

The England Handball Association

The Halliwell Jones Stadium · Winwick Road · Warrington · WA2 7NE

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England Handball Association

Board Meeting

Thursday 16th July 2020 5.30 – 9.30pm

Remote meeting via conference call

1. Attendance & Welcome

Board members:

Chair – Tracy Watkinson (TW); Chris J Smith (CJS); Amanda Bennett (AB); Heather Williams (HW); Marc Fayemi (MF); Diaraye Diallo (DD); Paul Shapiro (PS); Sue Whitehead (SW); Chad Ehlersen (CE) Steve Coy (SC)

Board Guest; Jean-Christophe Lacour (JC)

Staff: Mike Bain (MB) Cindy Ashworth (CA)

- a) Chair's opening remarks
- b) Apologies: Clare Henderson
- c) Declarations of interest – None
- d) The Quorum was confirmed
- e) Welcome SC as a new member of the board and JC attending the meeting as a guest until elected at the AGM
- f) Formal thank you to SW & CH– last board meeting

2. Review of minutes, Issues, Actions & Risk Register

Review and Approval of Minutes:

- Minutes of May Board meeting approved.

Matters arising not otherwise on the Agenda:

- None

Identification of any items of AOB:

- None

Review of Actions & Issues Log & Risk Register:

- Two advisory groups to be established. The Development group will focus on supporting the growth of Handball in England and will include competition. The Youth group will include 14-19-year olds from the Handball community to ensure the younger generation have a voice and have a mechanism to be involved in the future direction of England Handball.

Action: AB to send updated TOR to MB

- MB impact on Travel insurance due to COVID 19 not added to risk register. Travel within the organisation is minimal so the impact is not significant enough to log onto the risk register.
- CJS Risks 1 & 6, please can we differentiate to ensure there is focus on wider health and safety duties i.e. risk assessment, monitoring, training for staff?

Action: MB to speak with CJS regarding differentiating points 1 & 6.

Action: MB to check H&S policy regarding staff welfare and share with CJS

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3/4. Strategic Discussion: review last year's achievements and issues and future plans.

Management Team Strategic Reports

Management team joined the meeting.

Miriam Beales (MBe); Bobby White (BW); John Pearce (JP); Stacey Andrews (SA)

MB – Introduced the session and the format for the presentations. MB discussed a number of opportunities to grow the sport that should be considered in the development of our next strategy. It was noted and agreed by Board that our new strategy should not be developed with only Sport England in mind but should take in the views of the wider Handball community and should focus heavily on growing the sport from its current participation levels.

It was acknowledged that we should build closer working relationships with the EHF and IHF and potentially develop plans that could be supported by all three potential funders.

Strategic planning Office/Administration

CA described a number of improvements over the last 12 months within the day to day running of head office. Importantly these included improvements in financial management and budget control. There were also some challenges beyond the implications linked to the pandemic these included the redundancy situation and losing a member of staff from the office team. Other areas discussed included;

- Onboarding of the new CEO, providing an overview of the organisation and office function.
- Finance, some positive changes have been made in this area including cutting costs around expenditure and improving processes around credit control.
- CA informed the board about the creation of a services hub, creating a multi-skilled team to role share more effectively and provide a better service to customers. Customer service is key so we will be looking at ways of extending cover so that customers can make contact and potentially find answers to their enquiries out of office hours.
- EHA's IT Infrastructure is also a key area of focus. Bringing onboard a new IT support company to assist with systems and equipment.

Action: CA to contact CE to discuss services hub action plan

Strategic planning Partnership Team

SA gave a comprehensive overview of the partnership teams work with a key focus on supporting clubs through a number of development schemes such as Pro-Active club funding. SA reported on the number of clubs that have achieved Fit for purpose and the improvement in this figure over the last twelve months. Looking ahead there will be a greater focus on youth development and working with clubs who are able to support participation growth. Managing a smaller staffing team to ensure all clubs get appropriate support will be a priority as and when Handball resumes after COVID. Further detail below;

- Largest Schools competition to date, seeing a 23% increase in numbers.
- Fit for purpose – 70% of handball clubs no meet the minimum fit for purpose criteria.
- 80% of clubs now have a named and trained Club Welfare Officer.
- 93% of club coaches with under 18 members now have the industry standard UK coaching: Safeguarding and Protecting Children Certificate.

