

Minutes of the Sport Wales Board meeting held on Tuesday 21 April 2020 (by video conference)

Present: Lawrence Conway (Chair), Pippa Britton (Vice Chair), Ashok Ahir (AA), Ian Bancroft (IB), Rajma Begum (RB), Dafydd Trystan Davies (DTD), Delyth Evans (DE), Nicola Mead-Batten (NMB), Hannah Murphy (HM), Judi Rhys (JR), Professor Leigh Robinson (LR), Phil Tilley (PT), Alison Thorne (ATH), Martin Veale (MV)

Staff Attendance: Brian Davies (Acting CEO), Paul Randle (PR), Graham Williams (GW), Liam Hull (LH), Rhian Evans (RE), Owen Lewis (OL), Amanda Thompson (minutes)

Observers: Steffan Roberts (SR) & Paul Kindred (Culture & Sport, Welsh Government)

1. Welcome/apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. SR attended as Deputy Director for Culture & Sport in place of Dr Nicola Guy who was on maternity leave. Apologies for absence were received from Eleri McLennan (Young Ambassador representative).

2. Declarations of Interest

IB and LR for paper SW(20)19.

3. Minutes, Action Log, Decision Tracker and Matters Arising

Ref 5.2: change 'disguising' to 'distinguishing'. The minutes of the previous meeting were then accepted as a true and accurate record.

Actions from the last meeting have been covered within the Executive Report SW(20)14. Four reports that were due on the agenda for this meeting were deferred until later in the year: Climate Change Emergency update, Pension position update, and the annual review of the organisation's risk appetite.

4. Chair & Executive report

4.1 Chair's Statement

The Chair's statement was made in response to the radical mode of operation that the Executive team adopted in response to the Covid19 pandemic crisis. Some of the decisions recorded in the Executive Report SW(20)14 were ones that might in normal circumstances have been expected to come to the Board before implementation. However, this was not possible within the time constraints imposed by the emergency and the deadlines that the Executive and the Welsh Government had to work to, and in those circumstances the CEO's decision was made following discussion with the Chair.

To ensure due diligence going forward, the Chair proposed that two new Board sub-groups be formed:

- A sub-group to consider those matters on which the CEO required urgent agreement, and which could not wait for a full Board meeting for approval. The Chair proposed this group involve the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and at least two other Board members (chosen on an ad hoc basis and primarily in response to their availability).
- A sub-group charged with considering the longer-term recovery strategy for the organisation and sports sector at large. This group would also monitor the relevance and fit of the Vision for Sport and Sport Wales' new strategy. The Chair proposed this group involve DTD (Chair), ATH, NMB, HM, DE and IB. Other Board Members may give input on an ad hoc basis. Sarah Powell, though still on adoption leave, had agreed to also join the group as part of her keeping in touch days.

Members approved the Chair's recommendation.

4.2 Executive Report

The CEO gave this report and the following was added:

There had been contact with Sport New Zealand for purposes of shared learning during the crisis.

Sport Wales and the Welsh Sports Association were working closely together in response to the crisis.

Sport Wales now sat within the portfolio of Eluned Morgan AM, the Minister for International Relations & Welsh Language, and was sharing experiences and learning with other WGSBs by video conference.

The National Centres and Sport Wales staff had been made available to the local Health Boards but had not been utilised at this time.

The CEO formally thanked staff for the speed in which the **BeActiveWales** campaign was created. This was made possible by collaboration with NGBs and the Young Ambassadors. The Communications team produced weekly updates to partners that were well received and spoke fortnightly with NGB communications staff. Sport Wales' educational resources were now available for free online. In due course, RE would report back on the impact of these initiatives.

Wales Sports Awards: Discussion would continue with BBC Cymru as reported, however the *BeActiveWales* initiative was the current focus. It was agreed that a log of commendable community endeavours would be kept so that recognition could be made later in the year.

School Sport Survey: This was not due to be undertaken until 2021. However, the **National Survey for Wales** was due to take place during 2020 so would be impacted by the pandemic crisis. Discussion was ongoing with the Welsh Government.

Emergency Relief Fund (ERF): Following an online Q&A session, the first panel meeting was held on 20 April when 116 applications with a geographical spread over 21 local authority regions totalling £163k were approved. The next panel would be held on 28 April. The Chair thanked DTD for chairing the panel at such short notice. This funding also addressed issues that were caused by the floods back in February. The upper limit on grant aid had been raised from £3k to £5k. The application process required a legal declaration of other sources of grant assistance being sought to help mitigate the risk of double funding. This was also the case with the Welsh Government's Economic Resilience Fund.

