

Minutes of a Board meeting for the English Lacrosse Association held on Monday 26th February 2018 at the I2, Euston commencing at 5pm.

Present: John Neal (JN) Chair, Mark Coups (MC), Prashant Jobanputra (PJ), Hannah Bowe (HB), Ben Jessup (BJ), Neil Edgar (NE), Hamish McInnes (HM), Paul Coups (PC) – Minutes.

Section 1 Business matters

1. Apologies for Absence

Sue Livock (SL), Sallie Barker (SB), Mel Steel (MS)

2. Conflict of Interest Declarations

None declared.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes approved as a true record.

Action

- PC to check initials on point 7.

4. Matters Arising

MC reviewed the actions from the previous meeting in October.

- JN summarised the positive agenda and the success of achieving the Sport England Code of Governance.
- MC outlined all December actions had been addressed.
- Board meeting 14th May to be a joint meeting with staff.
- MC outlined that the safeguarding issue has remained static.
- BJ raised progress on the ULO programme, this to be discussed later in agenda item 12.
- MC has met with JN and PJ regarding IR and education settings, this to be discussed as part of agenda item 12.
- All agreed to discuss commercial advance as part of strategic business.

Section 2 Finance

5. Q2 Accounts, Cashflow to End of Year, Budget Setting Process 2018/19

NE summarised the Q3 accounts.

NE highlighted the following:

- the financial position is robust; however, income is below budget which has been offset by good controls on expenditure
- budget 2018-19 has been based on predicted year end actuals which should provide more precision in the figures for next year

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- the proposed 5% administration increase to talent and performance has not been levied as it proved unworkable
- an increase in numbers (through the addition of a U14 age group) is being rolled out as part of the talent pathway
- the talent pathway enables some support across the senior performance budget
- camps and education are now providing reasonable surplus, with camps demonstrating a strong business approach and growth
- reserves will be affected by WC2018, but accounts will hold to a 3-month reserve position and EL are forecast to be in surplus at year end.

The board thanked NE for his work on the finances.

Following the review, the board had a broad discussion on the finances. The discussion focused on two areas, reserves, talent and performance.

Talent and Performance

MC outlined that the support for Talent and Performance is important due to it:

- forming a significant part of EL budget
- having a significant financial risk if not managed effectively
- senior squads have identified as our main brand “Team England”, which aligns to commercial discussions and communications.

NE highlighted that the organisation of talent and performance programme, both administratively and financially, was taking up significant time.

HM suggested looking at the number of transactions that finance is dealing with in relation to this area of business.

JN summarised the discussion and suggested that this forms an agenda item at the next meeting.

Reserves

The board discussed the reserves policy of 3 months operating costs.

MC highlighted that the Business Plan KPI is for EL to work towards holding 4 months of reserves.

PJ suggested that for EL to have the capacity for new initiatives EL could consider trying to generate more.

NE outlined that completing the process for the two world cups should allow some easing of the financial stresses enabling an increased focus on income generation.

All agreed to return to this at the next board meeting.

6. 2018 – 2019 Budget and Cash Flow

NE reviewed the proposed budget set out in paper 3.

NE summarised the discussions at FARC to table the proposed budget.

NE reviewed the cashflow position as per discussion on Q3 accounts and outlined that there is no forecasted issues prior to year-end.

NE highlighted income generation and risks associated with:

- Participation
- Talent and Performance

PJ suggested that talent and performance could generate some more surplus, NE referred back to the proposed Talent programme expansion into the Under 14 age bracket.

HB highlighted the need to address events through new venues and number of teams. This was to be revisited with agenda item 13.

JN highlighted that there were key questions for the board to consider regarding price increases in relation to the following:

- Individual Registration
- Membership
- Education Courses and camps
- Talent and Performance.

The board undertook a broad discussion on price increases in relation to inflation. The board considered the relationships with members and IR vis a vis purchasing, administration and the wider offer.

