

Minutes Board of Directors Meeting

Date Tuesday 21 January 2025
Time 10.30 am
Venue Sport and Recreation Alliance, 137-144 High Holborn, London WC1

Present

Chair	Janet Beer (JB)	
Directors	Rupinder Bains (RB) Kenny Baillie (KB) Jack Baker (JBa) Sally Dicketts (SD). Katie Fawkner-Corbett (KF) Ruth Hall (RH) Alex Jordan (AJ) Dave Strain (DS) Hamid Vaghefian (HV) Lisa Wainwright (LW)	Up to Agenda Item 5 [inclusive] via Teams via Teams via Teams Chief Executive
Guest	Annamarie Phelps (AMP)	Agenda Item 5 only

In attendance

Martin Lindsey (ML), Chief Operating Officer (COO)

1.1 OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that the Let's Dance website was 'live' from 6am that morning and the CEO maintained her regular contact with Angela Rippon. The launch event would be held on Saturday 8 February at the Guildhall, London and all Directors were welcome to attend.

1.2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Richard Gray (RG).

1.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest declared at the meeting. It was noted that RH is a member of the NGB CEO Forum which was discussed during agenda item 4.

2.1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 November 2024 were agreed and would be signed in due course as an accurate record of the meeting.

The minutes of the Board strategy meeting held on 10 December 2024 were agreed subject to clarification of some of the wording regarding the aims of the NGB CEO Forum. RH had provided this for inclusion in the notes to Kate Lawrenson and the Chair confirmed that was in order.

ACTION: Company Secretary

2.2 MATTERS ARISING

The Board received and noted the summary paper which outlined the progress taken on the matters arising and actions from the previous meeting, all of which were either completed or ongoing.

3 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair referred to the recent correspondence with Sport England, copies of which had been circulated to the Board in confidence for reference. On 19 December 2024, the Chair officially replied to Chris Boardman's (CB) letter of 29 November and positive emails had been exchanged.

The CEO had exchanged her own emails with Tim Hollingsworth (TH) to progress some of the ideas discussed at the meeting. The Board had a general discussion about the Contract and the recent exchange of correspondence with Sport England. The point was made whether Sport England had asked *all* the System Partners to demonstrate impact in the way they had recently asked the Alliance to demonstrate.

NB At the end of the Board meeting, a letter via email was received from CB clarifying his thoughts and comments from the meeting in November and suggesting a further joint follow up meeting with both Chairs and CEOs. The Chair advised the Board that she would respond to the letter and confirm she would look forward to the meeting – subsequently confirmed for 16 April 2025.

Business items undertaken included

- Attendance at the IWG 30th Anniversary event held on 10 December following the Board's strategy meeting. The majority of Board members had also attended and the Chair commented that the President had networked well with everyone present. The City of London was an excellent partner and was providing a venue for both the IWG and the Alliance for its events.
- Chair's action on behalf of the Board to agree membership for Motorsport UK, who wished to return after a few years absence and were once again allocated to the Major Spectator Sports Division.
- Maintained regular meetings with the Chief Executive.

4 CEO UPDATE

The Board received the CEO report (previously circulated) which outlined the work undertaken by the organisation since the November Board meeting. LW highlighted the following points but started the discussion by stating that 'when everything is uncertain, anything is possible!':

- CSRA's Youth Edition had been launched to celebrate the 90th anniversary and nominations are being received.
- Taking more time to plan the strategy due to the discussions taking place with the NGB CEO Forum. DS asked for further clarification on that following discussions held at the December Board meeting. The CEO confirmed that the strategy would be brought to the April Board meeting for sign off with draft documents shared ahead of that meeting for comment.
- Policy work was active and busy as short timescales were being asked by the new Government departments.
- Reconomics second phase to be completed by the end of February 2025.
- Finally, the strategy update on the high level KPIs were provided for Q2.

The Board thanked the CEO for her report.

The Culture Media and Sport Committee had an enquiry on community and school sport and asked whether the Alliance had submitted evidence. The CEO confirmed that this was submitted on behalf of the membership the previous week and would circulate a copy to the Board. The CEO had also been asked to provide evidence although a date had yet to be provided.

ACTION: Company Secretary

Regarding the S4DC, was this under review and would the Alliance continue to host the organisation. The CEO shared the background to the Coalition which started six years ago and reported that she would meet with the Chair of the Coalition at the end of the month to discuss this further; the Coalition was reviewing their remit and strategy.