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SA informed the board of key areas of focus moving forward including:

- Providing support to the handball club network, including helping to support more clubs to achieve Pro-Active status.
- Focusing on youth within the primary sector and re-establishing National Schools Competition.
- AB There needs to be more incentives for clubs to become Pro-Active.
- MB confirmed that he was reforming the budget to set aside more funding for the partnership projects including the Pro-Active project.
- CSP running 3-hour online safeguarding courses – The Board agreed that anything concerning safeguarding should be mandatory, management team to communicate this to clubs and set tight timelines for achievement.
- TW 30% of clubs are not FFP, board agreed that these clubs should not play unless agreement around timescales for achievement can be confirmed.
- HW Need to check reporting systems around clubs reporting safeguarding issues.
- SA working on health checks for each club, SA to pick up clubs in her area leaving Ricardo and Luke to cover the South East Midlands and North.
- TW Communication with clubs not as much of an issue as it was 2years ago. Relationships with clubs have been improved.
- SC would like to meet some local clubs with the support of SA.

Action: SA to communicate to clubs not meeting FFP criteria in good time with reasoning why the requirements are important (i.e safeguarding standard) and support clubs to achieve these.

Action: SA to contact SC to arrange some meetings with clubs over the next coming months.

Strategic planning Competition

JP gave an overview of return to play plans and the impact to date with regards to COVID. JP confirmed that he had worked through a number of scenarios around starting dates for the leagues. Regular zoom calls are ongoing to gather feedback and to keep the club network informed of developments. JP informed the Board that the EHA University programme was now BUCs approved which should in the medium-term help build on an already successful programme Other points reported on included;

- Largest u16 competition to date with 42 teams taking part in organised club competition across the season.
- Successful university competition with 66 teams taking part in the University Championships across National Cup, Shield, Plate and Trophy. The largest weekend of Handball in the country.

JP informed the board about some key areas of focus from next season including:

- Continuing to develop the youth league with new structures of games moving into home and away the priority for next season will be to ensure the change in format is successful.
- Recreational league development. A key goal next season and moving forward is to bridge the gap between starting to play Handball and the Regional leagues. Creating more opportunities to play at recreational level will be explored.
- DD what are the plans for upcoming season?

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- JP Planning on mid-October start, unless there is a change in circumstances. EHA taking advice from SE and Government. Some sports have a Medical Officer, EHA do not really have the staff or the resources for this.
- HW How do we manage the track and trace system if there are any Covid Cases?
- JP Safeguarding, 1 recent case which happened outside of handball. 4 or 5 instances last season due to poor practice and poor behaviour. EHA has a clear system in place approved by the CPSU.
- JP Limited involvement last season with Competitions Disciplinary Committee due to very low number of cases being escalated to that level
- MF EHA should contact Chloe to thank her for her ongoing support.

Action: JP and MB to discuss COVID situation within the clubs, and the management of track and trace. Each club to nominate a COVID officer to act as a point of contact for EHA.

Action: JP to create safeguarding plan for next year, incorporating feedback from CPSU assessment, including the number of dip tests etc.

Strategic planning Coaching and Workforce

MBe provided a broad overview of the work that has been completed in the Coaching and Workforce department over the last year, highlighting the number of courses that have been run and the number of participants that have gone through the courses. MBe updated the Board regarding on line learning and the new on line refereeing course to be followed by level 1 and level 2 on line coaching courses. Looking ahead three priority areas were highlighted: refereeing, coaching and volunteering.

