



**Minutes of Volleyball England Board Meeting at 10am on 9 December 2023 via Teams.**

<b>Directors Present</b>	<b>Titles</b>
Adam Walker [AW]	Independent Chair
Andres Hernandez [AH]	Independent Director
Clare Francis [CF]	Senior Independent Director
David Reeve [DR]	Elected Director
Jess Plumridge [JP]	Elected Director
Richard Harrison [RH]	Elected Director
Simon Griffiths [SG]	Elected Director
<b>Staff Present</b>	
Charlie Ford [CFo]	Chief Executive Officer
Guin Batten [GB]	Deputy Chief Executive
Janet Inman [JI]	Volleyball England Foundation (online)
Dr Dane Vishnubala (DV)	Chief Medical Officer
Rob Payne [RP]	Staff
Laura Allcoat [LA]	Staff
<b>In attendance</b>	
Agata Sromecka [AS]	Secretariat

**EB/23-24/24 Welcome from the Chair and apologies**

Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Brendan Fogarty, Freda Bussey, Greg Brown, Jake Sheaf, Phil French had submitted apologies prior to the meeting.

**24.1 Directors Conflict of Interest & Disclosures**

No declarations of interest were submitted.

**24.2 Approval of agenda**

The agenda was approved by all present.

**24.3 Previous minutes**

Minutes of the 28th October 2023 Board meeting were taken as a true and accurate

record of the meeting.

#### **24.4 Matters arising**

Hall of Fame criteria – to be carried forward. AW and CFo will put a firm date in the calendar to undertake the review before presenting back at the January board meeting.

#### **EB/23-24/25 Exec Report including AGM engagement plan**

25.1 AW took the Exec report as read. Three specific points from the report will be discussed once any director questions have been addressed.

Board discussed:

- RH asked whether the presented Risk Register was a complete document. AW answered that it was not and that it merely presented the top 5 risks that the organisation were managing. RH suggested that a budget for the new performance plan and talent was included in the Register. RH explained that this was to ensure that Volleyball England could support the teams to get them to competitions and to organise competitions. GB and AH would review the Register at the next FSR committee meeting.
- SG asked what Globocol was. CFo explained it was a platform for tracking and managing safeguarding issues and managing risk in sport.

#### **Action**

***EB/23-24/25.1 GB and AH would review the Register at the next FSR committee meeting.***

25.1.1 CFo proceeded to draw Board's attention to the proposed AGM engagement plan as presented in the Executive Report. There were two options to choose from regarding the time of engagement: longer engagement - February to May 2024 and condensed engagement, which would take place in May only. CFo asked for Board's steer on this.

CF joined the meeting.

Board discussed:

- DR commented that Option 1 presented a labour-heavy plan and could be a draw on staff capacity.
- AH observed that Option 2 felt more like an approach that had been taken before and it had been previously received unfavorably by the membership.
- AW expressed his concern that the condensed period might be insufficient even if the comms piece was thorough.
- SG added that he preferred Option 2 and explained that there was insufficient comms to be sustained between Feb up until May. Also, he feared that the membership would soon forget the comms sent out during the elongated comms campaign. SG wondered whether there was another in-between option.
- JI commented that staff members could instigate conversations at the regional meetings.
- CFo added that the reason for option1 had been created with the previous challenges with pre-AGM engagement in mind.
- CF commented that the timing should consider the timeline of volleyball competitions.
- RH agreed with AH that it was important to prepare the membership and create

an environment in which the membership would have time to have their questions re proposed changes answered. This could be structured and presented at the committee, groups, regional meetings etc. RH added that it was a case of persuasion over an elongated period.

- AW summarized that the period of engagement would be elongated but CFo & SG would work on an option of how long this would be based on the contents of comms.

**Action**

**25.1.1 Board agreed that the period of AGM engagement would be elongated and SG and CFo would work on this.**

25.1.2 CFo drew the Board's attention to the fact that the new Chair of the BVF would be appointed shortly and this offered an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the organisations. As part of this CFo proposed that the new Chair of BVF attend the Volleyball England Board meetings in the capacity of an observer. CFo explained the reasoning for improving this relationship.

