**Welsh Triathlon (WT)**

**Minutes of the Board Meeting**

**Held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 13th March 2013 at Sophia Gardens, Cardiff**

Present*:*Mark Lowther (ML), Dean Hardie (DH), Deborah King (DK), Will Thomas (WLT), Paul Whapham (PW), Mike Hughes (MH), Carwyn Williams (CW), Tom Roberts (TR), Beverley Lewis (BL), Joanne Nicholas (JN)

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| **Item** | **Minute** | **Action** |
| 1. | **Apologies for absence**  Ian Cole (IC) |  |
| 2. | **Declarations of Interest**  None received |  |
| 3. | **Minutes of last Meeting**  3.1 Review of Articles ongoing – currently not top priority as for approval at AGM but DK hopes to complete by May Board Meeting.  3.2 Declaration of Interest Forms completed, with the exception of newest Board member, CW. Now to be circulated to other Board Members. BL suggested using dropbox.  BL to re-circulate D of I forms for club membership to be added. These are to be posted on the website  Skills matrix completed again with exception CW. These are to be kept in house.  3.3 Scoring system to be added to NC and GPS area of website.  TR still to complete the Welsh Race Pack. Raft copy in place TR to review BTF pack.  3.4 IC has produced a draft Financial Monitoring Form, presented. This is linked to the agreed Strategic themes of WT. It will have a ‘traffic light’ warning system on variance and link to a summary sheet which we can upload to the website once approved by the Board.  IC had announced his resignation to pursue a greater work challenge but will complete this form and be available to handover to the next Director for Finance. The Board are sorry to see Ian leave but wished him well in his new role.  Financial Documentation on procedures and delegation to be reviewed.  4.1 The Priorities for 2013 document had been refined and re-drafted.  **Governance**  Partnership Agreement (PA). ML confirmed that all funding had been received from SW apart from £25,000. This was not a reflection on WT but SW were waiting on Welsh Government funding decisions and had had to withhold funds from several NGB’s. The £25,000 was funding for the General Manager though this post had been paid two years in advanced and the money ring fenced so WT were not unduly worried at this stage.  The letter confirming funding payment also noted key project targets expected. These were in line with those WT set in the PA. Expectations from SW were noted in the areas of Governance, Safeguarding and Participation all of which WT were currently prioritising.  ML proposed he produce an annual report to SW to respond directly to the project targets and expectations outlined in the SW letter.  ML also referenced a letter of 26th September 2012 from SW indicated areas in which they at that time had concerns about, with regards WT. These were in the areas of 1. having in place a fully functioning Board 2. a strategic plan, 3. adequate staffing structure, 4. financial forecasting based on a Strategic Plan, 5. Safeguarding and Equality Standards. ML pointed to a significant advance in all these areas. JN agreed that it had been recognised by SW that WT had made great progress in all these areas.  One area pointed out by SW in the PA was the reduction in the number of coaching staff available in Wales. DH suggested that this was partly due to a lack of resources and support from BTF. There was also the possibility of previous problems in data collection/reporting. PW stressed that the demand for coaching courses was high and that it was a priority for WT to train tutors and increase the coaching courses available and from that the number of coaches operating in Wales. WT were actively seeking tutors.  The Board had considered Board Appraisal methods and ML thanked WLT for the examples he had provided. JN would ask SW for feedback on successful appraisal methods from other NGB’s. DH had provided a BTF Board appraisal form which ML had adapted for WT purposes. He felt it important to add a self appraisal section and had related the appraisal back to the key areas of the job descriptions and roles provided to the Board on taking up their positions. The Board seemed happy with this way forward.  One question remained and that was Accountability of the Chair. It was suggested that this would be done in effect by submission of the Annual report to SW as previously mentioned, the Self Assessment Process for Governance, but that also by appraisal to be carried out by a BTF Board member. ML would approach Ian Howard BTF.  Staff appraisals were discussed. BL would appraise the Development Manager(with PW), Performance Coach(with WLT) and Office Admin(with DK) in line with the BTF appraisal methods already discussed with Helen Wyeth BTF. There was a still a grey area over BL’s appraisal. An official line manager appraisal would need to be carried out in line with BTF procedures but this would require input from ML.  With regards the Club Quality Mark. WT could either buy into the BTF/TE initiative or use the new tool developed by Cardiff Universities and partners which is an online self assurance system. Further discussions were needed with TE.  Risk Management will be discussed under the Governance report.  **Development**  Three regional forums had been scheduled the first in Cardiff the following day. Response to the Club email had been poor. There had been an article on the website and earlier in the week an email had been sent to all club members inviting attendance.  Board member’s attendance at all NC and GP events had been allocated but needed revision with the resignation of IC. BL to circulate table again and include the Junior Series events.  **AOB**  A Safeguarding paper would be discussed later. | BL    BL  TR  DK  ML  BL  BL |
