

## MINUTES

### **In Attendance:**

David Joy (DJ)	Chief Executive
Lee Pooley (LP)	Head of Coaching and Qualifications
Ed Christian (EC)	British Canoeing ECLN Representative
Doug Cooper (DC)	Scottish Canoe Association (SCA)
Jet Moore (JM)	Canoe Wales (CW)
Robin Gregg (RG)	Canoe Association of Northern Ireland (CANI)
Graham Lyon (GL)	British Canoeing Awarding Body

### **Also In Attendance:**

Natasha Devonshire (ND)	Coaching Development and Engagement Lead
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### **Apologies:**

Sid Sinfield (SS)	Performance Coach Developer
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### **1. Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks**

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed RG who joins CSG to represent CANI. The Chair thanked Peter for his contribution on behalf of CANI.

### **3. Minutes of the Last Meeting (No44), March 2021**

### **4. Matters Arising (Not covered by the agenda)**

The minutes of the above meetings were agreed as accurate recordings of the proceedings. There were no matters arising noted.

### **5. British Canoeing Board**

The Chair highlighted that the teams are leaving for the Olympics and Paralympics over the next few weeks. It has been a busy selection period, with challenge and appeals but final preparations are now taking place.

The Chair shared that the Board considered a number of fairly significant papers relating to the international events strategy. The World Freestyle Championships in 2022 and the Slalom World Championships in 2023 have already been confirmed. There are a range of events including marathon, slalom and sprint championships, as well as Paracanoe World Cups, which are being explored for the feasibility of hosting across the UK.

The Chair also shared that we are working with the National Associations to get formal recognition of SUP from Sport England and the National Sports Councils. Surf England was awarded SUP as a discipline in 2016. The Sports Councils have recognised the work we are already doing with SUP and hope that towards the end of the year, we will be awarded formal recognition for our membership and qualifications.

The Chair explained that the UK Agreement that determines the roles and responsibilities between the National Associations is being reviewed this year. Part of that is a funding agreement and how we jointly fund the UK agreements within coaching, for example.

The Chair highlighted that as a matter of good practice, we are reviewing the Board, externally, to see what improvements can be made and look at how members are nominated from the National Associations. The skills mix and diversity is under more and more scrutiny and we want to ensure that we explore the nomination process to ensure there is a good mix of representation.

## **6. Coach Award Review**

Paper circulated

LP highlighted that we were concerned about qualifications having a slow recovery after Covid but we have had the busiest May ever on record, with learner numbers up by 70% in some areas.

After a 3 year period, the Coach Award has now been reviewed with feedback from the Awarding Body, Delivery Centres, as well as Tutors and Assessors. The results are significantly positive in support of the Coach Award. The feedback demonstrates that the award represents the demands of a Coach. There were several recommendations.

Due to the level of sophistication of the award BCAB have engaged a levelling exercise with the regulators and this has now been recognised as Level 3 on the National framework. BCAB have offered recertification to existing candidates. It was suggested that Level 3 can be used for entry criteria for University, so this could be mapped to UCAS points.

It was questioned whether there is now an issue between the Level 1 and 3, but it is not a linear pathway so this change should not have an impact. It was suggested that this is a high direct entry point for coaches due to the level of sophistication. Coaching is a complex role and we should celebrate this, keeping the qualification as it is and if necessary, introduce supportive mechanisms to support people to obtain the entry level.

The Paddlesport Instructor review will take place next year so we can explore whether this highlights a need to bridge the gap.

It was also suggested whether more emphasis should be placed on guidance, promoting the self-analysis tool, to support people in their decision making of which qualification is right for them.

One of the review recommendations was to extend the ratios, aligning them to the environmental definitions, moving from a 1:4 to 1:6.

**Action:** LP to review ratios for the Coach Award and implement as appropriate

## **7. 2022 – 2025 Planning**

Survey and forum feedback circulated

The Chair shared that the actions in the shared slide deck have come from the membership engagement in England, as well as the work within this group. The next step is to refine the actions, look at what's missing or could be improved and the impact on coaches and providers.

LP shared that we are currently in phase 3 of survey analysis. There have been 7 workshops with the National Associations, Technical Chairs, International Group and Safety group, with broad representation from 118 people. A discussion with the Discipline Committee coaching reps is still to take place.

There was general support for the key actions, as well as lots of useful suggestions. After phase 3, another draft strategy will be produced which will go to the Board and there will be a further opportunity for the National Associations, CSG and any relevant working groups to contribute. Following the consultations, it is clear we need to highlight what is UK and what is English.

The group reflected on the consultations and thought that the comments received have been expected, no surprises, and lots of common themes across the groups. The group shared that the process has been really well received, people have been engaged and value being consulted.

It was clear that people engaging in the new qualifications and awards were very happy and satisfied.

The group were questioned about how we can improve the statements of where we want to be by 2026 and to highlight if there is anything missing.

The group discussed the following ambitions: *Provide high quality and value for money qualifications and learning opportunities for coaches, leaders and instructors.*

The 'value for money' statement was questioned about how you perceive value and this is often down to how low a Provider will put their prices. We should be proud of the quality of the awards rather than Providers needing to drop their prices. In the focus groups, people didn't highlight cost as the issue, it was more important to provide high quality. It was suggested to change value for money to accessible, as this opens up discussions about more than just money and includes diversity, etc.