AW agreed and reinforced that the proposal offered a great opportunity and recommended the proposal for approval. **Board discussed and agreed in principle, a review would take place after 6-months to understand its impact on the level of Volleyball England/BVF engagement.** CFo would contact the new BVF Chair to organise a preliminary meeting.

**Action**

**25.1.2 CFo will contact the new BVF Chair to organise a preliminary meeting.**

**EB/23-24/26 Business Continuity Plan and Policy updates**

AW thanked CF for her work on the plan and policy update.

CF explained that the Business Continuity Plan was part of continued compliance to the Code for Sports Governance. CF commented on the main amendments to the policies.

There were no questions from the Board. CFo would amend the formatting of the policies ensuring they are consistent with all other policies.

The Board approved the Business Continuity plan and policy updates.

**Action**

**EB/23-24/26 CFo would amend the formatting of the Business Continuity Plan.**

**EB/23-24/27 Child Protection Safeguarding Unit (CPSU) review & Safeguarding Action Plan**

RP and LA joined the meeting.

RP and LA briefed the Board:

- Volleyball England was required to feed into the annual CPSU review. In previous years it was a fairly light touch approach consisting of a checklist and a plan.
- This year the requirements have become much more thorough and stringent. RP explained that the CPSU were keen to ensure that from an organisational perspective, everyone was committed to safeguarding and understood the needs

of the organisation and had appropriate resources to achieve that. Secondly, there had been a much more enhanced focus on connecting with Volleyball England counties and regions to try to tell the story through their eyes rather than being top down, which had been the approach in the past.

- Safeguarding was RP's and LA's remit and their work had been enhanced by Gordon Valentines review of Volleyball England's policies and procedures as well as integration of Globocol into the organisation. Globocol offered an improved way to manage safeguarding cases as they were arriving. It was also a great platform to store information resources, giving access to the right people at the right time.
- The CPSU required Volleyball England to elaborate on its strengths and weaknesses as an organisation. Introducing VolleyZone had made the affiliation process a lot more robust with a number of criteria that clubs were required to follow to evidence their revision within safeguarding. Globocol helped to administrate in a much more effective manner. Moreover, a significant amount of work had been conducted to support the staff to ensure they knew their role and responsibility in terms of safeguarding.
- Through his review, Gordon Valentine enhanced the awareness of organisational strengths & weaknesses.
- LA reinforced that Volleyball England now knew what steps needed to be taken to refresh the safeguarding policies and procedures. The Case Management Group would be reviewed and reappointed to ensure that it had external individuals to support objectivity and transparency of the disciplinary and safeguarding processes. This would be started early next year. In addition to what had already been mentioned about Globocol by RP, LA added that one of the benefits of it was the ability to cascade the platform down to the regions and clubs so that they had a secure place to store any concerns that they received. One of the plans would be to work with the region to pilot this and see how this would work in practice moving forward before launching it further. In terms of our safeguarding adult policy, the Board were asked to review and approve this.
- Further, an online forum for the club welfare officers was going to be launched before the end of this year so that it could be used to engage, reflect, and monitor the work that they were doing, and provide more one-to-one support as and when needed. Terms of reference would be needed before the launch of the online forum.
- In terms of the CPSU review meeting, there was a lot more paperwork to be completed this year compared to previous years. However, the review process completed by Gordon Valentine had enabled earlier identification of gaps and put plans into place ahead of the meeting with CPSU. That worked well with the support that the CPSU had identified meaning Volleyball England is in a good place to move safeguarding forward.
- Overall, Volleyball England achieved a 'Met' status with CPSU which is the highest grade given.

Board discussed:

- DR asked whether having a safeguarding lead was going to be appointed in the near future. CFo responded that following the six-month review meeting with Sport England, further information and detail was required in terms of a specific role to bolster the governance of the organisation. Further updates would be provided to the board in due course.
- RH offered support from Volleyball for Life within the participant pathways.
- JI offered her help with this work.
- AW thanked the team for this work.

