

Bowls Scotland Board Meeting

Wednesday 11th of September 2024, 5.30pm

Teams Meeting

Present:

David Scouller (DS) (Interim Chair), Gavin Smith (GS) Michael Cavanagh (MC), Henry Robertson (HR), Nic Wilson (NW), Rudi Urbach (RU), Chris Holloway (CH).

In Attendance:

Alan McMillan-CEO (AM), Brogan Sinclair- Business Operations Manager (BS), Lindsay MacKenzie-partnership manager- **sportscotland** (LM)

1. **Apologies:** No apologies.
2. **Chairs Opening Remarks:** DS welcomed attendees to the meeting.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** No declaration of interest.
4. **Approval of Previous Minutes:** AM asked if the action for board members to complete the UKAD online module was complete. The board requested the link is shared as the module could not be located and action carried over.
RU asked BS to check if there is an updated CWPS module for board directors.
The minutes were approved by the board.
5. **Proposal:**
 - 5.1. **CEO Recruitment:** MC confirmed the recruitment panel had been appointed. MC asked the board to submit any final comments on the job description and contract in the next week. NW suggested reaching out to the Scottish Hockey board to share best practice around the interview process from their recent CEO recruitment. MC stated they were happy to lead the recruitment process if support is put in place from the business and suggested a preference to recruit in house rather than go to a recruitment agency. GS asked if a recruitment company had been used previously, DS confirmed no. The board agreed that the expense of an agency would not present good value for the business, and with capability already confirmed in the board and staff, the board decided not to use a recruitment agency. MC asked the board to review the paper submitted by AM proposing the interim CEO arrangement.. There was agreement that where possible the development of internal staff would be preferred.
 - 5.2. **Business Plan 2023/24 Q4:** AM summarised the Q4 results. HR asked if there is a way to identify which of the RAG ratings have changed since Q3. AM said we will add in this tracking to the 2024-25 plan. Feedback shared by CH and RU that the commentary surrounding the results is particularly important to include. GS also shared that it is important to identify the priority levels to support the understanding of results against the key strategic targets.
 - 5.3. **Business Plan 2024/25 proposal:** Following feedback from the board, prioritisation levels were added to the proposed 2024/25 Business Plan. Of 28 objectives, there are 19 level 1, 6 level

2 and 3 level 3. Discussion around the number of priority level 1 targets concluded that this should be revised for the next board meeting.

- 5.4. Draft 2024/25 Budget: HR summarised the most recent budget draft. AM pointed out the challenges faced in declining membership income and commercial partners income and significant work already done to improve the budget projections. LM shared the position faced by sportscotland following the Scottish Government budget – in year cuts are now in place but investment already agreed is protected. The Bowls Scotland investment in effective org is agreed for the full 4 year investment cycle, but the high performance investment was subject to the recent mid point review. The high performance investment is yet to be confirmed for the coming two years – the decision will be communicated in early 2025. LM confirmed that in the worst case scenario, staffing investment would be protected first and foremost, but an impact on funding will hopefully be avoided. Should the Commonwealth Games not be confirmed, this could also impact performance funding and should be considered.

LM asked for more information about the Development Fund. AM confirmed the fund was built over several years following affiliation increase in 2012 and ringfenced for development programmes. RU asked that the board look again at the Try Bowls programme previously proposed by SPS. RU suggested that this is reviewed to consider if the programme will deliver the membership growth as intended, which would impact the membership income. BS shared that overall membership numbers regressed by -1.1% last year, but try bowls clubs grew by +1.8%. The board thanked BS for this trend data.

LM recommended that consideration be given to a proposed timeline for affiliation increase, given that the organisation has a healthy reserves balance, and also suggested that the time required to get an affiliation fee increase approved can be significant, so this should be factored into financial planning.

HR proposed a move to multiyear budgets, supported by GS and CH. GS asked if budget variance reports could be added. HR confirmed this will be put in place for the coming year.

HR confirmed they were not yet ready to approve this budget and asked senior management to review the opportunities around income and expenditure again.

- 5.5. AGM Delivery: BS proposed that the 2024 AGM be hosted online via Zoom. BS shared the key factors that support another online AGM; 53% of members surveyed in 2023 preferred online, 45% increase in voting members attendance in 2023 (96 voting members) following 4 years of declining attendance, minimal cost to the business of ~£255 in 2023 vs in person cost forecast of over £4000, and experience in the current staff team supports another online delivery. This proposal was approved.

6. Information/Discussion

- 6.1. Information Papers- BS asked if the addition of an operations update was useful for the board. The feedback was yes. No questions on the information papers.

- 6.2. Safeguarding – Update- BS updated the board that the Children 1st 2024 safeguarding health check actions passed on in handover from SPS were expected to be completed in September, ensuring compliance with safeguarding standards.

RU shared that as safeguarding lead on the board, he has an overview of all safeguarding cases and informed the board that the Bowls Scotland safeguarding policies are of a very high standard.

- 6.3. Anti-doping – No update.

7. AOCB

- 7.1. Board Microsoft accounts – RU asked the board to review the email circulated proposing the creation of a Bowls Scotland email account for board directors.
- 7.2. DS shared thanks to AM as he moves on after a period of 14 years as CEO at Bowls Scotland, this being officially his last board meeting during his tenure. DS highlighted AM's invaluable support to both the board and staff in both the good and more challenging times, such as the pandemic, and wished him every success in his new career.

The meeting closed at 19:20