



MINUTES

Of the meeting of the British Water Ski & Wakeboard Board held on Thursday 5th October 2023 via Video Conference Call

1. To Record Attendance and Apologies for Absence.

Present:

Martin Winter Chair
Steve Sopp
Peter James
Michael Lock
Nick Fellows
Patrick Donovan

Andy Philips Prospective board member re finance

Cathy Hughes Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Keir Boissevain Development

Apologies:

Margaret Curtis
Clare Lobb
Rod Beattie Advisory Council Chair (Interim)
Kylie Cooper Operations Manager

2. Declarations of Interest.

There were no changes made to the register of members interests. Martin highlighted an interest he had in reference to IWWF matters re a family member who was an elite Waterski athlete on the world stage.

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meetings Held on 22nd June and 5th July 2023.

The minutes were reviewed and approved by those who were present at the respective meetings (a minor revision / typo to 22nd June minutes).

4. Matters Arising not Covered by this Agenda.

a) Lascelles Memorial Awards – it was agreed to allocate up to £7.5K of general funds to assist and support highly promising young athletes, with the original bequest / fund now exhausted. BWSW aimed to utilise general funds, when the financial circumstance permitted, to support Lascelles.

Action: Kylie would liaise with the Lascelles Committee Chair Lizz Hobbs MBE on the timeline for the grant applications and awards announcement.

5. To Note Items for AOB.

None recorded.

6. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

a) EDI Lead Report – welcome report outlining some of the recent funded System Partner activity in terms of both our Delivery role and Systemic (connecting and influencing) role. A good number of initiatives and projects outlined within the report which contributed to our strategic aim to increase the accessibility of our sport by removing barriers and addressing the issues that prevent people participating in water skiing and wakeboarding.

b) Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) – now fully revised and a restatement of the organisation's commitment to tackling inequalities and making our sport inclusive and diverse; a sport that welcomes and has an offer for everyone. This commitment was at the heart of the BWSW strategy and reflected in our long-term vision and values. As part of our long-term vision, we aim to provide, create and enhance an inclusive organisational climate to achieve real and sustainable change. The DIAP was approved by all present and would now be assessed by a Sport England consultancy / partner.

Action: Cathy to make any final minor revisions and submit for this assessment.

c) People Plan – Cathy highlighted requirement 3.4 of the Code for Sports Governance which outlined the need to develop a People Plan / Recruitment Strategy / Talent Management Strategy / Workforce

Strategy or equivalent and to demonstrate that it is reviewed on at least an annual basis and that the findings of those discussions are shared openly e.g. openly with members and people (e.g. employees, volunteers).

d) Diversity Champion Board Role Description – with Clare standing down at the next AGM, having complete three terms of three years, and currently holding the Diversity Champion role there had been a recruitment drive to find a suitable replacement to join the board. The newly stated role description was approved and would be utilised as part of the recruitment initiative and clarifying the scope of the role.

A note of thanks to Cathy for her input and work on all matters in developing our approach to EDI.

7. Board Related Matters.

a) Advisory Council – Rod Beattie was currently overseas and was unable to attend today. The previous scheduled Advisory Council meeting needed to be rearranged.

i Harbourmasters – a circular had been sent to a number of harbourmasters in the vicinity of BWSW affiliated and non-affiliated clubs and centres in coastal areas and estuaries highlighting the benefits of BWSW membership and our role as the sole body in the UK developing and offering qualifications designed specifically for the sport. Our role in overseeing standards of coaching and driving to encourage safety and good practice was highlighted with a case study of good practice with the Norfolk Broads management plan: <https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating/owning-a-boat/tolls/other-tolls/how-we-manage-waterskiing>

ii Excellence Proposal - At the July meeting it was proposed that an 'Excellence Committee' should be created, allowing the Advisory Council to focus on issues and opportunities within disciplines and regions. The board felt that cross discipline, common excellence matters were perfectly legitimate agenda items for the Advisory Council to deal with and it was felt that there was not a pressing need for an additional committee in what was already a very broad committee structure.

b) IWWF Congress October 2023 Agenda. Issues arising included:

i Change of Corporate Vehicle – The IWWF was currently a limited company registered in the UK using the BWSW HQ as the registered address, however there were plans to incorporate a new company based in Switzerland and transfer the business and assets. A concern was highlighted at the lack of explanation in the documentation sent to members relating to item 11 of the World Congress and following Extraordinary Congress. However, there was no actual issue with the proposal to create a new Swiss company in place of the English one if done for good reason or reasons in the best interests of members and the sport. The BWSW representatives scheduled to be present at the upcoming IWWF Congress (Martin Winter and Steve Sopp) were mandated by the board to use their discretion as to whether to vote in favour, against or abstain as regards this proposal depending on the IWWF directors' response to a number of questions circulated for today's meeting in relation to the transfer and the mechanism / implementation as well as other important points.

Action: Martin to further refine / update the draft questions and recirculate. The UK representatives to Congress, Martin Winter and Steve Sopp, to canvass as far as possible in advance of the Congress meeting (to include the questions in the document outlined and discussed today) which included questions previously submitted to IWWF but not actually answered to date.

ii Code of Ethics - the UK representatives to Congress Martin Winter and Steve Sopp to also canvass, in advance of the Congress Meeting in so far as practical, and otherwise raise at the Congress Meeting the following questions as circulated for today's meeting:

- Have the executive board considered the IWWF commitments to IOC in adopting the new Code of Conduct and Ethics? There were now delinquencies from the IOC Code in terms of the unexplained abolition of an Ethics Commission and the prohibition of sponsor interference.