| 4.  4.1  4.2  4.3  4.4 | **Matters Arising**  **Strategy and HR (ML)**  A nine point action plan had been the result of the member consultation and this had been circulated to Clubs for comment. Only one comment had been received which was more about presentation than content. ML had allocated Lead Board members to each of the actions.  Board priorities had been identified and this process would go on to help shape the Strategic Plan. A Strategy workshop was scheduled for 11th April prior to the formal Board Induction Evening. This would be shaped but not dictated to by the SW funding requirements, the membership consultation and forums and the individual Board member priorities.  ML noted the commitment to consult with the members on the strategic Plan and then publish the final document by July 2013.  **Governance and Finance**  **Marketing and Sponsorship**  CW summarised his findings since in post with regards the marketing and sponsorship position of WT. Marketing needs to reflect the strategic aims of WT. CW looking into drafting a simple Marketing and Communications Strategy and identifying the level resources available for this area. CW to produce a report on the current position and priority areas for the next Board Meeting.  DH raised the issue of replacing our main sponsor since the severance of the Speedo contract. CW has been in touch with Ulundi Makhanya (BTF) to explore opportunities with Z3ROD and has been talking with RB and BL to identify the needs of WT from staff, coaches, athletes and general public.  It was noted that the elite athletes needed input into the decision about tri specific clothing.  Concern was raised by BL regarding the Powerbar products required for this weekend’s National Championship Duathlon in Pembrokeshire. BL to provide PW who is attending this race with the medals, leaflets and powerbar products from the Store.  CW was reviewing the way forward with regards the introduction of the Welsh language into WT  **Appointments**  The Board, after the SPC training evening, had identified the need for a Director for SPC and were going to advert.  At the same time an advert would go out for a new Director of Finance.  After recent interviews WT had appointed Darren Wyn Jones as Development Manager to start probably on 22nd April and Mollie Borg Office Administrator to start 9th April.  Adverts were now on the website for Coach educators to boost the number of tutors available in Wales.  PW noted a lack of clear HR guidelines and an HR Management Strategy would be reviewed and developed.  BL to provide clear guidelines on file label /format on Board Document submission for the next Board Meeting.  **Governance**  **Articles/Service Level Agreement (SLA)**  DK had reviewed the Articles and made some changes.  The SLA required updating which had been done but the Appendix needed more consideration and it was suggested the next step would be to set up a meeting with BTF representatives and review. ML made some observations and handed his amendments to DK.  Early consultation was required in all matters in which BTF made decisions which had an impact in Wales. The recent Ironman agreement was highlighted.  **Self Assurance**  DK reviewed the Action Plan.  DK to draft Terms and Conditions for the Management Groups.  It was agreed that WT need to find access to Legal Services. JN would research the other NGB’s on our behalf. WLT suggested taking advantage of the free legal service provided by the university Law students.  JN was pleased with the progress that had been made with regards Self Assurance and explained that the next Self assurance submission was 4th November with the new assessment rolling out from April so WT could start populating the new year’s forms from then.  **Risk Register**  DK presented the draft Risk Management Policy and Risk Register. The Board were to pass any potential risk to DK for inclusion. DK aimed to review the Risk register biannually but consider it a live document for amendments when required.  **Safeguarding (SPC)**  BL had provided a SPC report with clear Priorities for the short and long term. Further work on Implementing the Plan would start in earnest once the Director for SPC was appointed.  **Legal services**  BL put the Legal Services Document to the Board. It was clear the some of the issues had not been fully understood. The Board were in agreement however, that   * the Insurance Benefits to WT members was important and needed to continue, * there should be a standard benefit available to WT/TE members, * Option 3 proposed appeared, from the discussions presented, to be the way forward, * the liability sharing across WT/TE backed by the sinking fund should therefore continue and that discussions over a per member annual contribution was necessary.   