- CFo thanked and congratulated RP and LA on this excellent work.
- JI asked observed that there was more learning around the adult safeguarding to be done and the policy should recognise this. JI, RP and LA would discuss this further.

Board approved the adult safeguarding policy.

RP and LA left the meeting

**Action**

***EB/23-24/27 JI, RP and LA would discuss the adult safeguarding policy further.***

**EB/23-24/28 Clinical Governance – Review and plan**

DV joined the meeting.

AW welcomed DV to the meeting. DV updated the Board as follows:

- Clinical governance was a framework in which an organisation is accountable for continuously improving both services and the safeguarding of care that an athlete should be provided with.
- DV gave the Board key recent examples that had driven development of clinical governance across the sporting landscape.

DV then proceeded to explain six pillars of clinical governance:

- Clinical audit
- Education and training
- Quality and Clinical effectiveness
- Research and development.
- Openness
- Risk management

A plan of action would be prepared to take clinical governance forward. Ultimately there would be a plan in place that would inform the next three to five years. To start off, the immediate risks would be addressed. AW thanked DV for his presentation.

Board discussed:

- RH stated that clinical governance should be included in the coach education. DV and RH to discuss this further.
- AH added that the clinical governance should be cascaded to the clubs to protect players better.
- CF commented that the governance would need to be filtered down to promote good practice.
- SG expressed interest in screening and research especially amongst junior athletes to be able to understand their thresholds and pressure exerted on players before the game takes the best of them. RH added that this was also a safeguarding issue.
- AW stressed that despite the need, not all steps of the clinical governance would be implemented all at once, CFo agreed and stressed that small, cost-effective steps would be implemented in the first instance.
- AW thanked DV for the presentation.

DV left the meeting.

### **Action**

***EB/23-24/28 DV and RH to discuss clinical governance within coach education.***

### **EB/23-24/29 Environmental Social Governance (ESG)**

JP and CFo updated the Board on ESG.

- CFo explained what ESG was.
- CFo commented on examples of ESG objectives and policies that existed in the sector.
- JP explained why sustainability mattered and how it could be implemented.
- JP stated that Volleyball England should be clear on how it could approach sustainability before going out to membership including long- medium- and short-terms objectives. Volleyball England should set an example for the membership before then offering support and guidance.
- JP suggested that a third party is worked with to produce a sustainability report. JP presented an estimated cost.

Board discussed:

- DR recalled a company called Beyond Sport that could help with the report.
- AW liked the idea of the assessment and report on Volleyball England's environmental impact. JP added that the report findings should be reviewed on a regular basis.
- CF observed that the Volleyball England supply chain would be the biggest producer of carbon footprint for the organisation.
- CFo added that Volleyball England were speaking with commercial partners who could help the sport to reduce its carbon footprint.
- CFo added that moving forward, board papers would be formatted to include sustainability considerations.
- Board agreed for CFo to source cost of a supplier to produce a sustainability report for Volleyball England.
- JP informed that there were free resources that Board could access. JP was happy to be contacted in regard to those.

### **Action**

***EB/23-24/29 CFo to source cost of a supplier to produce a sustainability report for VE.***

### **EB/23-24/30 Meeting Finalisation**

#### **30.1 Review of Actions**

Actions were reviewed and agreed.

#### **30.2 AOB**

CF asked about the progress of the recruitment for Birmingham activator post. GB responded that the post was being interviewed for and the offer letter was being developed. SG expressed some concerns around the drivers for this post. JI suggested that Sport Birmingham could be approached to take up some of the outstanding work in the meantime.

CFo informed that meetings surrounding the second beach facility in Birmingham had been pushed back to January 2024.

