

Board Meeting: 29 November 2023 – in person with virtual option

Board Members in person: Paul Thorogood (PT), John Davies (JD), Jared Lougher (JL), Richard Brice (RB), Jonathan Arter (JA)

Board Members virtual : Adam Thompson (AT), Ben Stirling (BS), Daniel Jeffreys (DJ) and Diana Lewis (DL)

Invited: Colin Metson (CM), Susie Osborne (SO), Adam Park (AP), Colin Jones (CJ), Gareth Evans (GE)

Apologies: Helen Arnold-Richardson

ITEM	NOTE	
1.0	<p>Apologies received from HAR. PT welcomed everyone to the meeting and they each introduced themselves. PT added how pleased he was to welcome four new board members to the meeting and the success of the recruitment process for identifying such able people to the team.</p> <p>No declarations of interest.</p> <p>CM told the meeting that David Dulieu had stood down from the board and had received a letter of thanks, CM read DD's reply.</p> <p>The actions from the previous minutes included in the board pack were confirmed as completed with the exception of information on the finances and safeguarding training. This remains outstanding for some board members. RS advised the meeting that HAR was going to suggest to the meeting that a training course be held later in 2024 as advice on the most appropriate course had identified an alternative to the online option.</p> <p>JD asked why individuals had left the R&J Commission meeting on 15 August 2023. CM responded with information about the meeting and the discussions about the use of tutors but the two individuals did not wish to continue.</p> <p>PT explained to the new members of the board that all the subcommittee meeting minutes are included in the board pack so the meeting assumed they have been read and will answer any queries or move on. There were no queries.</p>	TO BE ACTIONED
2.0	<p>International Relations</p> <p>For the benefit of the new board directors CM gave some background to the history regarding the challenges with IBA regarding governance, finance, ethics and IOC derecognition. As IBA have not been involved in the last two Olympic cycles, like-minded organisations have established World Boxing. Although not recognised by the IOC yet, as a legal challenge from IBA is still ongoing, the aim is for World Boxing to hold competitions for Olympic pathway boxing and support boxing in the Olympics. There are major countries involved including USA, The Netherlands and GB. Countries from Asia, America, Oceania and Europe are represented. Wales joined in October and CM attended the first conference in Frankfurt. He outlined the decisions made at the conference that included the appointment of the World Boxing president and executive.</p> <p>CM advised the meeting that the next challenge is for a competition calendar that suits Welsh Boxing. The Wales performance team concentrate on the Commonwealth Games and these weight categories are unlikely to be available initially.</p>	

