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**SUNDAY 31 JANUARY 2021 AT 09:30 – BY ZOOM**

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**MINUTES****In Attendance:**

John Coyne CBE (JC)	Chair and Independent Director
Mark Bache (MB)	Independent Director
Richard Boreham (RB)	Vice Chair and Independent Director
Stephen Craig (SC)	Director nominated by CANI
Clare Dallaway (CD)	Director nominated by English Forum
Bronagh Kennedy (BK)	Independent Director
Martine Kushner (MK)	Independent Director
Alexandra Lane (AL)	Director nominated by English Forum
Ivan Lawler MBE (IL)	President
Steve Linksted (SL)	Director nominated by SCA
Greg Smale (GS)	Director nominated by English Forum
David Wakeling (DW)	Director nominated by Canoe Wales
David Joy (DJ)	CEO

**Also In Attendance:**

Lisa Bryant (LB)	Head of HR ( <i>Partial attendance</i> )
Susan Hicks (SH)	Finance Director
Gareth May (GM)	Business Development Manager ( <i>Partial attendance</i> )
Sam Rankin (SR)	Head of Membership ( <i>Partial attendance</i> )
Paul Ratcliffe (PR)	Performance Director ( <i>Partial attendance</i> )
Barry Wade (BW)	Head of Digital ( <i>Partial attendance</i> )
Charmaine Gawler (CG)	Executive Assistant to the CEO

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**1. Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The Chair (JC) welcomed all to the meeting on the Zoom platform. JC remarked that it was the fourth Board meeting to be held remotely and thanked members for accommodating the earlier than usual start. JC advised that the meeting was being recorded to assist with the production of the minutes of the meeting.

JC confirmed that Sam Rankin (SR) and Lisa Bryant (LB) would join the meeting to present Item 06, the Staff and Membership Surveys. Gareth May (GM) and Barry Wade (BW) would then present Item 07, the Commercial and Earned Income update and Item 08, the Cyber Security report respectively. Paul Ratcliffe (PR) would then join the meeting in the afternoon to present Items 17, 18 and 19 - the UK Sport Paris Award, the Sprint Strategy and the World Class Performance Report.

## **2. Apologies**

None received.

## **3. Declarations of Interest**

JC advised that it had been pre-agreed that IL and AL would step out of the meeting during the England Talent Club Programme report to avoid any conflict of interest.

There were no further declarations received beyond those recently submitted on the annual declaration.

## **4. Minutes of FB71**

The Minutes of FB71 were approved as a true and fair record of the meeting subject to a minor revision to the wording on Page 10 under ICF Event Changes for Paris 2024 to state that “this meant a reduction *from* 330 athlete places to 318”.

## **5. Matters arising not covered by the Agenda**

### ***ICF Activity***

The Board were advised of the sad passing of ICF Board Member Joao Tomasini Schwertner who had died following complications of Covid-19.

DJ updated the Board on recent developments relating to the ICF decision to change the Olympic programme of events for the 2024 Paris Games. The Board discussed this and related matters.

There were no further matters arising. JC referred members to the Board action log noting that several items were being progressed by SMT colleagues and invited members to raise any issues of concern.

## **6. Membership & Staff Survey Results**

JC introduced item 6 indicating that the paper be taken as read and invited Sam Rankin (SR) and Lisa Bryant (LB) to present.

### ***Membership Survey***

SR presented the Membership Survey results, highlighting the following areas of progress;

- Just under 6,000 responses received, including an 11% increase in females
- Access to waterways and insurance remain the two main reasons for joining
- Nearly half are likely to recommend membership to their friends or family
- The average membership satisfaction score was 7.45
- Satisfaction is highest amongst recreational non-club members

- A membership insight research project was recently undertaken with stakeholders, paddler surveys and focus groups, the results of which will be shared with the Board
- There is more work to be done on the promotion of campaigns and projects, such as Clear Access, Clear Waters (CACW)
- Consider membership offering for coaches and leaders
- Building next steps into the 2021 Annual Plan including building knowledge of membership segmentation; membership development; content and digital strategy; and audience growth.

SR confirmed that the longer standing members were generally less satisfied with membership and this needed further investigation.

It was reported that a higher proportion of new paddlers could be segmented as using SUP and inflatable craft. Further work was being undertaken to understand the reasons why paddlers joined British Canoeing during the Covid pandemic.

The Board commented on the simplicity of the RapidJoin function but wished to see more signposting towards routes to competition across the disciplines. This would be shaped and addressed through the domestic events strategy developed by British Canoeing Events.

The Board briefly discussed the implications of further changes to membership categories. It was emphasised that these thoughts were at very early stages and would be brought back to the Board as part of the Strategy 2022-25 considerations.

The Board requested that further work was undertaken to improve the current website through the development of a secure members' only hub.

The Board agreed that a summary of the results of the membership survey should be shared back to the members for transparency and used to better inform member services.

JC thanked SR for the comprehensive presentation and commended the team work across the organisation to get us into such a strong position for 2021.

