

Saturday 11 March 2023 at 10:00am
Virtual Meeting

In Attendance:

Voting Members:

Anthony Armstrong; Paul Bate; Karen Bennett; Jac Bond; Paul Britton; Sonya Brotherton; Brian Burgess; Tamra Cave; Brian Chapman; Andrew Elliott; Roger Fox; Neil Hoare; Noel Humphrey; John Lewis; Peter Li; Deborah Miles; Stan Missen; David Parker; Dee Paterson; Ross Pearton; Olwen Ross; Jim Rossiter; Bill Sharpe; Dwynwen Stepien; Andrew Train; Andy Trunks; Andrea Vaillancourt-Alder; David Walters; Deborah Wilkes

British Canoeing Board Members:

Ashley Metcalfe, Chief Executive (AM); Richard Boreham (RB); Kerry Chown (KC); John Coyne, Chair (JC); Stephen Craig (SC); Clare Dallaway (CD); Nick Donald (ND); Martine Kushner (MK); Steve Linksted (SL); Manpreet Sehmbi (MS); Greg Spencer (GS)

Staff Members in Attendance:

Lisa Bryant; Sandy Drummond; Chris Earle; Charmaine Gawler; Susan Hicks; James Hives; Rob Knott; Lee Pooley; Sam Rankin; Ben Sansom; Ben Seal; Darryll Shaw; Nancy Squires; James Unsworth; Barry Wade; Keir Worth.

Apologies:

Christine Baillie, Sue Hornby, Alan Laws, Gareth Mahood.

1. Welcome by Professor John Coyne CBE, Chairman, British Canoeing.

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

JC introduced himself, along with Ashley Metcalfe, Chief Executive Officer and Nick Donald, Director and Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee. He advised that Dee Paterson, President, would be joining the meeting remotely. He also advised that several Board Members and officers were also present to assist in various parts of the AGM as required.

JC noted that it was the second fully virtual AGM held by British Canoeing which aligns nicely to the recently launched Environmental Sustainability Strategy. JC confirmed 101 members had registered to join the meeting and that 35 were online at the start of the meeting. He advised that this number may rise and fall over the course of the meeting as people leave and join online. He confirmed that an audio recording would be captured for the purpose of true and accurate minute taking.

JC stated that the voting platform in use during the meeting was provided by Lumi, an independent company who would ensure that all votes were recorded and presented correctly. JC invited Lumi to introduce themselves and to instruct members how to use the voting platform.

Two trial votes were conducted for the purposes of allowing members the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the voting system. JC confirmed that all votes would remain open for approximately 30 seconds during the meeting.

JC advised that the papers for the meeting were distributed via email beforehand, including the finance slides. They were also available on the British Canoeing website and on the Lumi platform under the 'documents' tab.

JC confirmed that all motions on the agenda were classified as ordinary business requiring a simple majority of greater than 50% of the votes cast.

A number of proxy votes had been received and pre-cast in advance, and these would be included in the final voting results displayed on the screen for each of the motions.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Christine Baillie, Sue Hornby, Alan Laws and Gareth Mahood.

2. To Adopt the Minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting held 12 March 2022.

There were no amendments proposed to the Minutes.

Votes for: 41 (100%)

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 3

The minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting were approved by Ordinary Resolution.

3. To consider matters arising from the minutes of the 42nd Annual General Meeting.

The Chair confirmed that during item 9 of the 2022 AGM, the Board provided an update to members on the progress made on the Sports Resolution Action plan. He reported that the Board is pleased to confirm that the action plan has now been completed and that the full board statement detailing the actions taken can be found in the AGM pack. He stated that the progress made shows our ongoing commitment to safeguarding and driving good practice for the benefit of all involved in our sport.

There were no further matters arising.

4. To adopt the accounts for the Financial Year 1.11.21 to 31.10.22.

JC invited the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, Nick Donald (ND) to present the accounts. JC advised that the summary financial report could be found in the Annual Report and that a copy of the finance slides were available on the website and on the Lumi platform.

ND introduced himself as Independent Director and spoke to the finance slides presented to members. He reflected on the strong set of accounts that had mirrored the strong financial performance of 2021. ND confirmed that revenue had increased by 5% to a surplus of £742k driven predominantly by membership income and some element of cost saving. He pointed

to the restated 2021 numbers that had been adjusted in line with the new approach in accordance with the financial standards which now recognises membership income evenly spread over twelve months. He noted that the new approach allows for greater comparability and reliance.

ND highlighted that earned income fell just short of £5m and represented 46% of the total income. He noted that coaching and qualifications income had returned to pre-pandemic levels. Commercial income had been challenging but had also seen a significant increase albeit from a lower base level.