	<p>JD asked if there is any impact from joining World Boxing from the EUBC. CM confirmed that the EUBC will take guidance from the IBA.</p> <p>PT thanked CM for his detailed walk through. He told the meeting that they are awaiting the reaction from IBA. Some countries have resigned from IBA or have been suspended. A press release has been prepared following the World Boxing conference – thanks to DJ, but nothing has been received from IBA to date. PT confirmed that Welsh Boxing, ideally, wants to be a member of both and there should be room for both.</p> <p>JD confirmed that the articles say Welsh Boxing follow the rules of IBA. PT said that the IBA rules say you cannot be a member of more than one. CM told the meeting that there is an IBA conference in Dubai in December so there may be an update following this.</p> <p>CM told the meeting that the boxers, coaches and officials do not go where they know Russians or Belarussians are competing. He said that England sent an official as an evaluator, although their policy is the same. Scotland also were reported to have sent an individual but has since confirmed they were not representing the country. AP added that Ireland have scraped the policy earlier that day, allowing a boxer to compete.</p> <p>PT responded that the board need to do the best thing for Welsh Boxing. The decision was taken in line with guidance for UK sport and international policy of the UK and Welsh governments. This stance led to the suspension of two officials who decided to go against this policy. PT asked if a change in this policy would put Welsh Boxing in a better position or impact the decision taken about the Russian and Belarussian involvement. AP said that the team want equality. The board discussed the implications, the impact and the decision was taken to continue not to attend events if a Russian or Belarussian is represented and this decision was for boxers, coaches and officials.</p> <p>CM advised that there is some news regarding the Commonwealth Games but not on where it may be held, and the timing may change depending on the location. PT asked if the team would be in planning now. CM confirmed they would be but need to await a decision, it is hoped by the end of Quarter 1, 2024. Wales have good representation on the CWG board.</p>	CM TO SEND UPDATE
3.0	<p>Board Structure, Sub-Committees and Action Plan</p> <p>PT confirmed the new board structure, advising that the new directors are aware of their job descriptions and he had had discussions with each one. He advised that they are able to chair sub-committees if they feel it is appropriate. He told the meeting that last year it was highlighted that there are four main priority areas: performance, community, commercial and communications. He outlined why each of these is important and that the board need to support the team in achieving successes in these areas but are not responsible for the management and implementation of the plans. PT told the meeting that he is keen to work with a small group of directors to feed back on sub-committee discussions outside of formal board meetings. This will give the board the chance to support progress and offer expertise.</p> <p>Connection with BS was lost and he took no further part in the meeting.</p> <p>CM shared the action plans for July to December 2023 and January to June 2024 that were included in the board pack and the board agreed to support the plan which was approved.</p>	
4.0	<p>Performance</p> <p>AP gave some background on his role. He told the meeting how he wanted to focus on the team when he took up the role and improve the culture. This has yielded results</p>	

	<p>and his report, included in the board pack, highlights the staff including the appointment of Ann Bevan who has taken the administrative burden from AP. This allowed him to focus on identifying the risks going forward. He wants to focus on sport science which will help the team deliver in 2026. AP ran through the overview of the performance strategy, included in the pack, confirming that a lot of work has already been done and he wants to drive forward to continue to win medals.</p> <p>JL asked about succession planning and how do Welsh Boxing get the next guys coming through. AP responded that there is a now a strategy that identifies a boxer who can transition to coach. He is looking to pilot an apprenticeship scheme were prospects can shadow the elite coaches in a development strategy for the longer term. He advised that he wants to change the perception of how accessible the performance programme is and he wants it to be aspirational for coaches as well as boxers.</p> <p>AP confirmed the strategy shared in the board pack is still in draft as he is working with the performance group so it will be strategically aligned with the Sport Wales guidance. He told the meeting that he wants to form a performance subcommittee with the new members of the board now in post.</p> <p>DL told the meeting that her initial thought is that the strategy is strong and ambitious. She confirmed that she knows Ann Bevan is a benefit but it is still a small team. She suggested the female pathway should have a specific focus in the community boxing strategy so that the two are aligned.</p> <p>PT congratulated AP on his report and his progress since taking the new position. AP said that he has faced some challenges but wanted to thank CM for his support. PT added that it is exciting times ahead with BS and DL joining the team and bringing their expertise.</p> <p>CM concluded that we have had some really good results lately, as shown in the board pack. GB Boxing welcome the boxers Wales send up to Sheffield. The GB Boxing strategy is currently being developed and CM and PT will be attending the BABA board meeting in December.</p> <p>The draft Performance strategy was approved.</p>	<p>AP TO ESTABLISH PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE</p> <p>CM/PT TO FEEDBACK</p>
5.0	<p>Community</p> <p>GE ran through his report, as included in the board pack. He reinforced the involvement of the team of Amy Garrett (AG) and Mark Fitzgerald (MF). He advised they are looking to take events away from Cardiff and are looking at different venues around Wales. He told the meeting about the work being carried out across the divisions to become more interactive and are attending regular meetings. Over £200,000 of grants has been awarded to clubs, included energy grants for four clubs. Work needs to continue to encourage more clubs to apply. GE told the meeting that there is no operational resource to deliver in the communities but he is keen to change the perception of boxing and for the sport to be more engaging. This includes more coach education and he outlined the plans of the calendar included in the pack.</p> <p>The board discussed opportunities with schools and scout involvement.</p> <p>CM advised the meeting that we had not lost any clubs this season, that they are surviving and that they need to access the help available. The awards day was also a success and well received.</p> <p>The board discussed the recent events and confirmed that this is a great start to establishing our community plans.</p>	
6.0	<p>Communications</p>	