Sport Resilience Fund (SRF): The repurposing exercise had been carried out with speed to put together a fund of £8.1m (approximately 40% exchequer and 60% Lottery). If the fund needed extending over time, then there was scope to raise the fund to £16m. The other WGSBs had carried out the same exercise and SR confirmed that if it transpired that such funds were not needed for resilience purposes, the monies could be released back into the budget for other expenditure.

Partner funding: NGBs had received their funding for the first quarter of the financial year and Sport Wales was allowing flexibility of use for resilience purposes and records needed to be kept. With regards to the furloughing of staff by partners, their position would depend on the make up of their income i.e. the percentage of public funding and commercial revenue. Sport Wales would capture details of the furlough of staff by partners. The Welsh Government was also to issue more guidance on this matter.

Organisational Re-Design: The Executive had sought feedback from the Leadership team, Board representation and staff (through the PCS Union's Branch Executive Committee) before confirming that the re-design would continue. 65% of the process had been completed and the remainder of the procedure would be carried out sensitive to the circumstances. Internal interviews would be complete by the end of April.

Institute/Elite Performance: The British Olympic Association was still keen to base its Team GB performance analysis hub at SWNC for the Tokyo Olympics (postponed to 2021). The CEO would offer the same opportunity to the Paralympic Association.

The Institute was working hard with athletes and partners to maintain a level of bespoke programming for the highest priority athletes in Wales. The future practitioner skills academy continued, and the team were focusing on systematic support solutions that could be useful to the wider sport system over the long term. The CEO paid tribute to the Institute's staff for their creativity and dedication.

ACTIONS: A record of partner furloughing of staff to be retained.
Consideration to be given to a live Q&A session, similar to the one actioned for the ERF.

Paper Ref: SW(20)14

5. Business Continuity & Impact Assessment

5.1 Corporate Risk Register update

LH presented the key changes to the Corporate Risk Register in response to the Covid19 pandemic. He confirmed that the data protection responsibilities had now moved to a permanent staff post.

- CORP-01 Reduced funding leads to non-achievement of corporate goals – increased risk.
- CORP-04 Risk of death or serious injury at a SW National Centre (Sport Wales Activities) – reduced risk.
- Corp-06 Significant disruption to operations due to Covid19 pandemic – increased risk.
- Corp-07 Significant disruption due to ICT failures – increased risk.
- CORP-13 Failure to maximise use of technology & data – may experience some slippage but it remained a key area of work.
- CORP-20 Covid19 crisis results in financial and delivery impact on partners and wider sporting sector which inhibits the progress of the new Strategy and Vision for Sport in Wales – new risk.

ACTION: Staff structure and appointments to be shared with the Board once the Re-design had been completed.
The annual risk appetite review was postponed to a meeting later in the year.

Paper Ref: SW(20)15

5.2 Business Plan 2019/20

OL and RE updated the Board on the activity to year-end and delivery against the business plan. The report recognised the current implications of the Covid19 crisis, the mitigations in place and gave an early idea of the potential effects on delivery of the business plan for 2020/21.

- The reflective approach used during 2019/20 had proved very helpful. Initiatives like CLIP had provided more insight and had helped the organisation to work more collaboratively.
- RE raised a concern about people doing increasingly extreme fundraising endeavours which raised the risk of injury (potentially putting more strain on the NHS).
- The CEO would ask to meet with the Deputy Director of Culture & Sport and the Director of Culture, Sport & Tourism to update on the Investment Model.
- Communications and Insight staff were looking at ways to continue the CLIP initiative over the next 6 months. Sport Wales and NGBs were also sharing training resources for free online.
- The annual report was ready for submission to the Welsh Government. A supplemental page would be added to update the report with the Covid19 pandemic situation.

ACTIONS: LH to share the job description for the Technology Development Lead with ATH and PT.

Paper Ref: SW(20)16

5.3 Financial Impact report

PR talked through an overview of initial estimates of the financial impact of the Covid19 crisis for 2020/21, principally the losses due to the closure of SWNC and Plas Menai National Outdoor Centre.

- The most optimistic scenario, Model 1(a), indicated a total revenue loss of £1,260k (-48% vs.BP). There were £512k of identified costs which could mitigate some of this loss. Under this scenario Plas Menai would lose 55% of its current year revenue.
- The least optimistic scenario, Model 3(b), indicated a total revenue loss of £2,537k (-96% vs BP). There were £1,283k of identified costs which could mitigate some of this loss. Under this scenario Plas Menai would lose 97% of its current year revenue.

