

**Minutes of a UKA Board Meeting
On Teams, Wednesday 3 March 2021 at 10:00**

Attendees: Nic Coward (NC) – Chair
David Abrahams (DA)
Gordon Arthur (GA)
Penny Avis (PA)
Stuart Cain (SC)
Joanna Coates (JC)
Peter Crawshaw (PC)
Mark Draisey (MD)
Steve Perks (DSP)
Anne Wafula-Strike (AWS)
Mike Whittingham (MW)

Observers: Hannah England (HE)
Jason Gardener (JG)

Apologies: Ian Beattie (IB)

In attendance: Kate Bradley (KB)

11/21 Introduction and attendees

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Steve Perks, David Abrahams and Peter Crawshaw to their first meeting as directors. He also welcomed Kate Bradley who started as the new Operations and Strategy Director on Monday 1 March. Apologies had been received from IB, who was making a good recovery.

There were no specific interests to note other than those noted in the minutes.

12/21 Minutes

The minutes of the Board meeting on 7 December 2020 were approved as a true record and the following matters arising were discussed:

JC clarified that the 20 km Walk Trial would be going ahead on the same day as Olympic Marathon Trial. PC declared that he has an involvement in this event as he had been asked to arrange appropriate Technical Officials.

NC stated that he will speak to each Board member and observer individually before the next meeting to get their view on Board and CEO performance and progress during the past 12 months.

Action: NC to contact each director and observer to discuss Board and CEO review

Board asked for an update on property issues, including the location of main offices and facilities.

Action: MD to send a property update to the Board following his call on Friday 5 March.

It was noted that Board members had formally approved the Diversity Action Plan, a draft of which had been on the agenda at the last meeting.

JC updated the Board on the review of Safeguarding policies, drafts of which had been considered at the December meeting, and on considerable further work to address all issues raised by the Quinlan review and to which the five boards had committed to act. The policies have undergone further detailed work, between the Lead Safeguarding Officer and counterparts in the HCAFs, and the next step is to cross reference the Safeguarding policy against related regulations and policies to ensure a comprehensive and consistent approach. The final versions will be presented to the Board for formal approval by the May meeting.

Action: JC/KB to present final safeguarding policies and related documents to Board meeting in May

NC mentioned that a status update on all recent reviews and their recommendations, together with an updated status report of all policies and procedures including future dates for changes, would be presented at the next Board meeting.

Action: KB to present a status update of the policy register at the next Board meeting.

13/21 Chief Executive's Report

The CEO introduced her report, which was included in the Agenda, and raised the following items:

Performance – SS will attend the meeting later in the agenda to present a Performance update.

Suitable Para classification events ahead of the games in Tokyo are still an ongoing challenge. Athletes were not able to go to Dubai due to Covid and so UKA is exploring the possibility of Paris, Italy or Switzerland. There is an option of an April event in the UK in case international travel is not possible.

Commercial – JC talked through the commercial pipeline tracker in the Board pack. There are several promising opportunities. It was noted that it is not a cumulative list of opportunities as the same rights may be included in a more than one of the potential packages being discussed with third parties.

JC explained that the ticket ballot for the Summer events in London and Manchester will go live in the week commencing Monday 8 March. The executive team are discussing whether to release all tickets for sale or whether to model for partial capacity if restrictions are still in place following 21 June.

JC said that the executive team are developing a long-term events and competitions strategy, to include a short-term plan for 2021 and a possible smaller celebration event post Olympics and Paralympics. This will be presented back to the Board with a timeline.

The Board discussed the Commonwealth Games and the desire for as many opportunities as possible for eligible athletes, as opposed to the restrictive policy that had been taken by the organisers to date. It was noted that a submission had been made previously by the five organisations to seek increased participation but without creating a greater accommodation and related cost demand. It was confirmed questions over the number of athletes able to participate are questions for the HCAFs supported by UKA.

JC explained the commercial working group with the HCAFs is working well. There is now an asset register with a plan of what can be taken to market. This will usually be led by UKA unless there are smaller packages which can be led by the individual HCAF. The Board endorsed this.