**The Board noted the contents of the report.**

### ***Staff Survey***

JC invited LB to present the key findings from the 2020 staff survey;

- 91% of staff responded to the survey, an 11% increase on the previous year
- Good progress continued across the majority of areas with many scores around 90%
- Good overall engagement with lots of qualitative data received, particularly in relation to workload and wellbeing
- The highest scoring questions were in relation to values, ways of working, teamwork and cooperation; ambitions and targets and overall contentment with employer
- The lowest scoring questions requiring further action were in response to wellbeing; personal development; and equality & diversity
- 78% of staff felt that their workload was manageable

- 99% of staff had a good understanding of British Canoeing’s values
- Good scores were achieved in response to our handling of Covid-19, highlighting the importance of teamwork during remote working
- 88% were highly satisfied with their job role and employer
- The three biggest challenges to working remotely were feeling a lack of social connection with colleagues; challenges in separating work and home life; and concerns around the athlete/coach relationship
- The three biggest advantages to home working were increased flexibility, reduced travel time and less interruption or distraction

Four key areas were identified as requiring further action;

- **Wellbeing** - wellbeing policy drafted and staff trained in mental health first aid
- **Staff Development** - Learning & Development Advisor appointed in 2020; Revised performance review process with emphasis on Personal Development Plans
- **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion** - EDI lead appointed in January 2021 to drive this area of work
- **Teamwork** - in light of the challenging working environment, important to ensure we continue working well remotely as a team

LB confirmed that the next steps were for managers to work within their staff teams to focus on the areas identified to help develop an overall staff improvement action plan.

The Board commended LB, DJ and the Senior Management Team for the outstanding results. There were several suggestions made as to how to improve staff wellbeing during the third national lockdown, including an increase in social and interactive activities. There was also a recognition that personal wellbeing is not just about the work environment and many people will have greatly improved their own resilience during this period. BK brought to the attention of members the home schooling resources available on the Severn Trent Water website.

The Board commended and thanked the staff team for the way in which they had operated during the pandemic. As a result of this commitment and hard work, British Canoeing as an organisation were in a good position going into 2021.

**The Board noted the contents of the report.**

## **7. Commercial & Earned Income**

JC welcomed Gareth May (GM) to the meeting to provide a summary of commercial activity for 2020 and plans for 2021, including proposals to engage more members in British Canoeing products and services, which would lead to increased revenue to invest back in strategy.

GM highlighted the following areas of commercial activity;

- 14 new partnerships were contracted throughout 2020 with only 3 terminated early due to the cancellation of the international event during the year

- British Canoeing had been shortlisted for the European Sponsorship Association Awards
- Key areas of focus within the 2021 Annual Plan were to secure headline partners for the World Class Programme and Go Paddling; and to increase earned income through the growth in membership figures, the ELearning Platform, the Delivery Partner Scheme and via Paddles Up Training.

The Board considered the feasibility, demand and complexities in creating an online platform to sell second hand craft and equipment within the paddling community.

An online entry system was discussed and it was noted that the Marathon Racing Committee and Slalom Committees had developed their own online entry systems which had been used for large events and the intention was to make it available to clubs free of charge.

**The Board thanked GM for the commercial update, the progress made, noted the contents of the report and endorsed the direction of travel.**

## **8. Cyber Security Report**

JC introduced this paper which had been requested by the Board at the previous meeting. The paper outlined the cyber security measures in place and planned within British Canoeing.

BW invited comments and questions from board members.

It was confirmed that plans to roll out cyber security training to the volunteer workforce were in development with testing underway.

The Board noted that staff receive regular training each year and this was frequently recorded and monitored accordingly. British Canoeing would be engaging a third-party security report on our in-house developments and once delivered, plans put in place to implement the recommendations for improvement. It was noted that a new developer would be joining the Digital team on 1 February.

Recognising the prevalence of phishing, BW reassured the Board that the overall aim is to further reduce our click-through rate of 1.1% on phishing emails and to firmly embed good practice within staff culture to reduce the overall risk of a phishing attack.

**The Board noted, endorsed and commended the progress made within the Cyber Security Report.**

## **9. Strategic Plan 2022-25**

DJ provided context to the paper reminding members that the consultation and launch of the new strategy had been delayed by twelve months due to the impact of Covid-19. The new Strategy would be presented for approval in December 2021 and launched in March 2022. Consultation with members would recommence in the first half of 2021. It is intended that

the Board will consider key strategic issues in each of its meetings during 2021, and consider drafts of the strategy in June and September.

DJ advised that some headline analysis had been completed on the membership survey around the 2022-25 strategy which had been completed in February 2020. Members confirmed their support for the same areas of ambition, but felt that greater focus ought to be given to the following areas; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), Environment and Sustainability, improving communication and embedding existing services, rather than more continuous change.

Further themes that emerged from this Member consultation included;

- Lack of understanding and alignment between British Canoeing and UK National Associations
- Concern that British Canoeing prioritises focus on elite athletes rather than recreational members
- Coaches have difficulty in getting the qualifications required
- Clubs needing more support
- British Canoeing is more than just canoeing and kayaking - must recognise the whole of Paddling community

The Board broke out into two online discussion groups to discuss the Purpose and Vision of British Canoeing into the next strategy.

