

# An Ace Service Subgroup Minutes

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**Start Time:** 18.00

**End Time:** 20.00

**Venue/Platform:** Microsoft Teams

Attendees	Role Title
James Murphy	Competitions Working Group Lead
Nick Heckford	Officials Working Group Lead
Rob Payne	Strategic Manager, An Ace Service
Sam Jamieson	Deputy CEO
Simon Griffiths	Elected Director and Subgroup Chair
Jake Sheaf	Elected Director
Leila Gear	Project Officer

## 1. Standing Agenda

- a. Welcome by the Chair

SG welcomed the group

- b. Apologies

No apologies were noted

- c. Declaration of Interests

Were there any conflicts of interest?

- d. Approval of Agenda

The group approved the agenda

- e. Review of previous Minutes
- f. Review of previous Actions

The meeting has a 2-point agenda, focusing on Padlet structure and content.

Moving forwards from the last meeting, it was agreed these meetings should be used for pitching ideas and deciding on the prioritisation of tasks.

## Review of previous minutes

The group initially spent time reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting and agreeing upon the necessary changes to accurately reflect previous discussion and enhance clarity of meaning. These changes were added as comments to the document by SJ, but included:

- Concerns over formatting issues (particularly the use of acronyms)
- Discussion about whether it is for the Board to understand priorities – Senior Management team figure out the day-to-day operation
- Confusion over the language used in places
- Removing points around customer service

## **2. Agenda**

### **Agenda A – Padlet Structure**

RP and SG met prior to this meeting to discuss how Padlet could be utilised to make a useful structure. The existing Padlet columns were expanded from 'Issues' and 'Opportunities' to include short/long-term opportunities, areas for further investigation and higher priority issues, to provide a working document and a direction moving forwards.

The group were in consensus there should be one ongoing project that is the primary focus, one in the background that will move to the foreground as the initial project moves towards completion, and several 'quick wins.'

It was questioned whether Padlet is an appropriate long-term system to use as it is anticipated to be difficult to maintain when it gets bigger. The inability to determine who has added each point, or to change the order of tasks might become an issue.

JM voiced a concern about whether the 'high/medium/low' headings suggested there was an expectation to be actively working on all the tasks. To ensure nothing would be lost, the group agreed Padlet was missing a section for the items they are consciously deciding to do nothing with at this time, but to keep to be actioned at an appropriate time in the future. The 'Not Doing Now' column was added to provide a record of all the group's ideas, which can remain there to be focused on when relevant.

As there is a need to work collaboratively across subgroups to ensure the focus is consistent, it may be necessary to populate another column to detail the other subgroups' priorities.

### **Agenda B – Padlet Content**

The group allocated time within the meeting to discuss the content uploaded to Padlet, understanding who had uploaded what content, and a conversation around whether each item was in the correct column.

The point was raised about whether the placement of Junior Competitions under the 'Short-Term Opportunities' column was appropriate. Given the requests to change the competition (moving back to a last 8s format, and having allocated officials at matches), there is a huge opportunity but a significant



volume of work necessary to take the competition to the next level. NH indicated Junior Competitions touches multiple areas (e.g. there is now a demand for junior referee courses as a result of more juniors being involved in the Grand Prix Series this year), and if more immediate action is not taken, it was questioned whether the opportunity might be lost to capitalise on it. The group collectively agreed to move Junior Competitions to the 'Higher Priority Issue' column, with respect to how the success and demand for the competition can be capitalised on, and how the competition can be better resourced (suggestions under the latter included scaling down, outsourcing and spending greater resources to improve the offering).

It was agreed a good avenue to explore was whether there was opportunity to capitalise on event volunteers, particularly whether this could be linked to university courses/volunteer awards.

With respect to the Fluid (competitions) system, the group spoke about how the new website update will be a huge productivity gain for competitions management. It is currently unknown whether there will be any cost.

The group discussed how there currently is no case-management system to track how long it takes to resolve issues/allow users to track the progress of their case. It was suggested having a better system in place would provide visibility in real time (how many cases are open etc), give tools to the Senior Management team to see what is going on, and enable Managers to see what is routinely coming through as issues to implement an appropriate resolution. JM had spoken with Zendesk but has not yet heard back. They could come back and present it as 'quick win.' A strategic conversation is required surrounding potential cost and an alternative option in the event the cheap/local access disappears.

The topic of running NVL Division 3 was raised as to whether it something that should be continued given the substantially larger workload generated compared to the remuneration received.

The group agreed there was potentially a 'quick win' surrounding the rebranding of the national cup to enhance the appeal of the event and secure sponsorship.

In line with wanting to be more of a data and insight driven organization, it would also be worth trying to understand why teams pass up free entry.

With regards to retired referees, the group spoke about a potential opportunity to (re)recruit them as observers. **NH will look into this and who could be targeted (needs support from the Hub to create a list of lapsed, experienced referees over a certain age (tbd)).**

It was then proposed whether it was plausible this opportunity could be supported by referee assessment technology to enable retired referees to assess the performance of officials remotely. JM had previously investigated camera technology and suggested the use of Go Pros may be inadequate. Other equipment was found to be very expensive while the loaning out of kit does also raise issues around determining responsibility for insurance and transportation. The group agreed the retired referee and technology items could be merged for a 'quick win' – **RP will look into the feasibility of using other technology with Hub team.**

Under 'Short-Term Opportunities,' the issues of referee registration fees were raised. It was suggested there was an opportunity to encourage referees that are no longer registered to get back into volleyball



by reducing the maximum cost of the registration fee. **NH to resend SG the previous fee proposal that went to the Board.**

The group also spoke about focusing on aligning courses at the start of the season to improve their chances of taking place and running at capacity.

Ultimately, the group agreed that refereeing was the main issue they wanted to get behind, with its long-term project being to address the issue of insufficient referees and budget – subject to this aligning with the other Sub-Groups' interests and priorities. This is clearly a long-term play while the ideas around retired refs and the use of video technology for assessments represent the agreed quick win projects.

To help SG be better prepared for meeting with the other Sub-Group chairs, it was agreed that (a) NH would spend time to bring him up to speed; and (b) efforts should be made to articulate a more data-rich understanding of the current state of officiating.

### 3. AOB

### 4. Review of actions

Action List	Person Responsible
Meeting to understand the bigger picture issues surrounding refereeing, current budget constraints and the most recent fee proposal - to help SG advocate better at subgroup chair level	SG, NH
Quick wins - Looking into retired referees & technology i) volume of retired referees as campaign audience	RP
ii) technology that could be used (asking questions about insurance/logistics/risk etc)	RP

**Date of next meeting:** (SG will speak with Clare and then decide on date of next meeting)

Today's minutes were recorded by Leila Gear