
Board of Directors



Minutes

Wednesday, 11 December 2023 @ 11:00

Hybrid meeting: Bird & Bird, 12 New Fetter Lane, London

EC4A 1JP

and via Teams

Board Attendees in Person: Duncan Birtwistle; Scott Collier; Peter Hart; Alison Howe; Lauren Pagé; David Rosen; Pauline Tryner; Drew Vanbeck.

Via Teams: Darren Bernstein.

Guests: Peter Brooke; Andrew Evans (Items 2 & 3); Caroline Barcham (Item 2); Ruth Beale (Item 6.3).

Apologies: Andy Robinson; Laura Kaye Tomlinson.

Minute taker: Peter Hart.

1. Meeting Administration

1.1. Welcome and introduction.

The Chair welcomed everyone and thanked Lauren Pagé for hosting the meeting.

The Chair informed the meeting that a recording of the meeting would be held on the Chief Executive's computer on a personal drive and would be deleted when the minutes were approved. It was agreed for the meeting to be recorded.

1.2. Apologies:

The Chair informed the Board that Andy Robinson and Laura Kaye Tomlinson had submitted their apologies.

1.3. Any other business

Four items were raised:

- International Representation
- Ranking list for urban and forests events
- Newsletter mailings
- Orienteering being recognised as a GCSE sport.

No further items were raised.

1.4. Declarations of interest

No further additional declarations of interest were made.

2. Find Your Way Project Update

The Chair welcomed Caroline Barcham, Find Your Way Project lead and Andrew Evans in his capacity of one of the clubs involved in the project.

Scott Collier joined the meeting during this item.

Caroline updated the Board on the Project and the achievements.

Caroline reminded the Board of the key objective of the project in respect of using the sport to make those socially and economically inactive to engage in their local environment and become more physically active.

Caroline outlined the key achievements and outlined the wider benefits/partnerships that have been made as part of the project. She informed the meeting that whilst the Sport England funding for the project finishes in September 2024 there is an opportunity to use the learnings from this project and potentially make a bid to Sport England as part of their recent announcement regarding funding to boost activity in deprived areas.

Andrew Evans, in his capacity as one of the partner clubs of the project gave an overview of the benefits to a club of being involved in the project especially in developing local partnerships.

The Board congratulated the team on their achievements and recognised that engaging communities from hard-to-reach areas is more difficult and expensive.

The Chair requested the team submit a paper to the board regarding the learnings and make recommendations in terms of the future shape and look of the programme.

The Chair thanked Caroline, Andrew, the participating clubs and the team for their commitment and contribution to this important project.

3. Orienteering Foundation

Scott Collier declared an interest in this item.

Andrew Evans, Chair of the Trustees of the Orienteering Foundation gave an overview of the work, funding and grants awarded by the Orienteering Foundation and explained how they have and can support British Orienteering's Strategic Plan.

The Chair thanked the Orienteering Foundation, the Trustees and Andrew for their continuing support of British Orienteering.

4. Minutes of Board meetings 11 October 2023

The minutes of the meeting 11 October 2023 were approved without amendment.

5. Actions from previous minutes

5.1. Strategy for hosting Major Events & IOF Representation

No further action had been taken since the previous meeting.

5.2. British Orienteering Environmental Policy/Strategy

The Chief Executive informed the Board that a group of members had been identified and an invitation had been sent out for their first meeting in the New Year.

5.3. British Orienteering Trans Policy

The Chief Executive informed the Board following the last meeting where the Trans Policy was agreed there was some communication regarding the clarity of the guidance (not the Policy).

The recommendation was to clarify the explanation of eligibility to compete in the female category in the guidance to:

A trans individual whose sex assigned at birth was not male and who wishes to compete in the female category at an Identified Major Event must meet all of the following requirements:

- They must not have experienced any part of male puberty beyond Tanner Stage 2 at any time, and

- If they are aged over 12, they must not have experienced any part of male puberty beyond whatever stage they had reached at the age of 12, and
- They must have maintained since puberty the concentration of testosterone in their serum below 2.5 nmol/L, and
- They must be continuing to maintain the concentration of testosterone in their serum below 2.5 nmol/L.

This was approved by the Board and the CEO was requested to update the Policy on the website.

6. Finance

6.1. Management Accounts

The Chief Executive in the absence of the Treasurer introduced this item. He informed the Board that the Treasurer had not had the opportunity to review November's management accounts.

He informed the Board that the income was in line with the forecast. With the key differences being the surplus from Major Events and Commercial income both being higher than forecast.

The expenditure on staff/payroll was less than forecasted due to the delay in recruiting and appointing personnel. Expenditure on Performance was above forecast, he went on to inform the Board that, in addition to the overspend on the Trimtex clothing about which they had previously been made aware, the cost of attending events had increased reflecting high inflation and increased entry fees and accreditation. He informed the Board that British Orienteering pays for GB team attendance at international events up front and then recharges the athletes for their proportion, and that currently about £10K was outstanding from the athletes. Grants from the Orienteering Foundation for altitude training and Coach development were also due to be paid in the near future.

