

## Item 2 on agenda

### **Minutes of a Meeting of the Board At Athletics House, Birmingham On 18 March 2020 at 10:00**

#### **Attendees:**

**At Athletics House :** Chris Clark (CC) - Chair  
Nic Coward (NC)  
Joanna Coates (JC)  
Jonathan Orr (JO)

**Via Conference call:** David Bedford (DB)  
Penny Avis (PA)  
Gordon Arthur (GA)  
Stuart Cain (SC)  
Anne Wafula-Strike (AWS)  
Mike Whittingham (MW)  
Sarah Rowell (SR) - joined late

**Also in attendance:** Hannah England (HE)  
Jason Gardener (JG) – Conference Call  
Cherry Alexander (CA)  
Ellen Neal (EN) - minutes

#### **11/20 Welcome, Apologies and Conflicts of Interest**

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from SR who would be joining the meeting later. No additional conflicts of interest were reported.

#### **12/20 Chair's Welcome and Update**

CC confirmed this was his last meeting as Chair of UKA. He welcomed JC to her new role as CEO, on her first day. It was agreed that JC from close today would be the 'Accountable Officer' as detailed in the funding agreement with UK Sport.

CC also thanked NC for his time as Interim CEO, and also confirmed NC's appointment as Chair of UKA. The term of appointment under the constitution was for the period of CC's term of office, but it had been agreed that NC would serve as Chair only until the various key current processes had been brought to a conclusion, namely the UK Sport funding application process, the implementation of changes arising out of the UK Sport review, and the strategic and organisational change process that was to form a key priority for the new CEO. The agreement, on this basis, was that a process would be put in place to appoint a Chair at the end of the year.

It was also noted that this meeting is to be SR's last Board meeting and CC wanted to express his thanks to SR for her considerable contribution over the past 8 years.

**Action – NC/JC to discuss with SR.**

CC stated that in addition to issues that were known and that the organisation was addressing, there were further issues now facing UKA and the sport as a whole due to the COVID -19 pandemic. He stressed the importance of everyone placing health and welfare as the priority in decisions, recognising there may well be financial and commercial negatives from doing so. The Board agreed.

In these fast-moving times CC noted that various decisions that are made today may well need to be revisited as things develop and change. There may be material items and issues that we cannot control (i.e. the scheduling of the Olympic and Paralympic Games) which will have a critical impact on the UKA and wider sport programme for 2020 and beyond.

NC updated the Board on actions taken to date within the organisation to address the impact of the pandemic, focussing on the approach taken within the senior team. He advised that there are no reported COVID – 19 cases within the organisation, but that some staff are self-isolating under Government advice. UKA has taken the approach to promote staff working from home where possible, but the policy at the NPI is to find a way to keep the facility open to facilitate training in a safe environment. All policies are to be kept under daily review. The office remained open at this time. Decisions had been taken in relation to training camps and stopping overseas travel, all of which were endorsed by the Board. At the NPI, there had been a reported positive confirmed case which has resulted in various management actions within the University and the NPI. There has been no further coach, support staff or athlete reported case at NPI or within the system since. Governmental authorities are considering options in respect of their facilities following on from various central Government updates and advisories, which will have considerable impact on athletes and coaches.

The management team, through HR, is ensuring that staff are being supported. UKA staff have been asked to self-identify if they are in a vulnerable category and action taken to comply with guidelines, placing health and welfare as a priority. The HR Director is also ensuring we provide access to various initiatives to support staff and athlete mental health.

At the current time Tokyo is still scheduled to go ahead so the Performance department is constantly reviewing how it may best support the Athletes as they work towards that goal. NC stated his belief that the pressures on athletes, coaches and support staff mean that the Olympic and Paralympic Games cannot continue according to current plans. There was a general Board discussion on issues relating to the IOC and IPC decision-making processes and how best to seek to influence these. It was recognised that a postponement would create a great many issues for people and organisations, but it was considered the right approach to take.

CC thanked NC and the entire team for their work as they wrestle with these challenges.

### **13/20 2020/21 Budget**

JO presented the paper previously circulated and highlighted the key points in the Executive Summary of paper 3.1, detailing the updates to the preliminary budget that was presented to the Board in January.

There were significant risks regarding securing new commercial income and the potential impact of COVID-19 on both TV Events and the Commercial departments. This is to be closely monitored by the executive and Audit Committee and appropriate action to be taken with further report to the Board.

The Board approved the budget and the budget strategy as outlined in the second page of Paper 3.1, noting that there were significant uncertainties.

The Board considered to believe that a balanced budget, on a breakeven basis, was the appropriate target, recognising there were a great many issues on which assumptions were being made that were not likely to hold.

### **14/20 Coronavirus impact analysis**

Paper 4.1 had been circulated to the Board the previous evening. This principally considered the timing of projected TV Event expenditure commitments and the current status of UKA's material commercial contracts. The exposure to MAG is the largest factor, based on various factors around ticketing, advertising and promotion costs. It was noted that as time passes in the ordinary course of business UKA will have a further £170k of commitments made by the end of April.