The Board discussed the cross-country consultation process and noted the new timeline and how it was to be taken forward, including through the upcoming focus groups and webinar.

Action: KB to send Cross Country survey summary to the Board

The Board discussed the recent British Indoor Championships and noted a withdrawal rate of 25%, which was disappointing on its face and raised questions as to the true relative importance of the event for athletes against the investment to put it on. JC noted that the events team had worked very hard to deliver this event but will ensure this KPI is monitored going forward. The Board thanked the wider team for their efforts in delivering the indoor trial events.

AWS asked about the plan for Indoor Para events. JC confirmed she has consulted with the Para Head Coach who has stated the current indoor and outdoor fixtures are what is required but can go back to her to discuss again.

Action: JC to discuss indoor events with Paula Dunn.

The Board welcomed the athlete-led new digital campaign approach, Personal Best, developed by RM and Seven League.

Governance – JC noted that the working groups are attached in the Board pack. There is to be a member in each who will have specific responsibility for ensuring the groups and discussions have an EDI mindset.

Operational Plan – JC discussed the development of the 12-year plan and the next step was to consult with two smaller focus groups before holding larger webinars and thematic focus groups, for example coaching.

Safeguarding – JC introduced the standard report and explained that reporting to the Board would change so that safeguarding incidents were reported separately to incidents of physical or sexual abuse involving 18+ year olds.

People and culture - JC noted that a recent mental wellbeing survey had given staff an opportunity to raise other issues. There is an action plan to address these issues and more information in the Board pack.

Company remuneration and benefits – the Board noted that the overall remuneration approach was being considered by the executive with recommendations to the Remuneration Committee, which would include pension provision as well as salary and other benefits.

14/21 Performance

SS joined the meeting.

SS presented on the following.

- UK Sport Paris 2024 Funding – update on award and revised plan
- Performance staffing structure
- Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games preparation

SS presented the UK sport funding projections. Year 1 is confirmed, and Year 2 to 4 is indicative and will be confirmed after Tokyo. SS explained that a Performance staff consultation had begun, which was because of the organisation having to respond to the UK Sport funding award, and her subsequent review with JC of what is an appropriate and affordable staff structure. SS referenced the roles at risk. The Board asked how this has been assessed as effecting the morale of athletes and staff and whether the views of athletes have been taken. SS confirmed that it is a challenging time to do this, but it is the appropriate course of action and action is needed. SS presented plans for proposed development works at the NPI at Loughborough.

The Board noted the athlete performance tracking data in the Board pack. SS confirmed her view and that of the Head Coaches that the Performance team is doing everything possible in challenging circumstances to support the athletes and coaches and will present a further update on Tokyo preparation and forecasts to the next meeting. SS will speak to any Board members about the best way to present data and assessment of athlete progression and preparedness.

Action – SS to present a further Tokyo report at the May meeting.

The Board noted SS 's views in relation to the team travelling today to Poland to participate at the European Indoor Championships. SS left the meeting.

PWC Data and Insights presentation

Tommy Yule (TY) and Alex Cooke (AC) from PwC joined the meeting. JC introduced the PWC team and the work they are doing with the Performance team.

AC gave a presentation on the PWC data and insight project which will support athlete performance and coaching, supported by TY.

It was noted that the contract between UK and PWC had been extended, and AC confirmed the value that PWC attributed to the relationship.

TY and AC left the meeting.

15/21 – Development

MM joined the meeting.

Coach Development - MM presented a Coaching Development Update. The next step is focus groups and wider consultation. MM and his team will be developing a new learning framework for coaching qualifications and intend soon to appoint a coach development lead. MM will also be developing a coach communication plan, a plan to support more retired athletes, including para-athletes, into coaching and looking at accreditation and the potential of introducing an association for coaches. The Board noted their approval for the work to date. MM also noted that the coach licensing regulations and approach was under review with the wider work on regulations, codes, contractual provisions.

UKA Rules Group – The Terms of Reference were approved by the Board and Tim Soutar was confirmed as chair.