ND confirmed that staff costs amounted to 44% of the total operating costs noting that people are fundamental to the development of British Canoeing's work and that we now have a People Strategy in place to help empower and support our people.

ND reported that the balance sheet remains healthy and that we continue to build new reserves. He stated that British Canoeing had built up £5.3m of unrestricted funds and that the Board would now consider how to yield an optimal return on these funds.

ND outlined that the reserves position had been slightly distorted by the change in the financial accounting approach but assured members that it does not impact on the level of cash available. He highlighted the designated reserves that had been allocated to the Stronger Together fund for award and distribution in 2023.

ND summarised that the financial position of British Canoeing was robust and resilient although he cautioned that this coming financial year would be more challenging due to the cost of living crisis and rising levels of inflation.

JC thanked ND for the presentation and invited questions from members.

Jim Rossiter, Vice President asked whether the financial statements included the funds received from UK Sport into the World Class Programme. ND confirmed that the financial results do include the grant income British Canoeing receive from UK Sport.

The Chair expressed thanks and appreciation to ND for his work as Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee noting the robust set of accounts that benefit all members of the organisation.

The Chair opened the voting to adopt the accounts.

Votes for: 46 (100%)

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 1

The accounts were adopted by Ordinary Resolution.

5. To appoint 'Haysmacintyre' as the Auditors for the financial year 1.11.22 to 31.10.23, and to authorise the directors to fix their remuneration.

The Chair advised that the Board proposed to re-appoint Haysmacintyre as the Auditors for

British Canoeing.

JC noted that Ross Pearton raised a hand but no question was received.

The Chair opened the voting for the motion.

Votes for: 45 (97.83%)

Votes against: 1 (2.17%)

Abstentions: 2

The appointment of Haysmacintyre was approved by Ordinary Resolution.

6. To adopt the 43rd Annual Report of British Canoeing for 2022.

JC reminded members that the Annual Report had been circulated to all members with the AGM papers.

JC stated that the report presented in its new format illustrated what a busy and successful year it had been for everybody involved with British Canoeing and thanked those across the community who had contributed to both the delivery of the work and the subsequent production of the Annual Report.

The Chair then invited the Chief Executive AM to present the Annual Report.

AM stated that it was his first AGM since joining British Canoeing in June 2022 and that he had been hugely impressed by the breadth of work everyone had delivered.

AM shared his personal highlights from the past twelve months categorised within 4 key themes;

Focus on Sport

- AM congratulated all British Canoeing paddlers and support teams for their international success which included 85 medals won and 10 world champions.
- AM recognised the work of our volunteer workforce to deliver 2 home world championships and 1 new marathon short course national championships

Focus on Recreation

- 390 British Canoeing Clubs affiliated in England
- 400 Delivery Partners across the UK
- Increased focus on Safety with a new Safety lead appointed
- 600k visitors to the Go Paddling website

Focus on Campaigns

- 93,000+ members which represented a record for the organisation
- 1,200 paddlers took part in our Big Paddle Clean Up and we developed and successfully launched the Paddlers Code
- A new Environmental Sustainability Strategy launched which sets out our vision to help protect the environment
- A new EDI Strategy launched entitled #WePaddleTogether

Focus on Operations

- British Canoeing achieved a financial surplus of £741,522
- A new strategic plan successfully launched in March 2022
- Compliance maintained with UK Sport's code for sports governance
- 26 new staff in place with 3 new Board members.

AM, in looking forwards to 2023, stated that British Canoeing remains totally committed to its people and again thanked the many volunteers for their continued commitment and passion which is hugely appreciated by all.

Current State of Play

AM pointed to the growth in membership over the past 3 years progressing from a membership base of 38k in 2020 to 93k in 2023. He shared that the primary reason for this growth was due to the increase in the recreational independent paddling sector and this is where the potential for further growth lies. AM stated that how British Canoeing engage with the recreational paddler to bring them into our community would be key in 2023 and beyond.

Current NGB Focus

AM outlined how resources are allocated to performance, clubs and delivery partners with currently only limited resource focused on the independent recreational paddler. He proposed that there is now an opportunity to evolve in a gentle and careful manner in 3 key areas;

- Enabler of sporting excellence - by hosting an excellent 2023 ICF Canoe Slalom World Championships in September and focusing on our performance in Paris 2024
- Delivering value added excellence to the Independent Member
- Delivering Campaigns (Environmental Sustainability, Social Impact, EDI and Safety)

This would all be underpinned by Governance excellence through our member services, day to day operations, marketing, communications, education and robust finance.

AM outlined some challenges that British Canoeing were facing as an NGB in light of the recent Whyte review. He noted that the Workforce Governance Review aims to make sport and physical activity safer and more enjoyable for all participants and that British Canoeing would be developing a workforce register over the next 12-18 months to provide added protection for all our paddlers.

