

Annual General Meeting of Scottish Fencing Ltd
held via Zoom
17:30 on 7 December 2022



Board Attendees

George Liston	Chair
Stan Stoodley	President
Sheila Anderson	HR Director
Hugh Kernohan	Director of Governance
Giles Lomax	Independent Director
Mhairi McLaughlin	Equalities Director
Jude Salmon	Independent Director
Paul Vaughan	Performance and Safeguarding Director

Staff Attendees

Clare Queen	Chief Operating Officer
Liz Anderson	Operations Manager (Minutes)
Daniel Baker	Club & Community Development Manager

Present:

Mark	Alvares Peres	Glasgow University Fencing Club
Silvia J	Brown	Salle Ossian, Sancroft Blades
Andrew	Brown	Forth Valley, Salle Ossian
Jo	Cook	Salle Holyrood
Malcolm	Napier-Holford	
Thomas	Sorbie	Bellahouston Fencing Club

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting.

Apologies were noted on behalf of, **Adam Szymoszowskyj** (Director of Development), **Colleen Walker**, Finance Director, **Daniela Bryden** (on behalf of Joshua Bryden - Salle Ossian), **Samuel McCarlie** (WFFC), **Stephen Rennie** (Glasgow West End) and **Moya Nelson** (Orkney Fencing Club).

2. Minutes of Scottish Fencing 2021 AGM

The minutes of the Scottish Fencing AGM held on 13 December 2021 were proposed by Hugh Kernohan, seconded by Paul Vaughan and agreed as a true record.

3. Presentation of Accounts for Period 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

The Chair presented a summary of the accounts to March 2022.

The Chair highlighted the increase in membership income from the previous year which was due to membership increasing following the break in activities due to COVID. Scottish Fencing welcomed the investment from **sportscotland**; however Scottish Fencing needed to continue to look at additional funding sources to deliver activities and maintain reserves at their current level.

4. Approval of Appointment – Finance Director

Following Dave Carson's retirement, the Board had undertaken a recruitment process earlier in the year and appointed Colleen Walker as Finance Director. As an Independent Director, approval of this appointment is required, in accordance with Scottish Fencing's Articles of Association. The Annual General Meeting approved the appointment.

The Board thanked Dave Carson for his eight years of service as Finance Director, for the time he devoted to the role and for his wise counsel.

5. Report on Scottish Fencing Activity

5.1 Commonwealth Selection, Preparation and Results

The Director of Performance reported on the 2022 Commonwealth Fencing Championships highlighting:

- 28 individual and team medals.
- Recruitment of a Performance Consultant to support team preparations and complete post-event review.

There remained a follow-up piece of work which would look at performance and emerging athletes and how Scottish Fencing could support their development.

Paul thanked all the team fencers, parents who supported the younger squad members, coaches and support team across all the championships for all their efforts.

5.2 Staff changes

Sheila Anderson reported on the changes to the Scottish Fencing Staff Team. Following Vincent Bryson's resignation, the Board took the decision to recruit a full-time Chief Operating Officer as opposed to appointing a part-time Chief Executive Officer.

Clare Queen was appointed as Chief Operating Officer and Head of Pathways.

In August, Daniel Baker was appointed as Club and Community Development Manager.

5.3 Progress made against Year 1 of the Strategy

The Chief Operating Officer presented a summary of progress.

Safeguarding

A full review of policies and procedures was underway. The BF-led Club Welfare Audit would highlight areas where Scottish Fencing could offer support.

Club Development

The Club and Community Development Manager was currently in the process of meeting clubs and would shortly be circulating a questionnaire to identify what support clubs would like in 2023. He was also undertaking a review of Swordmark and Scottish Fencing would present this early in 2023.

Changing Lives

This is a key strategy area across sports. Currently the staff team was making connections with partners and putting plans in place for Scottish Fencing's Changing Lives programme. One project would focus on

introducing fencing to a low SIMD area and plans to work with a project in Easterhouse in Glasgow were advancing.