#### **30.3 Meeting close**

Meeting closed at 12.30pm

Actions	Who
<b>EB/23-24/:</b> <b>Hall of Fame criteria – to be carried forward.</b>	AW CFo
<b>EB/23-24/25.1 GB and AH would review the Register at the next FSR committee meeting.</b>	GB & AH
<b>25.1.1 Board agreed that the period would be elongated and SG and CFo would. Action SG and CFo</b>	SG/CFo
<b>25.1.2 CFo would contact the new BVF Chair to organise a preliminary meeting.</b>	CFo
<b>EB/23-24/26 CFo would amend the formatting of the Business Continuity Plan</b>	CFo
<b>EB/23-24/27 JI, RP and LA would discuss the adult safeguarding policy further.</b>	JI, RP & LA
<b>EB/23-24/29 CFo to source cost of a supplier to produce a sustainability report for Volleyball England.</b>	CFo
<b>EB/23-24/28 DV and RH to discuss clinical governance in coach education.</b>	DV and RH



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## Board Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023

### Report Summary

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The following paper provides summary information from the 9<sup>th</sup> December board pack which should be read in conjunction with the above board meeting minutes:

#### **Item EB/23-24/25 – Executive Report**

##### **Volleyball England Staff**

Since the last board meeting, we have seen the below staffing changes:

- Jonathan Moore (Strategic Manager – Major Events) left the organisation on the 6<sup>th</sup> December. As a result of this, the below staffing changes have taken place:
  - Laura Allcoat has been made permanent in her Get Keep Grow Strategic Manager role.
  - Rob Payne has assumed strategic oversight for Major Events within the An Ace Service (AAS) department.
  - Richard Williams' role within AAS has been extended to include Project Lead responsibilities for Major Events.
  - A new role 'Project Lead – Competitions' has been advertised to provide additional operational support for the AAS department and to remove the operational burden from Rob allowing him to be truly strategic and work closer with the sub-group.
  - John Worrall's role has been transformed to lead on all elements of Sitting Volleyball (including the Sitting Volleyball Grand Prix) and he has been reassigned to the Get Keep Grow department.
- Mo Kerai (Birmingham Activator) completed his interim appointment at the end of October. Recruitment is ongoing in terms of his successor.

##### **NEVZA update**

At the NEVZA EGM that took place on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December, the NEVZA members voted for the Swedish Federation to take the General Secretary and President roles for an initial 2-year period.

We have underlined our commitment to working with and supporting NEVZA activities closer including two initial areas:



- NEVZA Youth Beach Tournament – In July 2024. Dates and age groups TBC but we have everything in place.
- John Forman to join the NEVZA technical committees.

**Item EB/23-24/26 – Business Continuity Plan and Policy updates**

Volleyball England has gone through significant changes over the last 12 months that have included migrating to a new membership platform, launch of a new online shop and operational changes in terms of how the sport delivers its core functions.

Accordingly, the board has supported the Exec to review our policies and procedures to ensure:

- Our continued compliance with the ‘Code for Sports Governance’.
- Best practice and changes in law.
- Our policies are consistent across the business and reference one another accordingly.

The below policies have been reviewed and updated:

- 26.1 Volleyball England Business Continuity Policy (new)
- 26.2 Volleyball England Privacy Policy
- 26.3 Cookies Policy
- 26.4 Volleyball Membership Terms
- 26.5 Terms of Service
- 26.6 VolleyStore Return & Refund Policy
- 26.7 VolleyStore Shipping Policy
- 26.8 VolleyStore Privacy Policy

**Summary of changes**

Document	Changes made
VE privacy policy	Has been updated to reflect changes in best practice/law.
Cookies policy	Updated to reflect feedback from Fluid
VE member terms	Updated to simplify, include the insurance information from Howdens and to link to all appropriate connecting policies.
Terms of service (shop)	Updated to comply with relevant laws and linkages to Volleyball England Policies.  Shopify check out and delivery processes changed accordingly.
Return & Refund Policy	Updated to comply with relevant laws.
Shipping Policy	As above
Privacy Policy (Shop)	Amended to align to the VE general Privacy Policy