- 1099 people qualified through England Handball courses (excludes Table Officiating courses and partly complete courses). The number of Table Official Course bookings has doubled this year.
- Coaches from England attended national and international workshops with the support of England Handball.
- Course ratings by participants remain at either four or five out of five on average.
- Advanced Teaching Handball courses within schools doubled since 18/19

MBe discussed some key areas of focus for next season including:

- A Referee License Scheme in place to drive up minimum standards.
- A Level 3 course to be, scoped out and developed focusing on talent coaching to be developed with the support of the Performance Manager.
- Partnerships and collaborations with other volunteer organisations will be considered with a view to create a programme for the Volunteers Academy which will ensure that the workforce is recruited, trained, deployed and recognised appropriately across the business.
- CE Where is the organisation going to be in 5-10 years' time? Important to feed into the creation of the new strategy. Looking into the how as well as the what should be looked at in detail.
- DD Physical meetings no longer needed, Level 2 can be done remotely, and this could be flagship for EHA as more and more courses are being completed online.
- MBe Referees Association – In the process of creating a plan which includes yearly CPD to ensure that coaches have the opportunity to upskill and improve standards., coach licence will be introduced next season.
- MBe CPD E-learning platform to be set up for coaches and tutor workforce.

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Action: MBe to actively follow up with Schools and completed courses regarding deployment of workforce.

Strategic planning Performance

BW updated the Board on the Loughborough programme and the high number of strong applications for the coaching role. The plan is to start the programme in September with the successful applicant in post. More generally the plan going forward will focus on bringing players into the talent pathway at a younger age and finding ways of increasing on court training hours to help maximise player potential. Other areas of discussion included the following

- DiSE 2018/20 Cohort: 16 boys & 16 girls due to complete from 35 original enrolments making 91% achievement, our highest completion rate.
- 2019/20 Cohort: at the halfway stage with all 40 enrolments are still on programme (unprecedented) which indicates thorough selection and stable club environments for all players.
- Secured 'backing the best' funding for athletes from LSEG backgrounds.

BW informed the board about areas of focus for next season including:

- The U17 programme will provide competitive opportunities via the Futures programme at the Generation Cup as well as a revised internal competition series which aims to both inter-region and mixed region events – focusing on tactical, psychological and social competencies.
- We will continue to explore how we can increase training & competition opportunities for performance pathway athletes. Initial ideas include;
Midweek regional training, making weekends available for competition.
Similar models to Loughborough EPA (regionalised).
- DD asked if there were any updates on a possible September start.
- BW confirmed that he had a meeting scheduled for Monday with his RA Managers to discuss.

5. Building the next strategy

Board discussed the process around creating EHA's next strategy. It was agreed that consultation was key. MB confirmed that the strategy would need to be developed and ready to submit by Sept 2021. Both new groups (Development and Youth) should input into plans but wider consultation with the Handball community was important to help create a high level of buy in and ownership. It was agreed by Board that the September meeting should be dedicated to creating a framework around which the next strategy would be developed.

- TW we need a sub group to support the creation of the plan and establish who has the time and skills to contribute.
- MB we should take note of SE new strategy but also prioritise what the sport needs. Social impact, working with the disadvantaged communities. SE new strategy is evolution not revolution. Plan is to develop our draft strategy ready by April/May 2021.
- MB Creating support groups was discussed. A development group and a youth group- both these groups would feed into the next strategy.
- TW asked SW if she could suggest anyone from the handball community, would think about it and let board know.
- MB Idea of bringing in a facilitator was welcomed by the board.

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- TW maybe during the development process we consider a longer term plan although Sport England's funding cycle remains at 4 years.
- CJS SE have expressed some interest in developing longer term strategies.

Action: MB to email board members to gauge any interest in chairing the development group.

Action: MB to arrange a Strategy meeting in September to coincide with board meeting.

- TW Management team to be included in the next board meeting.

6. Safeguarding

a) Update on current cases:

- No cases.

7. AOB

- SW said her thanks and goodbyes. One of proudest moments was last year's cup finals, a great event.
- SW happy to sit on a group in the future.

Action: BW to work with HW on the interview questions.

8. Date of next meeting

TBC for a date in September