PJ outlined that there needs to be understanding on the trade-off between increases and benefits.

MC outlined the issues in relation to IR between schools, universities and junior club members (event entry / junior registration / possible associate registration).

HM outlined the issues that other NGB's had faced when not setting out regular increases and suggested a process of annual increases in respect of the identified assets.

MC highlighted the need to be aware of the threat of significant price increases to the association membership and referenced the issues that other NGB's had faced in this area which can result in the formation of alternative associations.

JN summarised the discussion and tabled that the executive to produce relevant information on price increases for board discussion.

The board approved the 2018 -2019 Budget.

JN thanked NE and FARC for their work.

Action

- MC to set out price increases to identified assets at two levels (inflation and above inflation)

Section 3: Routine Board Business

7. Review of Board Recruitment

MC summarised the process of board recruitment

- 15 applicants, 11 external and 4 viewed as internal
- 6 invited for interview, 4 external and 2 internal
- Nominations group involved at short listing stage using skills matrix.

JN enquired if EL must adhere to the "Rooney Rule", MC advised the board that it does not but does need to work to the guidelines in the code of governance for diversity.

BJ asked for clarification of the process for the interviewees identified as internal and for them to be put forward for elections. MC outlined that if suitable they would need to go to the next AGM for election, nominated by 2 members, but under the articles in the interim be co-opted onto the board.

Action

- MC and SL to interview 27th February internal candidates and identify suitability for elected positions.
- JN and MC to interview 7th March external candidates and identify suitability for appointed positions.

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8. Annual Board Effectiveness Review

JN outlined that EL had gone to the market for 3 quotes to deliver the work. EL had received 2, with Fair Play identified as the consultancy to deliver the programme of work.

JN also highlighted that a Sport England investment application to support the work had been submitted and should be forthcoming.

All agreed it was important to meet with Fair Play before the year end to set the parameters, context and scope of the review.

The board had a brief discussion on dissemination of information to stakeholders post review. It was agreed that this would form part of the conversation with Fair Play.

Action

- PJ and MC to arrange discussion with Fair Play before year end to instigate the review process.

9. World Cup 2017 Final Report

MC highlighted that the commentary and financial information stated on p20 and p21 have been sent to FIL to sign the event off. MC will report back on Fil response.

JN thanked all that had been involved in producing the report.

World Cup 2017 Report was approved by the board and can be circulated to relevant partners and bodies.

10. Business Score Card

The board reviewed paper 5.

The board had a wider discussion on the relevant KPI's.

BJ enquired if the participation figures will be achieved, MC outlined that the current analysis identified that they would.

JN highlighted that this needs to be reviewed at each meeting.

Board approved the score card information.

Section 4 Key Strategic Business

11. Sport England Financial Sustainability Plan

JN invited HM to outline his views on the Sport England process. HM summarised the position in relation to wider NGB work and the current political position.

The board discussed the information set out by Sport England and the timeframes involved. All agreed that it was disappointing to not be able to be coordinated with the board effectiveness work as two are intertwined, but that the two pieces of work should be brought together as part of setting out the EL journey moving forward.

MC outlined the current executive position on the process:

- senior staff have met twice
- templates for responding have been produced and are currently being populated
- there is a consistent theme of reducing back office
- cross sport finance leads are meeting to coordinate business scenario responses.

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All agreed that the process needs to be of benefit to EL and should highlight the positive direction EL has taken over the last two years.

The board reviewed the back-office position and shared services, with consideration of the previous discussion in relation to talent and performance. The board recognised that certain services are currently shared within our office space at the regional arena such as IT.

HM suggested looking at a minimum back office position to ensure EL is fit for purpose and highlighting the key elements and benefits.

The board had a general discussion on the possibilities to drive our assets but also highlighting the risks looking to other sports and outside of sport.

MC outlined that all information produced will be shared with the board prior to submission. All agreed that it should be a tight document.

