



British Rowing Limited

Minutes of a Board Meeting held on 11th October 2024 at 12:00 Hammersmith

Present:

Mark Davies (MD)
Alastair Marks (AM)
Kate O'Sullivan (KOS)
Tina Kokkinos (TK)
Peter Milhofer (PM)
Nick Hubble (NH)
Clare Briegal (CB)
Sebastian Walker (SW)
Liz Behnke (LB)
Karena Vleck (KV)
Sarah Davies (SD)

In attendance:

Emma Farlow (EF)
Rebecca West (RW)

Minute No

Intro

1 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

MD welcomed all to the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND ACTION TRACKER

There were a number of corrections raised within the meeting.

Approved

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No new declarations were raised at the meeting

4 Action Tracker

It was noted that most of the items within the Tracker were either completed, or on the agenda, with the exception of Action No 52 regarding British Rowing Safety Audits (within the organisation). It was noted that the recruitment for the British Rowing Safety Advisor position is underway and once that role has been successfully recruited to, a key objective of theirs will be to deliver the audits.

Action: It was agreed that the Action Log and due dates should be reviewed and re prioritised given the current work of the Executive.

5 Decision Tracker



Subject to the amendments required for the Minutes, the Decision Tracker was approved.

FINANCE

Annual Accounts BRL (first view) and Audit Update (verbal) Finance Improvement Plan Update Chiswick Boathouse Lease

The Board had a discussion about finance and the reasons for why the AGM would be delayed from its usual time.

BUSINESS UPDATES

CEO Update

AM presented the CEO Update Report to the Board, which included information on activities related to ; Olympics, Paralympics, Performance Team Review, Learn 2 Row, Great British Rowing Weekend, Environmental Awards, LEAD, Club Championship, Governance Reform Process and any concerns he has. The following was noted:

It was agreed that the Performance Director would be invited to the Board's meeting in December, to provide an update post the Paris Games and forward looking to LA.

Action: LK to be invited to the 5th December Board Meeting

The Board considered the need for further information to support discussions on potential partnerships and the GB Rowing Team, and expressed that it would be really useful if there was a one pager 'shopping list' for people to send out to potential partnerships to create more traction.

Action: AM to work with LK to create a list and send round the Board so that if they have any potential partnerships they can send it to them.

AM updated the Board on the Learn to Row Project, which had run throughout the summer, and noted a concern as to the timing of the Project implementation, which could have an impact on risk management relating to the vetting process for coaches. AM acknowledged the concern and that this would be captured as part of the wash up discussion with the Project Team. .

The Board reflected on British Rowing's recent efforts with regards to its Sustainability Strategy and related activities, and wanted it to formally acknowledge their thanks towards the Sustainability Team, particularly Rachel Dulai and Imogen Grant.

AM gave the Board early sight to the confirmed event dates for the events taking place in the next 6-9 months.

The Board considered the requirements for the upcoming Annual General Meeting and the preparations needed. It was agreed that the Meeting will need to be scheduled for a December 2024 date.

Agreed: The Executive to consider AGM preparations and proposed timings.



Lightweight Inclusion in International Competition

The Board considered matters surrounding lightweight rowing which have arisen since it was decided that there would not be any more lightweight events at the Olympic Games. Specifically, it discussed whether there was a way for lightweights to compete as Great Britain at the World Championships if there are no lightweights in the GBRT at Caversham, as a result of the team being funded on the basis of Olympic events only.

The Board discussed at some length the arguments put forward in two papers that were presented, looking at whether it would be appropriate to retain a pathway to international competition for lightweight rowers, and if so how such a thing could be achieved. The papers in question included a full set of arguments (provided by a representative from the Lightweight community) in addition to logistical points about the potential impact of running a two-tier system provided by the Performance Team in Caversham.

The Board considered all the points raised in the papers, including funding options, pathway, risk management, logistics, disruption, and third parties such as World Rowing.

A number of Board members commented that their starting point had been that they wanted to see a way to include lightweights, but following a thorough discussion, all agreed that the reality was that a number of factors made it a much more complicated thing to deliver than it seemed on the face of it. As such, the Board agreed that there was no way to include lightweights without putting the primary objective under which the GBRT is funded at risk. As such, the board agreed that it would not be appropriate to retain a pathway to international competition for lightweight rowers, and that to support lightweight rowing as a whole it was more practical and more sensible to improve the lightweight ecosystem through support at a Club competition level. The Board concluded that the logistics around the World Championships were much more complicated than is generally understood, and as such it is unrealistic for rowers to go to international events without the appropriate support in place.

The Chair asked that both papers be published in order that the full analysis of the arguments be visible to all members, in addition to the Board minute on the discussion. The Board agreed.

Agreed: The Board agreed that Lightweight Rowing would not be retained in the pathway. Both papers relating to the discussion should be published.

Love Rowing

The Foundation Director presented a report to the Board which provided an overview of Love Rowing's activities and achievements since the beginning of the year.

The Board agreed that regular progress updates from Love Rowing should feature on the Board Runway for 2025, to better support the engagement and alignment between both bodies.

Action: Board Runway 2025 to include Love Rowing Update Report at regular intervals

Safeguarding Report



The Safeguarding Manager presented the Safeguarding Report to the Board which provided a high level overview of the current challenges and opportunities .

It was noted that the paper had been considered in detail by the Safeguarding Panel and the Risk & Integrity Committee at their previous meetings. And therefore the paper was now being presented to the full Board for their awareness.

The Board raised a concern regarding the possibility of coaches or athletes who had been suspended and the ability for them to move between clubs. The Executive provided assurance that this was currently being considered by the team and were taking action to put appropriate mechanisms in place to mitigate this risk.

The Board also raised the importance of collaborative working with British Rowing's Home Countries in this area.

Agreed: The Board agreed that an Action Plan needed to be created as a key priority in order to reduce the risks within safeguarding.

GOVERNANCE

Governance Statement

It was agreed to defer the Annual Governance Statement, which under the new Governance Reform Programme, meant that the Risk & Integrity Committee should consider and then recommend its approval by the Board.

BOARD SUB COMMITTEES

Risk & Integrity Committee Meeting

The Chair of the Risk & Integrity Committee provided an update to the Board following the Committee meeting held on 3rd September. It was noted that work had been progressing with regards to the governance developments of the Panels which reported into the Risk & Integrity Committee, under the new governance structure.

AOB

The Board formally acknowledged that this was both Kate O'Sullivan and Liz Behnke's last meeting as their term as British Rowing Directors had come to an end, and wanted to thank them for their dedication, commitment and efforts over the many years.

MEETING DATES 2024

Thursday 5th December - Hammersmith

KEY

D = DISCUSSION, A = APPROVAL, N = NOTING