	Communications strategy was shared. DJ will become more involved as consultant, Katy Evans, develops the communications strategy. The board concluded that decisions will need to be made on resources to deliver the strategy.	
7.0	<p>Commercial</p> <p>CM confirmed the proposal from Sting. They are working with GB Boxing, World Boxing and others and are offering a contract with Welsh Boxing to provide equipment for the performance team and a preferential rate for affiliated clubs. JA confirmed he has been checking the contract and it is quite standard although governed by Australian law as the firm is based there. RB confirmed this is a recognised boxing brand and more positive than an apparel brand so more scope for commercial opportunities. CM advised that he has had positive feedback although advised to allow time for orders to be processed.</p> <p>RB told the meeting that recent events, such as the dinner show and awards day, are at the embryonic stage but will grow as they become established. They are now in the calendar and will develop. PT confirmed that there were lessons learnt and improvements can be made.</p> <p>RB advised that the coach education pathway needs to be aspirational. PT confirmed this is a substantial revenue stream as well and need to sell the benefit of these skills to the community.</p> <p>JL asked if there is a conflict if Sting is not used for apparel. AP confirmed the contract is for equipment and apparel.</p>	CONTRACT TO BE FINALISED
8.0	<p>Governance</p> <p>Due to the appointment of the new directors, JD advised that the board evaluations will be moved to early next year, that there is no value in completing them so soon to them joining. CM advised that the Membership Regulations and Domestic Rules are included in the pack and will be adopted if there are no queries or objections. There were none. JD said the only significant change is that, because Welsh Boxing is a limited company, there was a guarantee for each member to pay £1 if the company becomes insolvent. This was unreasonable so it has been changed to each affiliated club.</p> <p>Anti-doping was discussed. JL confirmed that he completed a course on 30 November. AP is still compliant but the organisation needs to understand how to educate going forward. He also advised that a boxer representative is required and the board confirmed they are happy for Rosie Eccles to be approached.</p> <p>GE advised that the board are required to complete disability awareness training.</p>	BOARD TRAINING REQUIRED
9.0	<p>Risk</p> <p>The reports were confirmed as in the pack. PT asked for any queries.</p> <p>JD advised that he is expecting reaction for IBA but nothing can be resolved until they know what this will be. This risk will be reviewed.</p>	CM TO REVIEW
10.0	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>AT talked through the financial report and gave the board the highlights of the balance sheet. Overall, he told the meeting, the financial position is good. He told the meeting that, following the discussions in the meeting, it is vital to make sure the investments are made wisely and to maximise benefit. He also said that he does not see events making big returns but they are important for the clubs and boxers but they need to at least break even.</p>	

	<p>PT confirmed the confidence of the board in AT's abilities and gave thanks for his support.</p> <p>CM confirmed that Welsh Boxing had an offer letter confirming the investment of Exchequer funding for 2024/25 for £173,000. PT added that all NGBs would be in a meeting at the end of the week to hear about future investments and cuts in funding are expected. CM added that there was a reduction of £7,000 in Lottery funding last year and next year but other sports had seen a substantial reduction in all investment.</p>	
11.0	<p>CEO Report</p> <p>All the information is in the board pack. No decisions were required so CM ran through the highlights and invited any questions. There were none.</p>	
12.0	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p> <p>Head of Performance Review</p> <p>Staff members left the meeting as the board discussed the Head of Performance role. CM's review on the Head of Performance role was accepted.</p>	
	<p>The meeting dates for 2024 will be set and shared. The next meeting will be virtual.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.55pm.</p>	To set a date