BL would feed these points back to BTF and TE. Wt to consider the use of a legal expert to assist in advice on this matter.  **Performance Pathway**  WLT reviewed the Performance report. He and RB were pleased with the N and S open development days and had brought into the ‘soon to be’ regional academies over 30 new junior athletes one of which had been invited to join the Talent Squad.  By invitation to develop/share coaching skills, 11 coaches had participated in these open training sessions. The coaches will take back skills to enhance club training.  The cross section of standards within the Talent Academy is still broad but by the end of the year it is hoped the Talent Academy will reduce in number and increase in standard. The current athletes showing potential but not yet achieving Talent Academy standard will be serviced at the Regional Academies.  Discussions are positive and ongoing with reference to developing a Performance Centre in Cardiff.  DH reported that there was discussion at BTF Board Level with regards CPD for our existing Performance Coaches.  JN reminded WLT that the Talent Cymru and Coach Cymru Funding forms were to be submitted by April.  **Participation Pathway**  PW went through his report.  Reviewing membership costs and benefits is a high priority for WT. PW proposed two options for revising membership to provide a clearer and better value package for our members. The Board preferred the option of Tristart being free, Tristar and Juniors being £10 and 20+ being £30. This reflects current race categories. The family memberships could be cut out as with the adult fee reduction, family membership, at the current price, would be more costly.  The membership reduction would be achieved by stripping out the Handbook and producing an online version, if required, and possibly taking out Trinews. Children’s membership would be enhanced by child friendly items. The Board were in agreement in principle with this Option.  The only category who would currently pay a greater fee would be the 20 to 24 year olds who have historically had £24 membership which would now go to £30. For the sake of a simpler system and because of the overall adult membership reduction it was felt this was a defensible position and mitigating measures could be offered to existing members in this category initially if required.  The challenges which still exist to changing the membership rates are the BTF administration, obtaining value added through sponsorship and agreeing the income costs with BTF.  The Club Forums were discussed in detail BL cautioned that there could potentially, be a huge number of requests and club priorities to come out of the Forums and that, whilst the views and requirements of the clubs were important, WT must remember that it only has limited staff and budget resources. She stressed that anything WT commit to do should be related to it’s strategic goals. This would streamline the work load and ensure WT works to achieve in it’s agreed priority areas. Support and information should be provided to the clubs to help them develop relationships and structures amongst themselves.  MH and PW reiterated the importance of the Clubs having their say and of WT meeting their demands. MH felt that the perception of WT within the Clubs was of an organisation driven by misplaced strategies. He felt the Forum was one place to turn around this perception, present the new strategic thinking and engage with the clubs to offer them the support they felt was important. | CW  BL  CW  BL  DK/BL  BL  DK  DK  JN  The Board  BL/ML  RB/WLT  CW/PW |
| 5. | **AOB**  TR raised an important issue regarding the Events Permitting System. The current system runs a traffic light warning on the registration page where by athletes can see the degree to which the permitting process has been achieved by the race organiser. For example a warning triangle is displayed if an event permit has been applied for but the risk assessment not submitted. However there is an automatic drop off the events register if an event organiser does not submit required documentation 1 month before the event.  This system could be abused in that should an event organiser want the advertisement on the website they could proceed to the events listing, obtain registration of athletes because of the endorsement by BTF, then fail to provide the required documentation. They could then obtain their own insurance and continue with the race. TR believed this practice had occurred in previous years.  TR is to make his concerns known to BTF Events and TR to establish a method of picking up on none compliant clubs through information requested of the Events team and send or request of the Events team to send strong reminders to Clubs. | TR |
| 7. | **Dates and Venue of Board Meeting**  The next Board Meeting is the 8th May 7:00pm, SW  Note: Board Induction 11th April, 7:00pm, SW |  |