

**SCOTTISH FENCING LTD**

Meeting of the BOARD of DIRECTORS of SCOTTISH FENCING LIMITED
15 SEPTEMBER 2021 BY MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present	George Liston	Chair (GDL)
	Stan Stoodley	President (SS)
	Paul Vaughan	Director of Talent and Performance (PV)
	Hugh Kernohan	Director of Governance (HK)
	Jude Salmon	Independent Director (JS)
In Attendance	Barry Cook	Partnership Manager, sportscotland (BC)
	Vincent Bryson	Chief Executive Officer (VB)
	Jacqui Dunlop	Minute Taker

	Item	Action
1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>1.1 <u>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially to Jude Salmon on her first Board meeting and extended a welcome to Giles Lomax who had also recently been appointed to the Board.</p> <p>Apologies were intimated on behalf of Adam Szymoszowskyj (Director of Development), Mhairi McLaughlin (Director), Sheila Anderson (Director of Operations), Giles Lomax (Independent Director).</p> <p>1.2. <u>Declaration of conflicts of interest</u></p> <p>There were no new conflicts of interest declared.</p>	
2	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>2.1 <u>Review of Minutes of 14 July 2021</u></p> <p>GDL noted that the minutes of 14 July 2021 would be re-circulated and approved by email.</p> <p>2.2 <u>Review of Minutes of 19 August 2021</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 19 August 2021 were a true record.</p> <p>SS explained that he had not received them. GDL noted that the minutes were available in the Sharepoint folder and all Board paperwork was placed there.</p>	<p>GDL</p> <p>GDL</p>

	<p>SS also noted that the June and July Board minutes were not on the website and GDL confirmed that they would be shortly.</p>	
3.	<p>Reports</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>GDL reported that he was pleased that Scottish Fencing had been able to recruit Jude Salmon and Giles Lomax to join the Board and he looked forward to working with them.</p> <p>GDL reported that Blair Cremin's last day with Scottish Fencing would be Monday, 27 September; thanks were expressed to Blair Cremin from GDL and the Board for his excellent contribution to Scottish Fencing, noting that his would be a hard act to follow.</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>VB submitted the CEO Report, the one-month summary was noted as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home-based remained <i>status quo</i> – likely January 2022 before any access to Caledonia House would be granted but home or hybrid working would remain for all staff. • Beyond Level 0 restrictions now in place nationwide – more to come regarding vaccine passports and any impact on club activity or events. • SF Membership Number – 672, up by 26. • Selection criteria released. • Strategy Sessions nearing completion – likely need out-of-routine Board catchup. • PM had resigned – last day Monday 27th September. • Pathways entries open - numbers were low. • Cash at Bank – (From Xero/Paypal) Aug 11th c.£82K (second investment payment from sportscotland expected in September 2021). <p>VB confirmed that the Advert for Head of Pathways and Community Change has been issued and the interview panel agreed. VB would conduct an exit interview with Blair Cremin.</p> <p>VB reported that he had attended the sportscotland CEO session at Inverclyde, where it had been reported that there had been a drop in membership across most governing bodies, but some had increased (eg walking, tennis, athletics and golf). The biggest drops were being seen in the SIMD1 areas and this was a concern.</p>	