The picture across the whole sport was also difficult to predict, with consequential impacts on the UKA finances.

It was agreed by the Board that a two-weekly flash budget process be implemented. The aim during this period of uncertainty would be to limit forward commitments as much as practicable in to reduce any material negative impact on reserves.

**Action – JO to keep Audit Committee Chair apprised of budget updates on a two-weekly basis.**

### **15/20 Verbal reports from Committee chairs on matters for the Board**

#### Athletics Appointment Panel (AAP)

The AAP would be reconstituted following on from CC stepping down from the Board. The AAP Terms of Reference would be reviewed and if any changes were proposed this would be brought back to a future meeting.

#### Audit Committee

In addition to points covered earlier in the meeting, it was noted the scheme of delegation had been reviewed and approved. It was suggested if there were to be considerable budget pressure then the executive authority levels may be temporarily

amended. This is to be considered by the CEO and Chair over the coming weeks as things develop.

**Action – JO to consider and NC/JC to decide if Executive authority levels need to temporarily change.**

Kevan Taylor (KT) had produced a paper reviewing the Risk Management Policy and Risk Register. This paper has a number of recommendations and it was agreed that the risk management process is embedded in management actions and policies. This subject will be considered by the incoming CFO upon his arrival.

**Action – PA and JO to share Risk paper with incoming CFO. New CFO to consider and report back to Board.**

#### HR and Remuneration Committee

The following points from the last HR and Remuneration Committee meeting were noted;

- Staff pay award and proposed 2020 bonus awards have been approved by the Board, via email.
- The PPDR process needs to be changed as it is not fit for purpose. This will be discussed between the new CEO and HR Rem Com Chair in due course.

**Action – JC to consider new Performance review system alongside new strategy and plan**

- The implementation date for IR35 has been put back a year. UKA to press ahead with its own programme regardless of this date change.
- A staff survey was completed at the end of 2019. This will be reviewed, and any resultant actions will be led by JC in due course.

**Action – JC to review 2019 staff survey.**

#### Performance Oversight Committee – DB, in SR's absence

The next POC meeting is scheduled for 1 April 2020.

#### UK Members Council

JG, CC, PA and NC briefed the Board on various points discussed at the last UK Members Council Meeting of 14 February 2020.

The UKMC Performance Review session has been cancelled due to COVID – 19 and will be re-scheduled if this is seen as relevant. It may be that it is overtaken by the strategy review process.

The administration of Thyroxine was discussed. NC had since raised the issue with the CMO, and the Interim Performance Directors, and reported that he was satisfied that appropriate processes are in place, and understood within the system, in relation

to anything that was being raised or considered as a novel substance, technique or process, including any proposed supplement use or administration. The CMO had also set out to NC the process undertaken to satisfy himself, that all decisions in relation to Thyroxine going back to 2014 had been appropriate, being based on clinical assessment and including expert consultant advice. The CMO had also outlined that there is now a peer-review group involving CMOs across sports, whereby if a question arises relating to the issue of the administration of a supplement or adoption of a new treatment of intervention, this is assessed collaboratively so that CMO advice and approaches within their sports are further assured as best practice.

It was noted that the CMO, in conjunction with other senior sports medicine practitioners, will publish a paper on acceptable Thyroxine treatment. This is the process through which the CMO had come to his conclusions and advice that every administration in the review period back to 2014 complied with best practice.

The Athletes Commission had asked if confirmation could be given that any opportunities and practices identified as providing a “potential gain for an athlete”, within appropriate regulatory compliance and best practice as above as a given, were shared consistently to all within the World Class Programme. It had been confirmed through the Interim Performance Directors that this was the case; all matters were being dealt with transparently, and it would be an individual athlete decision to whether they take a route or not, based on the best possible advice. It was noted that the Athletes Commission considered the communication and approach of the Interim Performance Directors to be very much appreciated and supported.

It was noted that, following Tokyo, there was to be a long-planned clinical governance review. NC stated that he had discussed the matter with the Head of Integrity at UK Sport and an appropriate approach agreed.

There was also general discussion about some behaviours around the UKMC and the issues these were creating.

#### Athletes Commission - HE

HE briefed the Board on various points discussed at the last Athletes Commission Meeting of 28 February 2020.

Jon Roberts had made a presentation on the proposed talent pathway, which had been welcomed.

The Commission had asked to be able to input into the appointment of the Performance Director and Head Coach, as they feel they have a wide range of experience.

There were concerns expressed regarding the consistency of team and WCP selection, and the Commission would like to have some involvement and input as these policies are being drawn up prior to implementation. NC had attended the meeting and been asked his views on the matter, and he reported that he considered that greater attention needed to be made to ensuring the chairs of selection panels had the necessary skills.