At the moment and subject to end of year adjustments we should be below the forecasted end of year deficit of £76K.

6.2. Insurance Renewal

The Chief Executive informed the Board of the key outcomes from the insurance renewal discussion with the brokers.

He informed the Board that currently our limit of our Public Liability insurance was £10m and that he had been informed that there was a recent settlement in excess of £10m. He therefore asked the Board whether they wanted to consider increasing the level of Public Liability cover to £15m?

He went on to inform the Board that at this stage he had not been asked by landowners and other stakeholders for an increased level of cover and that he had asked the brokers to provide a quote for consideration. After a discussion, it was agreed that the Board would wait for further information including an understanding of the costs.

The Board also considered whether to offer a small level of personal accident insurance for members as part of the membership package. Following a discussion, it was agreed that we would not pursue this.

The Chief Executive explained that the increase in the cost of the premium was the result of the significant increase on registered non-member numbers.

The Board approved the renewal of the insurance policy.

6.3. Levy Working Group

The Chief Executive referred to the notes of the meeting from the Levy Working Group which recommended that following a review of a number of different models, it was agreed that none of the models investigated would provide a significant enough advantage in terms of fairness, ease of administration (by the clubs) and the income to British Orienteering to warrant changing the current model.

The Chair thanked the group for reviewing the situation and confirmed that the outcome could be shared with members.

6.4. Corporation Tax

The Chief Executive informed the Board that he had investigated obtaining advice from a number of potential providers. Following a consultation with the small working group it was agreed to offer Richard Baldwin the contract.

6.5. Competition Partnership Agreements

Pauline Tryner declared an interest in this item.

The Chief Executive outlined the current position of the different types of partnership agreements that British Orienteering has with the organisers of the major events (JK and British Championships).

He informed the Board that he had been approached by the organisers of the JK25 for a change in the Partnership Agreement to financially recognise the voluntary contribution of the hosting Association.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that there should be a review of the current partnership agreement, but any changes should reflect actual costs incurred. It was agreed to set up a small working group of Andy Robinson, Scott Collier, Alison Howe and Peter Hart to review the current agreements.

In respect of the JK 25 agreement authority will be given by the Board via email.

Darren Bernstein left the meeting.

7. Governance

7.1. AGM 24

The Chair introduced this item, and the suggestions were to hold the AGM24 either at the British Sprint Relay in June or hold it alongside a Club & Members Forum in October.

Following a discussion, it was agreed to hold the AGM alongside the Club & Members Forum on Saturday 5 October at a venue to be agreed. The Chief Executive was asked to find a suitable venue.

7.2. Independent Board Review

The Chair informed the meeting that following a tender process that Governance United have been engaged to carry out an independent review of the Board.

Initial discussions with the Chair and CEO would take place early in the New Year.

Ruth Beale joined the meeting.

7.3. Performance Pathway Steering Group

The Chair welcomed Ruth Beale to the meeting.

7.3.1 To confirm the Board representative for Performance.

Following Ruth Beale's departure from the Board the Chair had approached Duncan Birtwistle to carry out the role as Board liaison for the Performance Pathway Programme. Duncan accepted the role. The Chair on behalf of the Board thanked Duncan for taking on this responsibility.

7.3.2 To approve the Terms of Reference for the Performance Pathway Programme Group (PPPG)

The Chair referred to the paper submitted by Ruth Beale on the Terms of Reference for the PPPG.

Ruth explained that the presented Terms of Reference were developed after a full consultation with relevant stakeholders.

The Terms of Reference covered issues around governance, decision making responsibilities, but the group would also offer support and monitoring of the programme.

The Board approved the Terms of Reference, and the CEO was asked to recruit a new Chair for approval by the Board. Scott Collier and Duncan Birtwistle volunteered to review the revised Job Description of the role. Duncan Birtwistle, CEO and a recently retired athlete would review the applications for the role of Chair of the PPPG.

The Chair thanked the current Chair of the Talent & Performance Steering Group, Bob Dredge, for his many years of leading this group.

The Chair thanked Ruth for her work in this area.

7.3.3 Recruitment of the replacement of the Performance Director

Pauline Tryner suggested that within our current resources that we may not be able to employ a traditional Performance Director/Manager and that another model could be considered even as an interim solution up to and including WOC 24.

The Chief Executive agreed to look into this.

Ruth Beale left the meeting.

8. World Orienteering Sprint Championships 2024

8.1 Financial Support for WOC24

The Chief Executive informed the meeting that British Orienteering had engaged Bird & Bird to assist them with the contract for the support being offered to WOC24. Following advice, it was agreed, and accepted by both SOA and S6D for the contract to be a tripartite agreement. The first draft had been received and returned to the solicitors with a number of comments.

8.2 WOC24 Update

The Chief Executive referred to the circulated paper for the above event.

There were no major concerns raised at the last WOC Steering Group meeting.

8.3 Comms Agency

The CEO informed the meeting that he had been approached by WOC 2024 to financially support the engagement of an advertising agency, FLIP, instead of providing the in-kind support of staff. Flip will develop and deliver a communication plan for WOC and WOC Tour.