- Can the new IWWF Code of Conduct and Ethics (recently placed on the list of Congress documents in October – though apparently adopted in July) please be drawn to the attention of members (as it is for item 13) so members can be made aware of what they are being asked to ratify?

- Have the Executive Board received independent advice that the new disciplinary bye-law and appeals procedure conforms with acceptable practice consistent with other sports governing bodies? The new byelaws and appeals procedure appeared to be very much a captive of the IWWF bureau in (i) determining the first hearing, appointing the appeal committee members and including a burden of proof that properly related to anti-doping – the effect of which was to make an appellant potentially "guilty" even if they established "innocence" before the appeals hearing on the balance of probabilities.

- Can the new IWWF disciplinary bye-law and appeals procedure (recently placed on the list of Congress documents in October – though apparently adopted in July) please be drawn to the attention of members (as it is for item 13) so members can be made aware of what they are being asked to ratify?

iii BWSW Resolution – an earlier BWSW resolution submitted to IWWF re participation of officials and athletes from Russia and Belarus had been dealt with in September prior to the Congress with IWWF issuing a revised policy statement along similar lines to our resolution so no action was required on this..

c) BWSW Overview Document – a document aimed to facilitate new board members with the 'A to Z' of BWSW for background information and induction purposes to provide clarity. A work in progress an updated draft to follow, if possible, for consideration at the next meeting. Martin was taking responsibility for this but the redraft was delayed due to pressure of other issues.

d) Accreditation Document – the current amended paperwork was approved (subject to third party advice and ongoing minor revisions).

e) Water Recovery Plan – the current draft was approved (subject to any further third party advice, ongoing minor revisions and making sure this was sufficiently club friendly).

f) Qualifications Matrix – approved (subject to ongoing minor revisions), a circular to relevant interested parties was in process to be circulated together with updated terms of reference for the Driving and Coaching Development Working Group.

Action: Patrick would circulate imminently once the working group lead had discussed with current and a former working group member.

g) BWSW Racing Meeting August – Martin, Steve, Peter and Patrick had attended this meeting to discuss the various issues within the discipline in terms of insurance issues, the BWSW safety review ongoing and issues around 'breakaway' group licences being issued in relation to international events but not via BWSW or in compliance with GB or IWWF Racing Rules.

h) E&A Congress 2026 – GB host bid to hold the event at a Stansted airport hotel approved, Gavin Kelly would lead on the running of the event with HQ support, a draft budget had been produced. Steve highlighted that 2026 was the BWSW 75th anniversary and it would be good PR for the organisation and provide networking within the wider sport. An item relating to a drinks reception was deferred for later consideration.

i) Friends of Tournament Terms of Reference – following on from a significant bequest, updated terms of reference with a number of small changes to the management of this fund approved.

j) Racing World Championships – a letter dated 1st September to IWWF was circulated for the meeting, it was produced with input from our safety consultant John Puddifoot and following a discussion with the BWSW Chair of Racing, and outlined a number of key points, subject to full BWSW board approval, in relation to the possibility of GB Team members entering the Worlds in Australia. Points included IWWF taking full responsibility for safety at the event, IWWF agreeing to waive IWWF byelaw 16, as regards BWSW, in terms of BWSW ensuring adequate insurance. In addition, recognising that BWSW would take no responsibility as regards appropriate helmets worn by skiers (rule 6.08 of the World Rules states that a helmet must be approved "by the Region"). It would be made crystal clear beforehand to any competitor so selected that on the paperwork provided, but without taking any external advice, there would be no third party liability insurance as regards racing or training and that the personal accident, death and disablement cover appeared to be completely inadequate in the event of a catastrophic incident. Importantly IWWF would make clear the policy offered no protection at all in respect of a third party claim from a competitor. The proposal was approved. The board would be kept abreast of progress. It was noted IWWF has not yet responded to the various points made in the letter

k) Finance Report – audit related work / pre audit submissions ongoing, audit scheduled for next week, a draft set of accounts was available showing a very modest surplus at draft stage. Nick raised a lack of regular financial reporting at board meetings which was not ideal and which was accepted by the meeting. Peter outlined that staffing had been turbulent and there had been a significant backlog with processing ongoing over a very extended period which had made reporting difficult in a timely manner. He also highlighted some of the fairly stable income streams, recovery in activity since the fallout of COVID over two seasons and reasonable levels of general reserves which provided for cash flow and security. Peter had today produced for Menzies an overview document in terms of Going Concern to support the audit process. The aim was improvement and the search for a new finance manager, halted by a period of intense audit activity, would resume imminently.

A note of thanks to Kylie for her efforts and support in helping the CEO during a period of a significant staffing challenge and pressurised timelines re the forthcoming audit.

8. Confirmation of Future Meeting Dates.

Board:

Thursday 19 th October	14:00	Conference Call	TBC
Thursday 23 rd November	14:00		

Some additional meetings may well be required to address ad hoc issues and the proposed time for these meetings is 9am on Wednesday mornings.

Board Sub-Group

Wednesdays	09:00
------------	-------

Advisory Council:

TBC	October meeting postponed to a future date
-----	--

AGM

Sunday 14th January 2024	13:00	Queens Club, London	TBC
--------------------------	-------	---------------------	-----

The meeting closed at 15:35

Meeting minuted by:

Patrick Donovan
CEO