

**Executive Board Update 8th September 2020 @ 18:00
Microsoft Teams**

Directors Present	Titles
Adam Walker [AW]	Chair (Independent)
Brendan Fogarty [BF]	Director
Freda Bussey [FB]	Director
Ian Wall [IW]	Director (Independent)
Andres Hernandez [AH]	Director (Independent)
Richard Harrison [RH]	Director
Seyram Atubra [SA]	Director
Staff Present	
Sue Storey [SS]	Chief Executive
Apologies	
Simon Griffiths [SG]	Director
Jefferson Williams [JW]	Director
Clare Francis [CF]	Vice Chair (Independent)
Samantha Jamieson [SJ]	Deputy Chief Executive
Kevin Fletcher [KF]	Finance Consultant

1. Welcome by the Chair

Apologies were received from Clare Francis, Jefferson Williams, Simon Griffiths and Sam Jamieson.

All Board meeting minutes that have not yet been approved by the Board would be considered and signed off at the next Board meeting on 26 September 2020.

SS proposed two items to be discussed at Any Other Business. These would be dates of future Board meetings and paper that Keith Nicholls shared with SS.

2. Finance

2a. Covid -19 Update

Previously circulated forecasting in relation to Covid-19 has not changed significantly. SS reported that as long as the season starts at the end of October the forecast would remain as is.

Volleyball England staff continue to work from home. A plan containing four levels has been developed to provide staff with guidance on how the organisation is planning to progress towards a return to work. The organisation at the minute is at the stage where employees are given a choice of either working from home or working from the office with the office being available to six employees at one time. There is an intention to conduct a review of

flexi and working from home policies going forward. There are no definite timescales for the achievement of further two levels of phased and full return.

Board discussed:

- SA enquired about the productivity of the staff team during the period of lockdown. SS reported that considering the number of staff that have been put on furlough leave, the staff have adapted very well to working from home and the productivity has been good. SS advised that the Executive team has also been focusing on the wellbeing of staff .
- SA asked whether VE had access to external wellbeing services or an employee assistance programme that staff could access. SS responded that at this time, there was no such service available to the staff team.
- AW congratulated the Executive team on their efforts to keep the staff morale high by means of organising virtual get-togethers but also saw value in investigating external staff assistance services. AW also suggested that it might be a good idea to seek advice about how staff could be helped with their working from home set-ups including working from home allowance.
- AW asked the Board whether they would feel comfortable to meet face-to-face for the November Board meeting. SS would investigate whether this would be feasible and which Board Members would wish to attend in person and which would prefer to join in remotely.

Actions:

2a. SS to investigate feasibility of meeting face-to-face November Board meeting and attendance of the Board.

2b. Audit Update

SS reported that the audit has been finalised with few recommendations. AW congratulated the Executive team as well as Kevin Fletcher for this outstanding result and thanked them for their hard work on this.

3. Executive Update

3a. Update on business activity

The report was taken as read. SS reported on a few key highlights from the report:

- the Strategy would be launched on Monday 14 September via a series of videos, including a message from AW, on a specially created webpage called Game Plan and via social media channels e.g. Facebook. SS encouraged the Board to help to promote the launch of the Strategy. A survey would be put out to the volleyball players countrywide asking them a series of questions aiming to investigate how Volleyball England can engage with them more effectively in the future. SA enquired about the content of the survey. SS would get back to SA after the meeting.
- As previously updated, the return to competitive volleyball play is planned to take place by the end of October. SS reported that Sport England have commissioned a piece of work to map out the scale of the problem around the impact of Covid-19 on the use of facilities for indoor sports. Another letter from CEOs of indoor sports organisation has been sent to the Prime Minister.

- the AGM would take place on 26 September. All clubs have been notified and asked to make nominations for roles to be voted on for election at this AGM. Also, clubs have been asked for any special resolutions to be considered at the meeting. In terms of the accounts, the AGM would be asked to agree that the year-end accounts are made available at the AGM with audited accounts following later in the year.
- Board agreed to have a Board meeting before the AGM on 26 September.
- the CWG 2022 media event in July was a great opportunity to celebrate and promote beach volleyball. A CWG working group with Clare Francis heading it has been set up.
- VE is working with BVF to make a submission for funding for up to £3m, to support the high-performance programme for beach and sitting volleyball. The bid is due to be submitted in October with the decision expected by Christmas 2020.
- VE continues to work with Seven League on the development of the digital strategy. The work is progressing well.
- Board thanked SS for this update.