The Board agreed to support the engagement of a commercial provider to a maximum of £5,000.

9. Strategic Plan

The Chief Executive gave an overview of the progress in the Strategic Plan.

9.1 Performance Figures

He reported that membership numbers were 8,953, which was slightly below those forecasted at the start of the year (9,000). 16-40 segment of the membership was now at 1,909 (21%) which was up on the previous year.

Participation was forecasted to hit around 150,000 at the end of the year against a budget assumption of 130,000. The number of non-member runs was up to 16.2% of the total runs (at the end of 2022 this was 13.8%).

9.2 Communication & Marketing Strategy

The CEO gave the meeting an update on Social Media engagement which was up in all areas.

He informed the meeting that the Communications Officer, Alex Welch had taken on board comments from her presentation on the new website at the last meeting. She had reviewed the look and functionality of the web page and he would circulate the latest link to the Board for comments. He informed that the opening page was now “locked down” to allow development of the other page designs.

10. Matters of Significance

10.1 Forestry England relationships

The CEO informed the Board of concerns over the relationship with Forestry England (FE) over the renewal of the contract and permission for the JK 24. He informed the Board that the planned entry timetable for the JK 24 had been postponed until the New Year as we had not received confirmation for access or the costs for access and if there was no resolution then there was a risk of the event being cancelled.

He went on to explain that British Orienteering have been seeking to resolve the contract problem for a significant length of time and had fully engaged FE in the process. The current contract had now “timed out” which was impacting on British Orienteering and the clubs in agreeing access and charges for access for events in 2024. He had written to the Head of Recreation and Visitor Experience at Forestry England seeking intervention to resolve the issue.

There were other matters of significance to report.

11. Welfare & Safeguarding

11.1 Overview

Peter Brooke, Lead Safeguarding Officer, thanked the Board for attending the Ann Craft Trust Board training earlier in the month.

He referred to a document which contained an overview of the policies and training that we have in place.

There was a discussion requirement for training for club leads for safeguarding/welfare, Peter Brooke was looking at the options for the provision of this and if there was a need to make it compulsory.

Pauline Tryner requested clarification on the requirement for coaches to provide evidence of recent training in safeguarding. Peter Brooke confirmed that coaches were required to have a minimum of a tutor-led course in the first instance followed by an online update refresher as part of their coaching licence. He informed the meeting that British Orienteering did not currently have the provision to provide the tutor-led courses directly.

11.2. Welfare Matters

Peter Brooke reported that there were no new cases that had been recently received.

12. Standing Items

12.2. Steering Groups and Committees

12.2.1. E&CC/Rules Group

The Chief Executive informed the meeting that the Rules Group had recently sent out the draft rules as part of a consultation before launching them for the 2024 season.

12.2.2. Competition Scheduling Group

The CEO informed the meeting that the Competition Scheduling Group had recently met and that they were finding it difficult to find organisers for the 2025 British Orienteering Long Championships and that the event may be run alongside the JK25 event.

12.2.3. Coaching Advisory Group

The CEO referred to the previously circulated paper which outlined the planned work programme of the group.

12.2.4. Talent & Performance

Selection Policies 2024

The CEO informed the meeting that the Talent & Performance Steering Group had recently approved the Selection Policies for the 2024 season.

Scott Collier queried the reason for the Selection Policies only permitting the selectors to consider split times if necessary to separate athletes or if something unforeseen occurs. The CEO confirmed that this was to reduce the necessity of the selection panel having to consider splits in all races and also to reduce the ability for athletes to appeal decisions based purely on splits.

13. International Matters

The Chief Executive informed the board members that he had received a request from the IOF for nominations for a number of roles within the IOF committee structure. He informed the meeting that if nominated by the Federation we were expected to cover the costs of attending meetings.

It was agreed that this should be a role of an Appointments Committee and that we should inform the members that we would only cover the cost of travelling to attend one face to face meeting per year.

14. Closing business

14.1. Any Other Business

14.1.1. Ranking List Forest & Urban

Pauline Tryner asked if we were looking at implementing different ranking list that rank forest and urban events separately?

Following a discussion, it was understood that currently we do not have the ability to split the different disciplines within the database, but this would be looked at as a future development.

14.1.2. Orienteering in schools

A member raised the issue regarding why orienteering is not a GCSE subject?

The CEO informed the Board that the Department for Education reviewed the qualification list about five years ago and that British Orienteering had submitted a proposal which was not accepted. He understood that this was because the problems associated with assessing progression of the students.

He would investigate further.

No further matters were raised.

15. Future meetings

Key Dates	Venue
Monday, 5 February 2024	The Studio, Birmingham - confirmed
Monday, 29 April 2024	The Studio, Manchester - confirmed
Monday, 24 June 2024	Tbc
Saturday, 7 September 2024	Tbc
Saturday, 5 October 2024	AGM and Club and Member Forum (Birmingham the Studio)
Monday, 9 December 2024	London

Lauren Pagé informed the meeting that she was unable to make the meeting of 5th February.

The Chair thanked Lauren and Bird & Bird for hosting the meeting.

The Chair formally closed the meeting at 15:56