

**MINUTES**  
**Approved at 24 January 2022 Board Meeting**



**Meeting**                    **BOARD**

**Location**                Online (Google Meet)

**Date / Time**            Wednesday 24 November 2021

**Present:**                Mark Davies (MD) (Chair)  
                              Kate O’Sullivan (KOS)  
                              Liz Behnke (LB)  
                              Nick Hubble (NH)  
                              Laura Lion (LL)  
                              Simon Reeves (SR)  
                              Karena Vleck (KV)  
                              Martin Claxton (MC)  
                              Peter Milhofer (PM)  
                              Tina Kokkinos (TK)  
                              Alastair Marks (AM) (Interim CEO)

**In attendance:**        Tatiana Doncaster (TD), Susan Lightman (SL), Genevieve Collett (GC, Minute Secretary) Marieke Hagemans (MH) for part, Harvey Davies (HD) for part, Rich Stock (RS) for part.

1	<p><b>CHAIR’S INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>Mark Davies (MD) welcomed the Board to the meeting. He also formally welcomed Alastair Marks (AM) to his first Board meeting as Interim CEO.</p>
2	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> and quorum</p> <p>The meeting was quorate. There were no apologies for absence. The selection of an Athlete Director for the Board panel was noted as outstanding by the Chair.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> SL to take this as an action and to come with a recommendation for the next meeting.</p>
3	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>There were no new declarations of interest from the Board.</p>
4	<p><b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b> from the previous Board Meeting on 29 September 2021.</p> <p>The minutes of the above meeting were noted and approved by the Board, subject to the correction of a small error.</p>

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	<b>Action:</b> Genevieve Collett (GC) to amend the small error in the September minutes and arrange for them to be put up on the website.	
5	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b> (not otherwise covered on the agenda) All matters on the action tracker were completed.	
6	<b>DISCUSSION ITEMS</b>	
6.1.	<b>FINANCE UPDATE</b>	
6.1.1	<p><b>Finance Committee Report</b></p> <p>Tina Kokkinos (TK) provided an overview of issues and stressed the need for a balanced budget to be achieved for the current financial year.</p> <p>It was stated that the submission for Sport England funding was due on 17 December and that the Finance Committee were reviewing that submission at a meeting on 10 December.</p> <p>The investment management company was performing well, and no consideration would be given to replacing it until mid-2022 due to more pressing matters.</p> <p>British Rowing’s Reserve Policy is under review and a revised policy will be brought to the Board once finalised by the Finance Committee.</p> <p>The Finance Committee was of the view that having a separate Investment Committee was unnecessary and proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference of the Finance Committee to allow for the Investment Committee to be merged with the Finance Committee.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> It was agreed that Investment Committee would be merged with the Finance Committee and the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee would be updated to reflect this. The amended Terms of Reference of the Finance Committee would be circulated to the Board for approval.</p>	Finance Committee /SL
6.1.2	<p><b>Financial Forecast Summary</b></p> <p>AM introduced the Financial Forecast Summary, noting that this had been reformulated. He asked for the Board’s input and comments post the meeting.</p> <p>The Board recognised that BR, in common with other NGBs, is having some difficulties in achieving commercial partnerships in the current</p>	

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<p>6.1.3</p>	<p>climate although some positive discussions with commercial partners are ongoing.</p> <p>TD noted that due to work carried out recently, many business overheads have reduced, and these savings were permanent. The business model was more streamlined as a result.</p> <p>TD pointed out that, as most positions within the organisation were reliant on being publicly funded, it was difficult to realise savings on recruitment when roles were not replaced; currently there were seven open roles within the business.</p> <p>The Board commented that British Rowing needed to drive income and not just make savings where it could.</p> <p>It was noted that the Safeguarding Officer had recently resigned, and the Board noted that SL would need to have the role covered by a contractor until a permanent LSO was recruited.</p> <p>The Board recognised the need to have adequate safeguarding provision.</p> <p><b>UK Sport Funding</b></p> <p>The Board discussed the various issues which may arise in relation to UK Sport funding. There were possible issues around the funding of the Start Programme and other UK Sport funding and AM was in discussion with UK Sport about these. The organisation would have the final decision by mid-December.</p> <p>The letter from the CEO of UK Sport, Sally Munday to MD was noted by the Board together with an email in response from MD.</p> <p>The Board considered how British Rowing should respond to Sally Munday's letter.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> It was agreed that a response should be made in writing to UK Sport by the CEO, which should include an invitation to Sally Munday to attend the next Board Meeting in person.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> AM to write to Sally Munday, CEO of UK Sport on behalf of British Rowing and the Board.</p>	<p>AM</p>
<p>6.2</p>	<p><b>MEMBERSHIP STRATEGY</b></p> <p>Marieke Hagemans (MH), Head of Membership introduced proposals (together with a timeline which she warned had not yet been discussed with the Deputy Director of Legal and Governance to ascertain what changes might be needed to British Rowing's governing documents to affect the proposals) for a new approach to membership. The proposals were in line with the organisation's goal to have 100,000 members by 2024 – an objective that requires</p>	