Increasing participation by Women and Girls was another key area. Clubs were reporting that the transition from beginners to general membership for women and girls was difficult. Scottish Fencing was looking to engage with clubs to support this and any club interested was asked to get in touch. Salle Holyrood replied that it would like to be involved with this initiative.

West Region

The West Region action plan was to redevelop fencing in the west of Scotland. This was in its early stages but would link to the planned Easterhouse project.

Para Fencing

Scottish Fencing was working with Scottish Disability Sport to develop a pathway for wheelchair fencing.

People Development

This was a key area to enable the development and sustainability of fencing in the future. Early in 2023 Scottish Fencing would undertake a consultation on needs and aspirations.

Scottish Fencing was currently developing SCC/CIMPISA coaching qualification. An en-garde coaching award was being developed for general sports coaches/teachers who have no fencing background but who can lead group sporting activities. Scottish Fencing hopes to launch the first part of this early in 2023.

Scottish Fencing was planning an in-person coaching conference in 2023.

Working Groups

Scottish Fencing had tried to establish some working groups earlier in the year, but engagement from the membership was limited. Different approaches will be tried, but members' participation is crucial to enable delivery of what members need and want.

6. AOCB

The Chair noted that some members had put forward some questions ahead of the AGM.

a) Support for Competitions

Scottish Fencing had tried to engage with members earlier in the year to discuss events and support for competitions. Going forward, Scottish Fencing would try a less formal approach to allow members to share their views and help to shape future events. The President highlighted how busy the events and competition calendar was and the high cost of travelling to tournaments; to make changes, Scottish Fencing needed the community to cooperate. Scottish Fencing could provide support in terms of pistes and scoring equipment and there were plans to offer training for DT and referees. However, Scottish Fencing needed an increased volunteer force to make these events enjoyable for all.

The Chief Operating Officer added that the delivery of DT training was in the early planning stages and hopefully would run in February/March 2023.

b) Scottish Fencing's Purpose.

The Director of Governance replied to this question. The full list of objectives for which Scottish Fencing was responsible is contained in the opening of our Articles of Association. He listed these as:

- Education of coaches.
- Enabling people to fence.
- Organising Scottish Championships and events.
- Organising Scotland teams.
- Liaising with British Fencing, member organisations of the Commonwealth Fencing Federation and other sporting bodies.

The above activities were funded by membership income and supported by volunteer effort.

Our investment from **sportscotland** was linked to the policy objectives of the Scottish Government, such as delivering fencing in areas of deprivation, improving social inclusion and diversity. Scottish Fencing presents to **sportscotland** how it can support these objectives and **sportscotland** invests in the outcomes.

c) **Coach Development**

The key piece of work was the people-development survey which would enable Scottish Fencing to build a detailed plan of volunteer education. The plan is not just about numbers but developing competent, confident and well-qualified individuals.

Scottish Fencing also needed to build education support for referees and volunteers and look at clubs need to find those willing to take on these volunteer roles.

In a response to a question from the meeting regarding coaching qualifications, the Chief Operating Officer replied that Scottish Fencing was working on Level 1 and 2 in parallel; hopefully Level 1 would be ready in the first half of 2023, followed in the second half of the year with a roll out for Level 2. The Director of People Development (Giles) added that there are plans for some technical and tactical skill sessions in the coming months so that the coaching community could re-engage with Scottish Fencing's education programme. He added this was a priority for Scottish Fencing in the coming months.

7. Presentation of Awards

The President thanked everyone for their contribution to the Awards, with the membership voting for the Crosnier Quaich for Performance. A full list of Nominees and their contributions to the sport is on the website.

He added that it was hard to single a few individuals out when so many in the fencing community had made genuine efforts to improve in 2023. However he was delighted to announce that the Winners of the 2022 awards were:

- Crosnier Quaich for Performance: Callum Penman.
- Crosnier Coaching Award: Phil Carson.
- Sword of Merit: Sean Walton.

Close

The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking all the members for their continued support throughout the year and in particular those attending the meeting. He added that going forward he hoped more members would engage and support future Scottish Fencing initiatives coming up in 2023.

There being no other the business, the meeting closed at 18.10.