Disciplinary Action – Lifetime Bans

The Board received a paper recommending that it confirm policy in relation to investigation of allegations of emotional, sexual or physical abuse, the approach to prosecution of any such alleged breaches of codes, disciplinary rules or licence provisions, and submissions on penalty to a tribunal in the event that allegations are upheld. The Board formally confirmed a policy of ‘Zero Tolerance’ towards such matters, meaning that the organisation should investigate and prosecute any such allegations and ask for the maximum ban or other penalty available where there is power to do so within the independent process.

The Board also noted the access now, through the Standards Committee, to open and independent expert advice and assistance in approaching each stage of investigations, and that the Committee would provide open and independent scrutiny of decisions made by the executive.

MM confirmed that the above policy will apply to all licensed and non-licensed coaches, noting that non-licensed coaches are covered under a disciplinary policy, most usually within HCAF jurisdiction, as opposed to the Coach Licence system which is within the UKA jurisdiction. As stated above, MM is leading the review of all applicable codes, rules, regulations, and licensing provisions, which had to encompass HCAFs as well as UKA, to ensure there was a seamless, consistent, and best practice system applicable to all participants. The findings of the Safeguarding review were relevant. The review process would be run with, and involve presentations throughout, to the HCAF Boards.

MM is working with each HCAF to create a central point of contact for ‘complaints or allegations of breaches of codes, regulations and licence conditions, which are not safeguarding related, to ensure a robust and consistent process for timely acknowledgement, investigation, prosecution, independent decision making and appeal.

The Board asked for a grid to be presented to show all categories of participant and coach (contracted, volunteer, employee) and how regulation applies to them.

Action: MM/KB to present an update on the review of all linked disciplinary, licensing, contractual and safeguarding provisions, and policies at May meeting with a timeline for review and approval during 2021

MM noted one change that had already been agreed within the executive, for there to be an external independent expert panel for coach license issues to be heard, as opposed to the internal panel that had existed to date, which will be a UK-wide independent group agreed by HCAF CEO forum. The Board endorsed this.

Standards Ethics and Rules Committee Minutes – The minutes were noted.

The Board noted that the role of the above committee was not to review and determine the appropriateness or otherwise of decisions taken by an individual athlete to change coaches, rather that it was available to the executive give an opinion on process if requested.

The Board discussed the contractual provisions that applied, and due diligence undertaken by the executive before an athlete changes coach. The Board noted that there were limited circumstances in which UK Athletics could act, noting that ability to do so operated at selection and funding levels, and under generally applicable disciplinary provisions. Required process to be followed and tests to be met. The Board noted that the athlete agreement will be reviewed to identify any changes related to coach/support team appointments, and under selection criteria. The Board noted that the issue must be supported by a general programme of education, so athletes understand the importance of issues other than a belief in the ability of a coach to improve performance. It was noted that any changes made to the athlete agreement and selection criteria would be unlikely to give UKA the right to have to approve any coach or support personnel, and certainly not without supported reasons.

The Board also noted the importance of a positive and open dialogue and culture and working relationship between the UKA Head Coach and team, and athletes, before a formal due diligence process starts. Challenges arise if discussions have not taken place between the Performance team and an athlete before an approach is made by an athlete to change coach and before UKA can consider and offer guidance and advice.

World Athletics Shoe Rule – the Board formally approved the adoption of the World Athletics rules, as set out in the Board paper, at the levels recommended by the Rules Group and Technical Advisory Group.

Fixture Scheduling, Licensing Events and Technical Officials

The Board received presentations on Fixture Scheduling, Licensing Events and Technical Officials appointments, particularly in the context of the assessment of risk and questions in relations to liability and insurance.

Katie Brazier – Competitions and Events Director (KTB) joined the meeting.

KTB outlined the current process for agreeing fixtures. She outlined that one of key challenges with the current process is how and when fixtures clashes are raised by competition providers and how those clashes are resolved. The competition working group is discussing how to improve this to ensure clarity about who is responsible for which part of the decision-making process and how to deal with conflict.

Jacky Brett - Licensing Administrator (JB) and Paula Gowing - Officials Manager (PG) joined the meeting.

JB gave a presentation on how licenses are awarded for events. PG gave a presentation on officiating and the hierarchy and appointment process.