The Board noted that the Alliance would need to include the future of the S4DC within its new strategy together with the NGB CEO Forum ideas and requests. The Chair reminded the Board of the discussions at the December strategy meeting. The perception was that 'sport' was not always thought about by the Alliance which was why the NGB CEO Forum was sharing its concerns. Caroline White [previous Board member] used to remind the Board about the need to include 'recreation' in its discussions as nationally this was not on the agenda where sport was. Whilst the Alliance's new strategy might not change its overarching high-level areas, the supporting structures would need to be amended.

The CEO stressed that the Alliance's policy team worked hard to stop government's policies from landing on the sector – which was not always shared with the membership – but in the meantime, policies from the sports councils were still hitting the NGBs and regrettably remained outside the Alliance's influence ie Coaching, safe sport, sustainability. The Chair acknowledged the work undertaken by the Team and the need to communicate with the membership what had been achieved and the impact the work had made for both them and the sector.

5 IWG UPDATE

The Board welcomed AMP to the meeting who provided an initial, short background history on the IWG and what it was for those new members on the Board. The UK Secretariat was established 2022-2026 and the focus of the first two years had been to establish itself during and post pandemic to grow the number of signatories of the Brighton-Helsinki Declaration, set up and grow the insight hub on the website and develop webinars and advocacy. The IWG's 30th anniversary celebration had been held in December 2024 at the Guildhall.

Better relationships were still to be developed with UNESCO, UN Women and IOC. There was also domestic and international work to be undertaken around leadership, investment and engagement and the secretariat was now looking forward to the conference to be held at the end of 2026.

The Conference was one of four deliverables for the Secretariat. The other three being:

- the hosting and growth of the network.
- the Brighton-Helsinki stewardship.
- Delivering a four-year Impact report.

The key focus at this time was to raise the commercial income to fill the gap between what was considered a reasonable price for the cost of the ticket [and sales] and the overall costs to fund the Conference. IWG had costed three levels of deliverables for the conference – gold, silver and bronze. The secretariat was aiming for silver and would notify the Alliance Board in April if those timescales and ticket sales were exceeded and could move to gold. Alternatively they would also look at a worse case scenario if needed to move to the lower level of a two-day conference and reduce to the lowest level – the conference was currently at three days.

The main item of report from AMP was on the commercial revenue. Considerable work had been given to the preparation of the sponsorship deck. This had taken more time than expected but it had been updated and was currently being tested. A targeted approach was being taken with the sponsorship towards those organisations interested in female consumers, women's sport sector and Birmingham businesses. A copy of the sponsorship package was made available and would be circulated to the Board for reference. **ACTION: Chief Executive**

AMP reported that there were a number of organisations that had indicated they would like tickets for the conference and some were interested in exhibiting. She would attend a February meeting of the Home Countries Sports Council's Chief Executives and the West Midland Growth Company had a meeting later in the week with commercial organisations in Birmingham to introduce the IWG. Many of the Birmingham businesses that had already indicated their support of the IWG would be in attendance and both AMP and Lisa O'Keefe would look to move these introductions to the next level, hopefully with commercial sponsorship.

AMP was confident that with the help of the marketing agency taken on to help shape the final offer, more commercial income and sponsorship would be found from the Birmingham companies.

The Chair thanked AMP for her report and asked whether the IOC would source speakers for the event. AMP reported that the ticket sales were to commence in April 2025 by which time the key headline speakers and partners would need to be established. AMP was hopeful that this new partnership arrangement would provide the emphasis needed to obtain key speakers from the IOC.

Clare Barrell (CB), World Rugby, was chair of the IWG Conference Committee and was working on a list of eminent speakers that the secretariat would like to have. The programme would require some 'tweaking' to accommodate who was speaking. SD queried whether there were any clear topics for discussion and the way the sessions would be held, giving the idea of 'open spaces' as an example. AMP would like SD to discuss this further with CB and would arrange for them to speak further. **ACTION: Company Secretary to take forward**

A further discussion on the themes and workshops was held. Women's health throughout the ages was highlighted as an important area. AMP confirmed that it was an area of current research and she was sure sport for older women would be included. It was a global conference and there would be a lot of areas to be covered during the three days.

The Chief Executive reminded the Board that RB, KF and she were members of the IWG Steering Committee. The next meeting was on 5 March and much of the discussion would centre around the conference risks. DS was asked whether he would also wish to attend.

LW also pointed out that the IWG secretariat was a small team and if the Board had any suggestions for speakers or social media influencers who could assist with the conference to let Lisa O'Keefe asap lisaokeefe@iwgwomenandsport.org. The commercial deck would be provided for onward circulation as appropriate – please update the tracker or let KL know.

ACTION: Company Secretary

The Chair thanked AMP for her report [AMP left the meeting].

6 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

The October 2024 management accounts indicated a surplus of £15k before Notional Pension Service/Admin costs and Exceptional Staff costs against a Year-to-Date budgeted surplus of £20k.