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	<p>appealing to a wider audience and for British Rowing membership to be more than ‘a tax on racing’.</p> <p>The Board warmly welcomed the proposals and noted that needs to be linked into IT and that modelling of the proposals should be carried out to determine how the proposals would best be brought into effect.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> That the proposals were approved in principle and that a paper should be brought to the January Board to reflect the modelling carried out and to update the Board on progress.</p>	MH
6.3	<p><b>DIGITAL PLANS</b></p> <p>Harvey Davies, IT Director and Richard Stock, Head of Communications outlined their proposals for an app for the rowing community, one feature of which would facilitate the membership proposals previously presented. There would need to be a staggered road map of activity with a bigger, broader picture in mind. The Board expressed their agreement with the proposals and discussed how these should be progressed.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> The Board agreed to prioritise a budget for the digital marketing plans and suggested the formation of a digital marketing working group to help shape these plans.</p> <p><b>NB:</b> It was agreed that regular updates would be provided to the Board between now and the next Board meeting. At its meeting in January, the Board would receive a detailed update, including clear signposting on the roadmap of costs and milestones allowing clear measurement of progress.</p>	RS/HD
6.4	<p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SWIMMING</b></p> <p>The Board considered a paper from Stephen Worley, British Rowing’s Honorary Safety Adviser, suggesting a change to British Rowing’s guidance on the requirement for rowers to be able to swim. The Board felt that a more comprehensive paper was needed which reflected the various views in this area.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> It was agreed that AM and NH would discuss this matter with Stephen Worley with a view to a more detailed paper being brought to the Board for consideration.</p>	AM/NH
6.6	<p><b>CHESTER LE STREET AMATEUR ROWING CLUB – DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <p>The Board considered the report and recommendations made by the Independent Panel of the Disciplinary &amp; Grievance Panel.</p>	

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	<p><b>Decision:</b> It was agreed that the Independent Panel’s Report findings and all its recommendations should be accepted. Martin Claxton (MC) dissented from one of the recommendations – namely, that the findings of the Independent Panel should be published on the British Rowing website.</p> <p>SL will prepare an action plan to implement the recommendations and will bring a report on the Club’s progress in complying with the recommendations to the January 2022 Board meeting. Depending on the progress made, the Board will make a decision on disaffiliation by May 2022 at the latest.</p>	SL
6.7	<p><b>AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION</b></p> <p>The Board noted that the paper, drafted by TK and AM had been considered by the Audit &amp; Risk Committee, which had recommended it for approval by the Board, subject to two small amendments.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> The Board approved the Amended Scheme of Delegation, subject to the amendments suggested by the Audit and Risk Committee being made. PM and TK would ensure the necessary amendments were made.</p>	PM/TK
6.8	<p><b>YOUTH PANEL</b></p> <p>The Board considered the proposals for a British Rowing Youth Panel. The Board was of the view that it is important that the youth voice can be heard by the people running British Rowing, but various views were expressed about how to do this more efficiently than through a panel, which limited input to panel members.</p> <p>SL invited the Board to share their ideas offline .</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> The Board asked for a more modern approach to allowing young people to have their say be offered, citing the previous evening’s webinar which was well attended by young people who would not then have to commit to regular attendance as an example of what might work.</p>	SL
6.9	<p><b>2025 WORLD CUP 11 AND 2026 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS BIDS</b></p> <p>The Board discussed the above papers and clarified that what was being asked of them was to register an interest. It will be some time before a final decision needs to be made about making a binding commitment. On that basis, while stressing that it is important to be seen to be a contender for successfully running events of this type,</p>	

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	<p>the potential upsides needed to be weighed against the financial risks. The Finance Committee will consider this aspect in more detail.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> It was agreed that the Board felt comfortable continuing to the next stage. Any further decisions on this matter will need further Board consideration following a recommendation from the Finance Committee after its meeting.</p>	
6.10	<p><b>GOVERNANCE AUDIT ACTION PLAN</b></p> <p>SL advised the Board that she had last reported to UK Sport in July regarding the BDO Governance Audit and had sent them a copy of the Governance Audit Action plan now before the Board. She suggested that, since UK Sport had indicated that they were satisfied with the progress made and that there are only a few outstanding matters, the Board delegated the final few issues to the Audit and Risk Committee to monitor. KV noted that it was important that the relevant Board Committees have oversight of the issues pertaining to them.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> The Board agreed that the Governance Audit plan be removed from the Board Agenda and that the Audit and Risk Committee monitor the compliance of the final few matters consulting other committees as required.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<b>ITEMS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL</b>	
7.1	<p><b>AFFILIATIONS AND RESIGNATIONS</b></p> <p>The paper was approved by the Board.</p>	
7.2	<p><b>ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT</b></p> <p>The paper was approved by the Board subject to SL checking that the language in the statement correlates with that in the Annual Report and Accounts.</p>	SL
<b>8</b>	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b>	
	<p><b>MLUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORLD ROWING EVENTS</b></p> <p>The Board considered the MLUP's recommendations for the World Rowing and European Rowing events.</p> <p>It was brought to the Board's attention by NH that seven out of ten proposed World Rowing umpires were from Thames Valley. A similar ratio was found in Multi-Lane Umpires. The Board agreed that the training for an Umpire could be both costly and time invasive and that this should be investigated to provide a better spread.</p>	

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	<p><b>Action:</b> It was agreed that AM and NH would pick up the investigation into this matter and an update would be provided to the Board at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> The Board approved the MLUP's recommendations as appended to the paper.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> AM will sign the necessary forms and send them off by 30 November.</p>	<p>AM/NH</p> <p>AM</p>
9.	<p><b>The Board noted the following papers:</b></p> <p>A1. KPI Status Report</p> <p>A2. Risk Register</p> <p>A3. Annual Update on D&amp;1 and plans for 2021/22</p> <p>A4. Sport England Investment Submission</p> <p>B1. Audit &amp; Risk Committee Minutes (from 18.10.21 meeting)</p> <p>B2. Sport Committee Report (from 28.10.21 meeting)</p>	
	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> – 24 January 2021, 12:30 by Google Meet/Caversham</p>	