	<p>Work remained ongoing on the Strategic Review with the final draft expected soon, and the review with sportscotland planned for 26th October for the investment period 2022-25.</p> <p>PV reported that the Selection Criteria had been issued following the previous meeting and there had been a few emails requesting clarification of various points, so a virtual meeting had been held on 14 September. He noted that there had been nothing raised which could not be addressed and he would respond to everyone within a fortnight and would also update some of the definitions in the selection criteria. The next stage of the process, when the new Head of Pathways and Community Change had been appointed, would be to get the training dates issued and coaches recruited. He noted that the aim originally had been to run up to three sessions prior to Christmas but it was now likely that these would be online sessions.</p> <p>HK asked what the education committee proposals were and VB noted that consideration was being given to whether there should be one committee established to look at coaching, refereeing and volunteering or whether these should be addressed in more than one committee.</p> <p>PV noted that the numbers signing up for the pathways squad had been low, and that videos had been made to encourage people. VB agreed to check for an update and report back to PV. GDL asked whether financial concerns had been a barrier to people signing up; VB noted that this had not been cited as a reason, although there was support available should this be a genuine barrier to participation.</p>	VB
4.	<p>Priority Area – Lockdown Activity</p> <p>It was reported that there had been no changes since the previous Board meeting with further advice released from the Government around winter planning. The UK and Scottish Governments had diverged on the use of vaccine passports and it was noted that Scottish Fencing could be considering this in case numbers of infections continued to increase, as it could be a factor in risk mitigation for indoor sports.</p>	
5.	<p>Sportscotland Update</p> <p>BC reported there had been no more information received about how the next few months would be approached with regard to COVID guidance, although he agreed it would be sensible to think along the same lines as VB. He noted that Scottish Fencing should be flexible and ready to adapt and respond as necessary. He explained that there were a lot of different approaches being adopted by different sports as the winter period approached.</p> <p>Scottish Fencing’s Strategic Review had been scheduled for 26 October and there would be supporting paperwork to be completed: there were a finance document</p>	

and a progress document and VB confirmed that he had received these from sportscotland and was aware of the requirement to submit these by the end of October. VB and GDL would lead on the strategic review with sportscotland.

The six-month review, for the second sportscotland investment payment, should be with VB shortly and completion of a tracker document would be required. Sportscotland was finalising the paperwork for this, which should be issued shortly.

BC explained that there a project had been underway with local authority colleagues through sportscotland's partnership with the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH), and similar mental health sessions would also be made available to governing bodies. The programme started with the staff and Board teams and would look at the organisational approach to mental health, then supporting clubs to have mental health conversations. Once this had been finalised, BC would circulate information to Scottish Fencing then it would be up to the Board to decide if they wanted to engage with the project.

BC reported that more support would be available from sportscotland for workforces, with funding secured through their coaching and volunteering colleagues to look at the recovery of the workforce and where there were massive gaps to support and train new coaches and upskill the existing workforce. BC agreed to keep Scottish Fencing updated, noting that it was not a massive pot of funding, and it would be targeted at areas where workforce issues were impacting the sport's ability to deliver. GDL sought clarification on the workforce support and BC explained that it was not a furlough replacement but more about training and development for coaches where there were identified gaps in the workforce.

There was the continuing offer of a re-engagement session at Inverclyde or Glenmore and BC noted that other sports had found it useful to hold these sessions.

GDL asked what restrictions looked like for other indoor sports and if there was any learning which Scottish Fencing could share. BC noted that the similar concerns existed about what the winter would hold, and that the guidance from the Scottish Government of using Test and Protect, maintaining good hygiene, using face coverings and being sensible should all be followed.

PV noted that across Scotland there seemed to have been some plateauing on the return to venues following the immediate rush and he felt that it was important to get people back into the habit, or create a new habit, of attending sessions. He felt that the Board did not need to do anything further with regard to COVID guidance.

PV sought clarification on the timeline for the Strategic Review and VB noted that the first draft of the strategy had been sent from the graphic designer, and this would be sent to the rest of the sub-group. A costed staffing structure, which the Board would need to approve, was also being worked on. The draft strategy

