019-2022 was to be presented to their membership later in the month and published on their website.

In Argentina, JM broached the subject of unification of the two organisations but this was not seen as a problem in Argentina. Nevertheless GS has prepared a document on unification and its benefits to be presented to them in due course.

Applications from Argentina and Jamaica had been rejected as they did not meet the criteria for development assistance.

Asia & Oceania

WM produced a short report indicating that there had not been a great deal of activity in the region since the last Board meeting. He was pleased to report, however, that lawn bowls was to be included in the South East Asian Games to be held in the Philippines in December 2019.

Bowls New Zealand had made enquiries regarding the inclusion of bowls in the Paralympics and GS had written to IBD for their views and consideration and was still awaiting a response.

The availability of the Laws of the Sport on the WB website appeared to continue to cause debate and concern within BA. It was felt, however, that the World Governing Body of the sport had a responsibility to display the Laws of its sport on its website, which in effect was a reference point for the sport, and it was thought that the display would not directly affect the sale of Law books by MNAs, which should also contain their own relevant Domestic Regulations.

WM added that there had been an expression of interest in establishing a lawn bowls club in Vietnam.

Europe.

GC's written report had been circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting and provided an update on each member country within his region. Several new countries – Austria, Norway and Sweden – had intimated an interest in bowling in the past but no further contact had been received from them although Sweden was still paying fees to the European Bowls Union (EBU). Contact had also been established with Bulgaria and Italy and was continuing.

GC updated the Board with his dealings with France and Switzerland, the latter having made enquiries on the construction of a new venue and who were also attending umpiring and coaching training in Guernsey in September 2019. France wish to host some events at their new green in 2019 and were participating, along with Switzerland, in the Atlantic Championships. As there were several events already scheduled to take place in 2019, thought would be given to possibly organising some sort of an event in France in 2020. GC would liaise with the French officials.

Conversations were continuing with Portugal involving officials from "Bowls Algarve" on the formation of a new body hopefully culminating in an application to re-join WB.

Development Members, Czech Republic, Hungary and Germany continued to be active and GC was in regular contact with them on progress and all were attending the courses being organised by Guernsey in September 2019.

Bowls Germany requested funding for a greenkeeper support visit, further details are required before final approval is agreed.

Bowls Guernsey had submitted a request for financial assistance for their centralised coaching and umpiring courses to be held later in the year.

IOM had also requested assistance for coaching and full details would be furnished in due course.

The Board agreed to the requests from Bowls Guernsey and IOM.

Action:

GC to liaise with officials in France to investigate the possibility of utilising their facilities in 2020.

11. GENERAL BUSINESS:

GS informed the Board that Dr Ron Barron had arranged the manufacture by Thomas Taylor of 15 new World Reference Bowls and advised that he would be retiring from World Bowls duties in one year. It was hoped that Rob Curran currently with Drakes Pride, who already provides assistance to Dr Barron, would take over from him.

GS had written to the Commonwealth Games enquiring if bowling could be included in the playing programme for the Commonwealth Youth Games and was awaiting on a reply.

GS referred to a letter from International Bowls for the Disabled (IBD) asking for full membership of WB to be considered and GS had responded by confirming that IBD was a Recognised Association and that the current World Bowls constitution only allowed member National Authorities to be full members of WB.

The Board were of a view that no change was required.

Future Meetings:

It was proposed to hold a conference meeting provisionally on 14th July 2019 with the next face-to-face meeting in Edinburgh on 9 & 10 October 2019 as agreed at previous meeting.

Roger Black
31 January 2019