The board approved that the executive to proceed and produce the relevant documentation.

Actions

- MC to circulate documents prior to submission to Sport England

12. University Lacrosse Officer Programme

JN summarised the information set out in paper 7.

BJ identified the need to monitor the programme and enquired who would lead on this.

MC updated the board on staff changes that EL is currently undertaking and highlighted that the programme monitoring would be transferred from Gabbi Simmonds (who is leaving) to Amy Heppingstall her replacement in March 2018.

MC outlined that 30 ULO would be the starting position for the programme and that expansion is planned to take place the following year. MC added that support from RPC would also increase if the programme delivers in identified areas outlined in their investment rationale.

Following a discussion on the programme, all agreed it was a multi-faceted intervention, supporting EL expansion in many areas (IR, stakeholder engagement, commercial partnerships, club expansion and school links).

The Board approved the programme.

13. Performance System Review

JN asked HM to review the process and philosophy.

HM outlined that EL had started a review using the framework (which has been used / provided by British Shooting), which will identify key areas for lacrosse within the parameters of:

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- Players
- System
- Environment

The process will then RAG rate the information. The review is being complimented by an independent culture health check, which EL has negotiated from UK Sport for Easter 2018. MC outlined that there would be a cost to this but has been significantly reduced with EL “tagging” onto the Winter Olympic review process.

The combination of both processes will provide:

- a clear action plans
- develop trust and transparency in the system
- highlight the duty of care for athletes.

MC outlined that this the above process will create a template for an ongoing annual review.

JN highlighted that the board will need to ensure action is taken on the results and investment would need to be aligned accordingly.

The Board approved the expenditure for the independent culture health check.

14. National Lacrosse Committee Review

JN outlined the information in paper 8 and tabled the proposed minimum age band of 14 for female club lacrosse.

BJ enquired about the numbers involved in the consultation prior to the proposal. MC summarised the consultation process and the extensive review aligned to each segment of the women’s game.

The Board approved the NLC proposal set out in paper 8, for the minimum playing age for women at senior level to be 14.

MC reviewed the regional away day and regional governance review (led by Fair Play).

BJ outlined that both were positive and well received.

It was identified that there are elements of the game not fully aligned to the strategic direction of EL. Further away days and governance work will enable this to be discussed and more information developed to improve the alignment.

The Board approved the 4 task and finish groups proposed by NLC.

15. Events Group Priorities

JN reviewed the events position set out in paper 9.

MC summarised the position regarding the EL facility partnership for major events and the challenging discussions with SSP for this year's National Schools.

All agreed that the EL future facility partner is key for expansion and should be a focus for staff and volunteers.

MC outlined the discussions with Aldershot and summarised the facility capability "outside the wire".

The board had a broad discussion on the use of Aldershot and the positive work from the events group.

MC highlighted that the current weather will have implications on the National Schools event with postponement or cancellation a strong possibility resulting in loss of revenue.

Action

- Events Group to provide a more detailed document in relation to the Aldershot Venue identifying potential calendar of use, outlay to support events hosted there, financial detail associated with the event calendar.

16. AOB

- BJ enquired about the current GDPR position. MC outlined that an audit has been undertaken and RPC is assisting in our compliance work. K. Lawler is the designated member of staff and she has received training and is dovetailed into other NGB GDPR officers.
- The Board wished to thank MS for all her work with EL, especially the modernisation programme for the NGB, as she is due to leave the board once the recruitment process detailed above has been completed.
- JN outlined the need for a longer discussion on the strategic items of the agenda at the next meeting to maximise the proposed joint session with the staff. JN suggested Ashridge.

Action

- JN to provide MC with costings for Ashridge.

DONM

14th May Board meeting and joint session with staff.

Distribution: John Neal, Hannah Bowe, Prashant Jobanputra, Ben Jessup, Mark Coups, Sallie Barker, Hamish McInnes, Melanie Steel

Cc: Sue Livock, Neil Edgar.

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