VB

	<p>documentation would hopefully be issued at the one time, rather than piecemeal to the Board. BC noted that, for sportscotland purposes, the document didn't need to be glossy but had to have substance, although the closer to a final version it could be, the better. VB confirmed that he hoped to get the finalised Strategy document, include staffing structures and the supporting rationale, circulated to be the Board by Thursday, 23 September.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Financial Update</p> <p>VB reported that since the previous Board meeting payroll had been run, but that the accounts were healthy. SA, VB and David Carson had agreed to make some capital investments in IT. Two laptops would be purchased for full-time staff and there would be an upgrade of 'phones. These purchases will be capitalised for four years as buying outright. VB noted that there were no fixed-line 'phone costs.</p> <p>The year-end cash figure would be above £70,000 which was more than double what had been forecast in March 2020. £900 had been spent on safeguarding retraining and there was work to do on coach-education courses; Blair Cremin was looking into this.</p> <p>BC noted that there may be some unallocated salary expenditure, depending on when the new staff member started. As this would be short-term, it was unlikely that sportscotland would recover any of the underspend associated with this but BC would keep VB updated on this in order that it could be fed into the financial projections.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Records of Decisions Made Outside a Board Meeting</p> <p>The Board approved a change to the Pathway Manager role profile and revision of role to Head of Pathways and Community Change.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Submitted Paper and Areas for Discussion</p> <p>GDL noted that two papers had been submitted independently for the Board's consideration, but these had a significant overlap.</p> <p>a) British Fencing Membership Fees – GDL had submitted a paper on British Fencing Membership Fees. An email had been received from the CEO of British Fencing seeking support for a freeze of Membership Fees for the coming year. The other Home Nations had confirmed by return that that this was acceptable to them; a decision on Scottish Fencing's response was required ahead of the British Fencing AGM on 9 October.</p> <p>SS noted that, if there was to be an increase in fees, consultation should be carried with the members, articulating how any fee increase would be used. BC reported that there were other governing bodies in similar situations with British bodies and would be happy to share their experiences.</p> <p>It was agreed that there should be a better understanding on the allocation</p>	

	<p>of the fees to Scottish Fencing and what Scottish fencers get for their money. HK noted that in administrative terms having a single membership worked well both for Scottish Fencing and the members.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the fees and it was agreed that the Scottish Fencing Board would support a membership freeze for the coming year only, although there was concern noted about the lateness of the request. GDL and HK agreed to draft a reply to British Fencing.</p> <p>b) <u>British Fencing Relationship</u> – SA submitted a paper on the British Fencing relationship. The main point of the paper noted that Scottish Fencing needed to engage with British Fencing through the mechanisms that it has, eg CEO dialogue which was effective and had provided a range of benefits for both organisations. There had to be better engagement at Board level: Scottish Fencing was allowed representation at the British Fencing Board meetings, which were being held remotely. British Fencing activities should also be a standing item on the Scottish Fencing agenda to ensure that initiatives such as the “Behind the Mask” survey were known about and understood in advance.</p> <p>PV suggested that the British Fencing CEO be invited to a Scottish Fencing Board meeting to give feedback on the Behind the Mask Survey, and that relationships were built with British Fencing Board members. HK explained the governance at British Fencing, where they had a substantial executive structure; consequently some of the dialogue and the relationship between the two organisations would be at staff level, whereas the Board was an overseeing organisation and met four times a year. Consideration would need to be given on the different issues and the best channel to approach them.</p> <p>VB felt that attending the British Fencing Board was an opportunity which should be realised at the earliest opportunity and if GDL couldn’t attend another Board member should attend in his place.</p> <p>It was agreed that, as the Strategy work had to take priority up to the end of October, GDL, VB and HK would develop a paper setting out the intended course of action and bring back to the November Board meeting.</p>	<p>GDL/HK</p> <p>GDL/ HK/VB</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>a) <u>Commonwealth Veterans’ Championships</u> – HK confirmed it has been agreed that Veterans would enter the event individually; Scottish Fencing would receive a list of those who had entered and would be required to confirm that they meet the eligibility criteria. HK noted that the Weapon Captains would ensure this was done, but Scottish Fencing would have to formally confirm this.</p> <p>b) <u>Anti-doping</u> – GDL confirmed that he was the Anti-doping lead on the</p>	

	Board.	
	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday, 21 October 2021	