During the current uncertainties, it would be appreciated if UKA could keep an open dialogue with the athletes as they prepare for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, in particular keeping them updated regarding the Competitions schedule. This may involve updates to let athletes know that there is actually no news, rather than there being no communication.

**Action – JC to review Competitions situation with HCAF’s CEO’s and Donna Fraser.**

## **16/20 Chief Executive Update**

A verbal update was received from NC on the following:

### New Chief Executive Induction

It was confirmed to the Board that JC’s onboarding process had commenced through various calls already, and that this would continue through NC now becoming Chair. Key initial priorities include; UKA Finance and related Events and Commercial issues, Competitions Structure, Performance, Coach Development, Rules, Selection Processes, and all aspects coming together as a new Strategy and business plan, and organisational plan, with an initial report to be made at the next Board Meeting.

### UK Sport Review

Sue Street is to make her report to the UK Sport Board in the week commencing 23 March. NC outlined his continuing view that Sue Street will set out well known issues within the sport, and within UKA, and that this was an opportunity to create necessary and wide-ranging change.

### Performance: UK Sport Paris/2032 Submission process; Performance Director

The Board was reminded that the current position is that we have not put in a Phase 2 submission within the time limit. Many sports have done so, and UK Sport team is working through these and will provide formal feedback. The UKA approach, as agreed with UK Sport, is that we now plan to put in a “direction of travel” paper in April 2020. The UK Sport team will then give informal feedback leading up to the next formal milestone of the deadline for the final submission in October/November.

NC outlined his reasons for not having progressed the Performance Director recruitment as had been agreed at the last meeting. Following discussions with various Board members, staff and others, NC did not see it as the best route to set out a job description for a PD and recruit as had been recommended to the last meeting. NC considered the design for the team and specific roles needed to follow the overall Strategy and business plan review, and also the ongoing discussions with the HCAFs and others over a sport-wide review. This was endorsed by the Board.

### Coach Development

A productive meeting had been held with the HCAFs, assisted by Malcom Brown and Toni Minichiello. All had agreed the priority for a new Coach Development plan, and this would be taken forward through this group. One agreed outcome is that the sport does not have an executive tasked with leading a world-class coach development programme, and there is general agreement that this must be remedied as a priority, most likely through a recruitment into UKA.

#### John Mehrzad QC Report - Comms

Communication post-publication was discussed, and a draft release had been shared for comments. A further, final version would be circulated. There was likely to be a request for interviews on the same day as the publication, which will be on Friday, and which NC will undertake.

The recommendations were discussed and how they have already or are being addressed and implemented.

The Board noted the proposal to create a dedicated specialist committee to provide non-executive support and oversight within the governance framework. The objective is to ensure best practice in the regulation of the sport: this includes standard setting generally and ethics, safeguarding, Anti-Doping, anti-corruption, anti-discrimination, coach behaviours and systems ensuring appropriate rules are in place and being met through an effective executive.

**Action – The Board approved the proposal in principle and will consider detail at its next meeting.**

#### **17/20 Operational Reports for noting and discussion**

- a. Finance and Governance - The proposed Working Group chairs and Schedule of Matters Reserved to the Board were approved. All other items were noted as read.
- b. Operations - Noted as read and no further comments.
- c. Domestic Competitions - Report was noted as read and one issue raised for further action. One matter was raised by Board members: there had been a change to policy and Rule agreed at the January Board meeting, that wheelchair users could not enter road races unless there were full road closures, and where there were road closures, only with an appropriate risk assessment having been carried out and all actions being undertaken. The Board noted this had come late to the Board, and there was a concern that the new rule was impacting on the availability of events for Para athletes which had not been intended or foreseen. DB will head a small working group to look into the Rule and the process that had led to its recommendation.

**Action – DB to arrange working group to investigate the rule further.**

- d. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Noted as read and no further comments.
- e. Performance - Noted as read and no further comments.

- f. Major Events - Birmingham 2022: CA will fully update JC as a priority on the impact on the organisation.
- g. Commercial, including presentation on Commercial Strategy and Athletics World Cup - The Board noted the latest position on broadcast negotiations, and potential new partner negotiations. The Board notes the considerable uncertainty at this time. CC updated the Board and referenced the report he had prepared that had been circulated. CC confirmed that he would be happy to stay involved in this area, at no fee, as he wished to continue to contribute despite leaving the Board.

**18/20 Minutes of the meeting 29 January 2020**

The minutes of the Board meeting on 29 January were approved as a true record. Redacted January minutes have not been produced. A redacted set will be looked at by JC/JO and shared with Board shortly.

**19/20 Agreed actions from meeting 29 January 2020**

The agreed actions from the meeting 29 January 2020 were included on the agenda of the meeting or discussed and / or closed. The agreed actions are attached to these minutes.

CC thanked the Board for their support whilst he has been in post. The Board wished to place on record their appreciation to CC for his hard work over the last few months.

Meeting closed at 1330.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 13 May 2020, Birmingham with the possibility of a Strategy session alongside normal business.