

Annual General Meeting of Scottish Fencing Ltd  
held via Microsoft Teams  
18.00 on 10 December 2020



#### Board Attendees

George Liston	President (GDL)
Sheila Anderson	Director of Operations (SA)
Ross Morrison	Director of Safeguarding (RM)
Paul Vaughan	Director of Talent and Performance (PV)
Morven Shaw	Commercial Director (MS)
Adam Szymoszowskyj	Director of Development (AS)
Hugh Kernohan	Director of Governance (HK)

#### Staff Attendees

Vincent Bryson	Chief Executive Officer (VB)
Blair Cremin	Pathways Manager (BC)
Liz Anderson	Operations Manager, Minute Taker

#### Attendees

Niall	Campbell
Calum	Johnston
Peter Ruadh	Drummond
Iain	Morrison
Jo	Cook
Andrew	Brown
Kevin	Milne
Sean	Walton
Nicola	Borthwick
Matt	Pocock
Clyne	Grant
Karen	Grant (KG)
Keith	Davidson
David	Barbour
Malcolm	Napier-Holford
Alex	McLeod
Sam	McCarlie

#### Apologies:

Tom	Sorbie
Martin	Foley - Director of Events (MF)
Paul	Thomson
Ruth	Thomson
Barry	Cook sportsotland Partnership Manager (BCo)
Gail	Prince Director responsible for strategy (GP)

## Minutes:

### **1 Minute of Scottish Fencing AGM, 30 November 2019**

The minutes of the AGM held on 30 November 2019 were agreed.

These were Proposed by Hugh Kernohan and Seconded by Ross Morrison.

### **2 Welcome**

GDL welcomed everyone to the meeting. VB thanked everyone for their patience with the technical difficulties at the start of the meeting.

### **3 Presentation of Accounts for period 01/04/2019 – 31/03/2020 followed by general questions on accounts**

DWC summarised the accounts to 31 March 2020. There is a net deficit for the year; however, the Board had been very careful to manage cash throughout the year. In addition, the Directors were very aware of the need for income generation and this was been explored actively.

With regard to Scottish Fencing's financial position for 2021, COVID had, counterintuitively, resulted in Scottish Fencing being in a slightly better position than members might expect. Despite the loss of income from events and membership fees, VB had been successful in securing a £10k grant from City of Edinburgh. The impact of further financial difficulties has lessened thanks to sportscotland's flexibility around our investment, for which the Board was very grateful. Both mean that, despite the impacts of COVID, Scottish Fencing could maintain a sufficient level of reserves.

The Board continued to focus on the cash position and income generation. Currently, VB was in discussions with sportscotland regarding Scottish Fencing's future investment.

### **4 President's Report on Scottish Fencing activity 2019, followed by general discussion**

GDL highlighted that a full report was available on the Scottish Fencing website and thanked the members for their engagement throughout the year.

He summarised SF's targets for 2019-20:

- Regeneration of the sport in areas where fencing had declined.
- Development of a performance pathway.
- Using fencing as a vehicle for changing lives.

Despite the suspension of fencing, progress against some of these targets had been made.

SF had delivered some online training for Pathways fencers, as well as offering coach CPD with the Alistair McCaw presentations. Throughout the year, the staff team had strengthened relationships within the Scottish sporting landscape. Many of the current issues were not unique to fencing and by engaging across multiple sports fencing had a larger voice to raise concerns with sportscotland and to lobby the Scottish Government.

SF now had a formal agreement with Scottish Student Sport (SSS), which had been a great piece of work by BC and Matt Pocock, Scottish Student Fencing Chair. SF looked to continue to build partnerships with other organisations to help to grow fencing.

Currently, the focus for the staff team was preparing the ground for the resumption of fencing activities, interpreting and disseminating guidance issued by sportsScotland as it was updated to ensure a safe and coordinated return.

VB added that he was delighted to announce that the next round of CPD opportunities would be with Damian Hughes (author and co-host of the High-performance Podcast). VB congratulated BC on his success in securing this great opportunity.

HK reported that of the seven elected Board members, four directors' terms would expire in March 2021. HK would email members early in 2021 to advise them of opportunities for people to join the Board. If the number of applicants exceeded the number of vacancies, Scottish Fencing would run an election. He suggested that anyone interested could contact any of the current Board members for an informal discussion to discover more about what was involved.

In addition Gail Prince (GP), who had served as an independent director had also stepped down and the Board was working to fill this vacancy. GDL thanked GP for her extensive contributions during her term of office.

GDL spoke of the loss of two immense figures in the fencing community this year, Graeme de Sainte Croix (Dusty) and Bert Bracewell. For most people who fence in Scotland one or both would have had a significant impact on their lives. Both were very sad losses to the sport.

#### What's next? **#forgingthefuture**

The Scottish Government had increased the alignment between sport and public health. Project Forte and similar projects had demonstrated how sport could shape and influence lives positively. The Changing Lives principle would become increasingly prevalent: two clubs – Salle Ossian and Salle Holyrood – had begun their Changing Lives journey and SF encouraged other clubs to be part of that journey.

Future fixtures and events were planned to include:

- The Senior Five-nations' Match, hosted by Scotland in 2021.
- The Senior and Veterans' Commonwealth Fencing Championships, hosted by England in 2022.
- Scottish Fencing's centenary in 2023.

Scottish Fencing was about to launch a video platform on Actify, a resource for sharing good practice throughout the sporting landscape. The hub would initially use the resources produced by Keith Cook and Salle Holyrood earlier in the year.

VB was the chair of the CEO forum for Scottish SGBs, which is where discussions with Active Scotland took place, considering how sport could play a part in helping the Nation to recover in the aftermath of the pandemic. In the future, there may be opportunities for asset transfer from local authorities to community use, similar to how West Fife obtained their premises.

SF and BF continued to work closely.

VB added that he would be happy to receive any additional questions.

CG asked whether the membership had reduced during the year. Membership had reduced, but *pro rata* the fall had been less in Scotland than across the UK. However, SF had a small membership, so the fall in numbers was having a greater impact, with SF looking at a 40 to 50% drop in income. SF memberships normally total around 1,000 but numbers had dropped by 200. The vast majority of SF memberships were in the competitive categories. Clubs still can't get access to venues and this could be a longer-term problem. Hopefully, once clubs were able to resume activities, membership numbers would recover. Salle Holyrood commented that, since they'd returned, their club membership had increased.

## **5 Awards**

GDL noted that it was very positive to receive so many worthy nominations for the awards and he thanked everyone who had voted.

The recipients of each award were confirmed:

Crosnier Quaich: Men's Epée Team, Senior Five-nations' Match 2019.

Crosnier Coaching Awards: Keith Cook

Sword of Merit: Charity McArdle

Scottish Fencing would present awards to people as soon as it was safe to do so.

GDL concluded the meeting by thanking all the members for their continued support throughout the year and in particular those attending the evening's meeting.

The meeting closed at 7 pm.