The Board asked if these processes were aligned to Athletics Unified, in particular “athlete first”. KTB explained that this is information to on the design principles which underpin a fixture schedule, but it is work in progress and that it will be refined during the strategic plan development process.

MM noted that 18 UK officials had recently been appointed at international level (World/World Para/European). The Board noted and congratulated them all.

MM, KTB, PG and JB left the meeting.

The Board noted the ongoing work in these areas but emphasised the need for clarity in relation to event organisation, and the nature of the “licence”, and how this might impact on insurance through umbrella policies. The Board could not be sure that events might consider themselves to be licensed, and therefore insured, when this might not be the case. This was made all the more important to resolve when there appeared to be such complexity in how, and by whom, licences were granted, and questions in relation to compliance. The Board were concerned to ensure progress on these matters in advance of the next policy renewal.

16/21 Events, Competitions and Commercial

Covered in CEO report.

17/21 Finance

Financial Performance/Forecast update: attached – MD presented the update report.

Draft Audit Committee Minutes - No questions were raised about the minutes.

Health & Safety – MD presented a health and safety paper and set out the duty of directors. The Board discussed and agreed that it further emphasised the need for clarity in relation to the licensing of events, and the applicability of insurance.

MD is leading a project to review the end-to-end risk management and insurance of licensed and non-licensed events which can be delivered safely to support the Athletics Unified strategy and operational plan, and the HCAF plans. The Board recommended discussing with Scottish Athletics who have developed good practice in this area.

The Board requested an updated risk register at the next audit committee and May Board meeting.

Action: KB to include updated risk register on May agenda and present an annual governance calendar and discussion/approval framework for the Board

JG left the meeting.

18/21 People and Culture

HR Remuneration Committee Minutes: The minutes were noted with no questions.

Revised Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference: The Board approved new terms of reference which will create a change from a HR Remuneration Committee to a focused Remuneration Committee. The Board approved this.

19/21 Strategy and Governance

Board Committee memberships – The chair confirmed that PC will be joining the Remuneration Committee and DA will be joining the Audit Committee.

Olympic and Paralympic Games Selection panel – MW confirmed as chair. The Board noted how well the indoor selection process had gone, with no appeals.

New NED Recruitment – The chair updated on the process. NC, AWS, and SP are to be the panel. The application window has now closed, and the panel will look at the list during next week to shortlist. The intention is to have only one round of interviews, although that can be changed. The UKA Board is not currently gender compliant.

Revised Board Skills Matrix: The chair confirmed that Board members will be asked to self-assess and report against the agreed skills matrix. Guidance will be provided to directors in respect of the scoring criteria to ensure consistency of approach.

UKA Members Consultation – NC updated on the formal corporate (i.e., voting) membership consultation. Good progress has been made on the consultation process and NC thanked the HCAFs for the considerable work this involved. Each HCAF Board has signed off on their own consultation paper that they will send out to their memberships. The letters set out the same five options, and with a similar description of the background thinking and narrative about the options. The five options: each HCAF is a formal member with equal vote; each HCAF is a member with weighted voting; each HCAF is a member on either of these bases, with additional members to represent interest groups not already represented; each HCAF member club is also a voting member of UK Athletics; each registered or affiliated participant, at an individual level, is a member.

UKA Members have been briefed on the process.

It was noted that the chairs and CEOs were due to join a call after the conclusion of the Board, to further consider and agree the details of the release of letters by each HCAF to their membership, and the response time.

AWS left the meeting.

Directors Fees – The chair referred to correspondence between Board members since the last meeting and led the Board through a discussion and decision about NED fees (which would also apply to the President).

The Board agreed that the NED fee should be £9,000 going forward from the date of the commencement of the next tax year, and applicable to all NEDs.

MD will contact all directors and the President individually asking them to confirm the new fee from the commencement date, and if they want to waive or redirect their fees.

Action: MD to contact all directors and President regarding waiving or redirecting fees

110/21 Any Other Business



No Other Business items raised.

Next Meetings:

Wednesday 26th May at 10am – Full Board

The meeting closed at 15.30.