A reforecast of the budget had been undertaken and the expected position at the end of the year was a surplus of £3k compared to a budgeted surplus of £2k, excluding the exceptional staffing item and notional pension service/admin costs. The Board noted the current position.

DS, chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, asked the Board to note that the following year was likely to be tight financially. The income from an additional tenant may not be forthcoming and the income from Sport England was at a flat rate. The Chair commented that negotiations for the next period of contractual funding should commence next year and she asked DS to be part of that team. ML confirmed that the budget to deliver the new strategy would be calculated alongside that document.

7 ALLIANCE RISK REGISTER

The Board was reminded that the Risk Register was maintained by the SMT and was linked to the strategy and operational plan. All strategic risks and any other risk with a residual score of 15 or greater were highlighted to the Board at each meeting and the IWG risks were included in the Alliance register, it was noted:

There had been no strategic risks that had increased in score since the last review in November 2024.

There had been no strategic risks that had reduced in score since the last review in November 2024.

There had been no new strategic risks added to the risk register and no strategic risks had been made inactive since the last review in July 2024.

The current highest rated Alliance/IWG strategic risks on the risk register were as follows:

- Reduction in our Sport England core funding significantly impacts our ability to maintain our current resource and deliver our strategy (12/25).
- (IWG) Planning & Delivery of 9th World Conference absorbs vast majority of Secretariat resource, significantly impacting ability to deliver fully on 2022-26 Strategic Priorities (9/25).
- (IWG) Unable to bring together and shape stakeholder thinking due to lack of profile, influence or understanding of IWG unique role in a crowded landscape (8/25).

These risks would continue to be monitored to ensure that the mitigation measures were effective in controlling them. Should the scores for these risks increase further, ie the increased risk of NGBs leaving the Alliance, action would be reviewed to control the risks.

The SMT would review the risks ahead of the March Finance and Audit Committee meeting and before the April Board meeting, in particular the IWG risks. The Board noted the paper.

8 BOARD RECRUITMENT 2025

ML highlighted the paper which outlined this year's timeline and process regarding the Board's recruitment process.

The completed skills audit did not indicate any gaps to be filled during this year's recruitment process and there was a total of three Directors who were due to be re-appointed or re-elected.

The Board agreed to re-appoint DS for his second term as an Appointed Director and it was in their remit to do this without DS having to go through the recruitment process – having initially undertaken this in 2021. [Article 26.3 refers].

Both RB and SD were required to go through the recruitment process, not having done so as a casual vacancy appointment which meant that there would be one Elected and one Appointed Director to be advertised this year. The recruitment pack would not mention any specific skills and be more generic. KF reminded the Board of the need to include 'recreation' in the job description and ML stated that the Nominations Committee would also be aware to include that experience when considering the candidates. The Chair agreed with the generic JD and the recommendation was agreed. DS mentioned that the Board might wish to consider succession planning when considering the skills audit and review current Directors' terms of office in the short and long term.

9 EDI COMMITTEE

The Board received for information the minutes of the committee meeting held on 25 November 2024. HV reported that there were two new committee members and it was good to have a refresh of the committee to take the work forward. The EDI report was on the website and an EDI event was being arranged for February 2025. The committee was looking to establish EDI ambassadors

and asked the Board to let him have any names for consideration. An action plan was being reviewed and would be worked on for the Alliance.

10 IWG STEERING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2024 had been circulated for information. They key items had been discussed under the IWG update agenda item.

11 INSIGHT EXCHANGE

The Chair explained how this agenda item was an opportunity for intelligence/insight exchange of information by Board members that might assist with existing or future work programmes for the Alliance. Not all discussion was minuted but points raised included:

- Safeguarding and the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse
- PE and school sport agenda – good meeting with DfE officials before Christmas. Opportunity but will be challenging around finance.
- Social media – BlueSky good alternative to X.
- AI and training opportunities – CEO has a list available if Board members interested. DS there should be some guidance on what staff are using AI for in particular around GDPR and recruitment. **ACTION: ML to review**
- Sport England was to have a semi restructure and the three pillars to be reviewed were around policy, place and systems.

12 DATE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next scheduled business Board meeting would be held at 10.30 am on Tuesday 1 April 2025.

The Board noted a Joint lunch with Vice Presidents would be held following this meeting and to allow time to attend this where possible.

The meeting concluded at 12.45 pm.

It should be noted that during discussions following the Board meeting, RH stood down as Chair of the Remuneration and Staffing Committee due to time pressures within her CEO role. SD agreed to take on these duties with immediate effect, to include the Board Lead on Welfare and Safety issues.