As the Welsh Government had only approved an interim budget for 2020/21, and all funding was potentially subject to review later in the year, the Board was advised to be mindful of the need to consider other options to reduce costs. The Executive would continue to explore such options and to work on operational exit plans to ensure resources were available and all Government guidelines were complied with to minimise risk to employees, partners and the public. Members noted the report.

Paper Ref: SW(20)17

5.4 Finance report April 2019-February 2020

Members noted the financial position of Sport Wales as of 29 February 2020. The accounts for the year 2019/20 should be ready for sign off as originally planned. Wales Audit Office (WAO) planned to conduct their audit remotely. Regular meetings were held with WAO to monitor progress and identify if there would be a need to adjust the timeline due to changing WAO priorities. The impact of Covid19 on the 2019/20 accounts was estimated at c£90k due to the closure of the Centres. The introduction of the new finance system had been delayed as full testing was not currently possible. Members noted the report.

Paper Ref: SW(20)18

5.5 Community Sport & Activity Programme (CSAP) update

GW updated the Board on the impact of the Covid19 outbreak on CSAP and recommended:

- Rescheduling the current timelines for rest of Wales (i.e. the current Outline Solutions stage) and determining the dates in line with recovery from the pandemic.
- Seeking to confirm the preferred regional footprint for the rest of Wales once there had been further engagement with partners on their submissions during the rescheduled Outline Solutions stage.
- Continuing agreed work with Sport North Wales (SNW) based on its ability to engage.
- Refocusing internal staff resources on work in the project plan that can be progressed without partner input and preparing a remobilisation plan to allow work to restart as quickly when appropriate.
- Substantially stand down the external consultancy support.

Points noted during the Board's discussion were:

- Start thinking about what recovery would look like and plan to be ready to act quickly.
- Be ready to support SNW when the project could be remobilised.
- CSAP Project Board would be checking that CSAP remained fit for purpose.
- There was debate around the geographical footprint and agreed that consultation should be held open until appropriate to discuss again.
- Funds had been repurposed from the CSAP budget towards the SRF, as shown, however there had been no existing commitments to activities within those funds.

Members approved the recommendations in the report.

Paper Ref: SW(20)19

5.6 Sport Wales National Facilities Review update

PR gave an overview of the Facilities Review Group (FRG)'s work since the previous Board meeting, and the likely impacts of the Covid19 crisis. It was recommended that the process of finding a joint venture or outsourcing partner for Plas Menai and the review process for SWNC should both be paused.

It was suggested that FRG start thinking of the consequences of the loses of revenue, not only in financial terms but also the social impact, and to work up a three-year financial model. The Chair suggested not ruling anything out at this stage and taking some time to reflect on next steps. Before taking any further decisions, the Board would need to be aware of the Welsh Government's approach to the continuance of public infrastructure overall as part of the nation's recovery plans.

Paper Ref: SW(20)20

6. Young Ambassador Steering Group report

Members noted the report and were pleased to hear that the Young Ambassadors had contributed to the *BeActiveWales* campaign.

7. Groups and Standing Committees

The minutes from the previous meetings were noted. The CSAP Project Board's meeting of 31 March had been postponed. The next Audit & Risk Assurance Committee meeting would be held on 25 June and the Facilities Review Group were due to meet next on 6 May.

8. Any other business

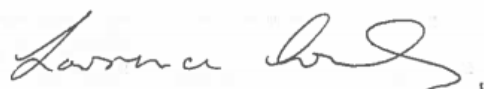
A concern was raised about barriers to physical activity during the current crisis:

- Greater drop in keeping physically active among BME communities, many of whom were already among the numbers of people with no/low engagement with sport.
- Online resources were not as accessible to those who were digitally excluded or who had limited internet data or language barriers.
- Some parents lacked the confidence or competency to support their children with educational or other online resources.
- Some people faced difficulties with housing and overcrowding issues and lack of open space which was also a barrier to them keeping active at this time.

9. Date of next meetings

- The next meeting would be held provisionally on 18 June. This would be confirmed shortly.
- The meeting on 7 July would need to be confirmed and was subject to the timetable to sign off the 2019/20 accounts.
- It was anticipated that the regular schedule of Board meetings would resume in the Autumn, the dates being 16 September and 27 November 2020.

Signed



Lawrence Conway CB, Chair

Date: 19 June 2020