Action:

3a. SS to update SA on the content of the survey to be launched in the Strategy release week.

A Board meeting would be organised pre-AGM.

4. Policy

4a Policy approval process

AW updated the Board on the actions related to the organisational policy update:

- Pinsent Masons have reviewed all VE's organisational policies, which are now ready to be signed off by the Board. To streamline the approval process, VE could ask Pinsent Masons to prepare an executive summary report containing information on key changes introduced to the policies and what material changes these would make. Following this, it was proposed that a working group could be created to investigate this summary to ensure that the process has been conducted with due diligence. Finally, a Pinsent Masons representative could meet the Board to brief them on that key information. AW assured the Board that the Board would have access to all amended documents. Board agreed to these arrangements. The working group would consist of BF, IW and potentially CF. There was no timeframe for this work, but CF could advise about this.
- SS would brief CF on the agreed actions.

Actions:

4a. All actions to be carried out as noted above in connection to the policy update.

SS to update CF on the Board decisions.

5. Equality & Diversity

AW reported that the Equality and Diversity Action Plan is due to be reviewed. SS and AW felt it would be beneficial to obtain external support to carry out this work to ensure unconscious bias is eliminated. Finally, this work could potentially be funded by Sport

England.

Board discussed:

- RH observed that the requirements set out in the plan were extensive considering the size of the organisation.
- Going forward, the action plan could help to set out the detail of various commitments that would help VE to build and maintain high standards of equality and diversity as well as meet the Sport England sport governance requirements.
- SS noted that VE should be aiming for the highest standards due to the organisation being representative of a diverse community. SA echoed this approach and explained that the plan would help VE to establish itself as an organisation genuinely committed to equality and diversity.
- SS would investigate the background of the Equality and Diversity working group and the progress of equality and diversity work. SS would work with RH and FB on the Board paper that is to be presented at the November Board paper. SS would also investigate availability of support from Sport England or any other organisation to carry out work related to the action plan.

Actions:

5a. All actions to be carried out in connection to the Equality and Diversity Action plan as noted above.

6. Volleyball England Foundation

IW updated the Board on the work of the Volleyball England Foundation as per the circulated paper:

- the first AGM was held
- an annual report was published
- only one grant was awarded in 2019-20
- there is a recognition that the profile of the organisation needs to be increased within the community to be able to raise funds to support various volleyball projects
- the Foundation was successful in securing two grants totalling £3.5k
- 62 volleyballs were granted to support the sitting volleyball programme; the value of these was £2.7k
- 6 clubs have applied for grants with the Foundation
- the Foundation continues to strengthen its digital presence
- a newsletter has been issued
- the foundation offered to support the development of the legacy of the Birmingham 2022 and is awaiting response
- enough funds have been raised to cover the expenditure connected to the sitting volleyball

SS and AW have been meeting with Simone Turner and Janet Inman every 6 weeks to ensure strategic alignment of the organisations and mutual support. Also, Stewart Thorpe is meeting every week with Janet to ensure the alignment of the communication of both organisations.

SS added that all aspects of running of the Foundation have been reviewed, which is

positive.

7. Any Other Business

The paper from Keith Nicholls was discussed by the Board. Board agreed that SS and AW would review the paper and pull out key points that would be cross compared with the Strategy. The key areas of difference would be brought to the Board for discussion. Going forward, the organisation would involve Keith Nicholls in specific discussions.

Board meeting dates for 2021 would be realigned to fall in line with the availability of management accounts.

Action:

7. SS and AW to carry out actions as above in connection to Keith Nicholls' paper.

7. SS to coordinate the realignment of board meeting dates in 2021.

8. Meeting Finalisation

Review actions have been noted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AW Walker".

Signed Adam Walker, Chair