AM shared that British Canoeing were committed to a rebrand project in 2023 following extensive consultation. There would be opportunities for further consultation as the project progresses to ensure the new brand is truly relevant and reflective of our current members.

AM thanked everyone for the warm welcome he had received since joining in June 2022. He especially thanked JC and the Board for their support and the expertise they offer to keep the organisation focused and on track. He also thanked the whole operational team who have so much to be proud of for what they have and continue to achieve.

The Chair thanked AM for the presentation and invited questions about the Annual Report.

JC noted a hand raised in Zoom and invited Dwynwen Stepien to follow up with a comment if

he had a question that he would like addressed by the panel.

The Chair opened the voting for the motion to adopt the Annual Report 2022.

Votes for: 43 (100%)

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 3

The Annual Report was adopted by Ordinary Resolution.

7. To approve the appointment of Directors nominated since the 42nd Annual General Meeting

The Chair confirmed that the Board proposed nominations for two Directors and that these were presented to the AGM for approval. Manpreet Sehmbi had been nominated as an Independent Director by the Board. Gareth Mahood had been nominated by the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland. Both Directors were standing for their first term of 4 years.

JC noted that British Canoeing awaits a nomination from The SCA following the end of Steve Linksted's maximum two terms. He assured members that the Board will continue to work with the SCA to secure a nomination and will bring this back to the membership at next year's AGM. In the meantime, JC confirmed that SL had agreed to attend the Board as an observer on behalf of the SCA.

The Chair invited Manpreet Sehmbi to introduce herself.

The Chair opened the voting for motion 7.1.

7.1 Manpreet Sehmbi – Independent Director

Votes for: 38 (97.44%)

Votes against: 1 (2.56%)

Abstentions: 6

The appointment was approved by Ordinary Resolution. The Chair congratulated Manpreet on her appointment to the Board.

7.2 Gareth Mahood - Director nominated by CANI

JC stated that Gareth Mahood had been nominated to be a Director by the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland. He relayed apologies on behalf of GM for not being able to attend the meeting due to a prior canoeing commitment in Northern Ireland.

The Chair opened the voting for motion 7.2.

Votes for: 35 (100%)

Votes against: 0 (%)

Abstentions: 8

The appointment was approved by Ordinary Resolution.

The Chair congratulated Gareth on his appointment to the Board.

8. To confirm the reappointment of Dee Paterson as President of British Canoeing

JC confirmed that DP was appointed President in March 2021 and is now standing for re-election. He noted that DP is eligible to act as President for a further two-year period in line with our Articles of Association.

JC invited DP to say a few words.

DP thanked everyone for their hard work that continues throughout the community and for those that encouraged her to stand again for a second term. She explained that the role of President was a voluntary position in which she hoped to be an ambassador for members and our community to help create more opportunities for people to engage in paddling.

DP encouraged members to opt for the Go Green membership option that helps to fund the river clean ups and environmental campaign. She also stated that inclusion is high on her agenda and encouraged people to think about their communities and how to get more people engaged. As a member of the National Honours and Awards Panel (NHAP), DP stated that it had been a privilege to see so many people being nominated and urged members to continue to submit nominations.

DP stated that she had attended a number of events in 2022 including the Canoe Polo World Championships and she also volunteered at the SUP World Championships where she had been delighted to see the first British paddlers medal in the discipline. At grass roots level, DP attended the European Club Polo Championships in Belfast and thanked the team of volunteers who had delivered the event to such a high standard.

DP declared that if elected, she looked forward to continuing to be an ambassador for the paddling community and always welcomed contact from members.

The Chair invited questions from members.

The Chair opened the voting for motion 8.

Votes for: 35 (85.37%)

Votes against: 6 (14.63%)

Abstentions: 2

The motion was passed by Ordinary Resolution. Congratulated DP on her appointment.

9. To confirm the appointment of Dave Spencer as Vice President

JC opened item 09 recognising that the role of Vice President is a position that recognises those who have made a unique and significant contribution to the sport either as a participant, coach or administrator, at national or international level.

JC invited DS to say a few words.

JC thanked DS for his comments. The Chair opened the voting for motion 9.

Votes for: 40 (95.24%)

Votes against: 2 (4.76%)

Abstentions: 2

The motion was passed by Ordinary Resolution. JC congratulated DS on his appointment as Vice President.

10. Acknowledgements

The Chair recognised the three retiring members of the Board; Bronagh Kennedy, Steve Linksted and Stephen Craig who had each served for the last 2 terms on the Board. The Chair formally thanked BK, SL and SC for their hard work and commitment in serving the Board.

The Chair in closing the meeting, thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution and for their continued work as part of British Canoeing. JC declared that he was looking forward to an exciting year ahead. He then invited members to remain on the call if they wished to partake in the informal Q&A session.