*Better promote the existing opportunities and processes to those qualified and unqualified coaches who may not yet be aware of recent changes (UK)*

LP explained that this ambition is because we are still hearing a lot of comments from people who don't recognise the changes. The group agreed this should be in there and that it is broad so can link to UCAS points, national frameworks, not just about club community. It was suggested to remove 'recent changes' as it's now not recent.

*Create and promote club qualification bursary programmes*

The group highlighted that it is important that we can use bursaries in different ways. This will be a National Association responsibility, supported through Delivery Centres. It was suggested that support can be done in more ways than a bursary and therefore supporting the diversity and equality agenda.

*Improve the digital, online and eLearning offer for instructors, coaches and leaders to support their continual professional development (UK)*

It has been recognised that there will be a big push on our digital offer. We will be working with the Digital Team to look at how to make the BCAB library more accessible, easier to understand and navigate. We will continue to be aware of the digital and face to face balance.

*Strengthen the membership benefits for instructors, coaches, and leaders*

This should be a National Association responsibility. The suggestions so far are fairly straightforward, such as more comprehensive insurance packages and recognition.

The next stage would be to look at what the measures might be, what the key KPIs are and whether the measurement is throughput or satisfaction scores. The group suggested this should be both. There should also be a qualitative piece of work, with discussions with the same group over the four years, to get valid human reaction alongside the numbers.

Moving forwards, there needs to be diversity growth targets, in terms of gender, age, ethnic diversity. It was suggested to look at what other sports are doing and look at what the evidence is telling us. The next 4 years might be about getting accessibility in place, and then in the 4 years afterwards, when the culture has changed, we could put measurements in. The group agreed that more diversity is needed. It was suggested the important of monitoring who is accessing, online learning, as results have shown there may be more diversity of those accessing online resources.

*The paddlesport community will recognise and welcome the changes which occurred during 2017-21  
More instructors, coaches and leaders will be qualified.*

*Coaches and leaders working in clubs will be required to be qualified by 2025*

*There will be an expansion of the digital library and eLearning offer with large take up*

*Member benefits for coaches and leaders will be improved*

It was suggested to reword the first statement to look forward, rather than looking backwards. The second statement should be expanded to include full recognition of increasing diversity within the whole workforce.

Overall, it was suggested that these should be visionary statements.

The Chair thanked the group for the work done so far with the strategy and the input and conversations to help shape the future direction of British Canoeing.

## **8. Overseas Survey**

Paper circulated

In the previous meeting, there was a discussion around paddlers working overseas and the need to understand the landscape of how many people are operating overseas and how Brexit/COVID might affect these people.

We shared a survey for 6 weeks, which had 248 responses, of which 81 coaches/leaders were working overseas. Around half of this group earned up to £5k a year working overseas. LP questioned whether the next step is to look to get our qualifications recognised, although people would still require a permit to work in Europe.

LP explained that we are engaging with other federations who are having similar difficulties. The general consensus is that countries will recognise our qualifications, the difficulty would be to get a work permit. This usually requires someone to have residency.

It was suggested that what is needed is a central place where the information about working abroad, what permits you would need, etc.

**Action:** LP to consider appropriate mechanisms to inform UK residents of the requirements of operating internationally.

## **9. Qualifications in Clubs**

As discussed at previous meetings, we are considering in asking paddlers who are coaching/leading in a club environment that they would need to be qualified by certification, not experience. The aim would be to have coordination across the UK. We are currently in a unique situation compared to other governing bodies and we want to move to a place where people are qualified. It is now easier than it's ever been to qualify, with direct entry and APL.

The Chair shared that the intent is to explore this further. We realise it has the potential for some negativity. It was suggested to work with CAG to get some common understanding and statements about why we would want to make this change.

## **10. Code of Conduct for Coaching Workforce**

LP shared that CAG would like to review the Code of Conduct and the way it's delivered as a resource. CAG would like to make the Code of Conduct a requirement every 3 years, aligned with safeguarding and first aid. Coaches would not be up to date until they had completed the Code of Conduct and Providers would not be able to get course authorisation.

CAG also suggested that the existing eLearning and guidance needs reviewing.

It was thought that this does not fit with our educational philosophy and whether the Code of Conduct could be embedded into CPD or safeguarding, rather than adding another barrier. Equally, if this is seen as a tick box exercise, the learning is unlikely to have impact.

However, CSG do see the need to get better at reinforcing the behaviours of good coaching and find ways to do this to support learning

## **11. Awarding Body Update**

LP shared that significant capacity is going into reviewing BCAB quality assurance processes to be aligned with new regulatory requirements. This is a change to how our Delivery Centres have been working, so BCAB have been supporting the Delivery Centres with workshops.

The Risk Management and Risk Assessment eLearning is now available and anyone who is affiliated to British Canoeing can get the resource free of charge. The Assessor eLearning will be made available towards the end of July.

In the autumn, we will introduce a log in to the digital library. It needs to be decided whether this will be for all members, just those registered, etc. Consideration is also needed around how much this would cost for non-members to access. Once this is in place, we can trace this back to membership to understand who is accessing the library for a diversity perspective.

## **12. Any Other Business**

None noted.

## **13. Date of next meeting**

Virtual, 10.30am – 12.30pm  
9<sup>th</sup> November 2021