DJ invited feedback from the two group facilitators.

The Board discussed the alignment of branding across both recreational and competitive paddling and how best to position any potential rebrand within the new strategy.

The Board recognised that there were outstanding UK v English issues to resolve. DJ advised that this would be discussed at the next meeting of the Board in March.

DJ outlined the process to consult on and develop the strategy over the next 12 months and this was welcomed by the Board.

**The Board noted the emerging Purpose, Vision and ambitions and key areas for future development for the 2022-25 Strategy. The Board approved the proposed process and timelines for the development of the new strategy.**

## **10. CEO Report**

### ***2021 ICF Freestyle World Championships***

DJ highlighted that there were growing concerns about the feasibility of the World Championships due to the risks and challenges associated with Covid-19. A decision as to whether the event will go ahead will be taken jointly with the ICF in April.

Currently several possible scenarios are being planned ranging from a 'normal' event with social distancing, to an event behind closed doors. A survey had been circulated to international athletes and Federations to determine whether they intend to travel to compete at the event. It was noted that the event could not be rescheduled in 2021 due to other calendar commitments.

### ***2023 ICF World Canoe Slalom Championships***

The first meeting of the Stakeholder Board for this event was held in December 2020 and everything is on track at this point. These World Championships will also be the World qualification Event for the Paris Olympic Games and will feature Extreme Slalom for the first time.

### ***Case Management***

DJ advised that additional legal capacity had been engaged to resolve an outstanding complaint. For several reasons, the complaint had since been withdrawn but the individual had however requested that Board consider several points that had been raised. The Board agreed to invite the Governance and Risk Committee to consider these matters and to respond to the individual as soon as possible.

DJ confirmed that there was work planned to further support committees around matters of governance. The importance of committee members submitting declarations of interest before any meeting was emphasised by a Board member. This would be referred to the Governance & Risk Committee.

It was agreed that a verbal update would be provided to the Board during the closed session at the end of the meeting, regarding a case involving a legal claim on British Canoeing.

**The Board noted and endorsed the CEO Report.**

### **11. CEO Annual Plan and KPIs 2021**

DJ highlighted the key headlines from the report.

The Senior Management Team (SMT) had functioned exceptionally well during the past year and is subsequently now stronger as a team. It was noted that the role carried out by the CEO has been changing over the last 12-18 months and will move again in the next 12 months, with an emphasis on becoming more externally facing and working to shape the environment in which British Canoeing is operating, as opposed to shaping the internal work of the organisation.

**The Board noted the report on the CEO Primary Objectives of KPIs delivered in 2020 and approved the Primary Objectives and the areas of new focus for the CEO in 2021.**

### **12. Finance Report**

SH updated the Board on the financial performance of British Canoeing to December 2020, highlighting the key headlines from the accounts.

### ***British Canoeing Events Ltd***

It was reported that preparations are on-going for the ICF 2021 Freestyle World Championships with the financial forecast showing a significant loss on this event, due to covid implications. The additional costs incurred by this are substantial and income will also be negatively impacted in areas such as ticket sales, commercial contracts and potentially reduced overseas competitor levels.

It was noted that following Brexit, British Canoeing would likely need to apply for a carnet agreement with the chamber of commerce detailing the value of business goods and services to transport equipment and craft into and out of Europe. It was agreed to inform the non-Olympic Discipline Committees of this new requirement.

**The Board received and approved the Finance Report.**

### **14. Statutory Accounts 2019-20**

JC invited SH and MB to present an overview of the British Canoeing Financial Statements for 2019/20, including the Annual Accounts 2019-20 and financial summary, British Canoeing and BCE Statutory Accounts, the Audit Finding Report prepared by Hays Macintyre and the revised Letter of Representation.

#### ***Financial Performance***

The yearend trading position for the central operations was a surplus of £542k generated from the growth in membership income more than offsetting losses in income within other areas including coaching, competition and events. As a result, the company achieved its sustainable level of reserves (£800k), now just £75k short of the Investment Level as presented within the British Canoeing Reserve Policy.

The consolidated cash balance had grown in the year due to the timing of the receipts of UK Sport and Sport England funding received in advance. It is predicted that the cash balance will drop within the next 12 months.

#### ***Discipline Committees***

Most of the discipline committees declared a financial loss during the year, due to reduced event levies and league fees, whilst covid restrictions have been in place. Those committees that did declare a surplus (Marathon, WWR and Freestyle) received British Canoeing grant funding that exceeded their level of expenditure. It was noted that the Canoe Polo Committee had made a significant loss in 2019-20 generated by a high level of creditors (£25k) detailed on their balance sheet. At the Canoe Polo Annual Committee Meeting on 30 January the Committee agreed the creditors number should be revised to reflect the actual income received in the year.

### ***British Canoeing Events Ltd***

BCE Ltd had declared a £17K surplus, generated wholly through retained funds following the cancellation of the 2020 ECA Slalom Championships. It was noted that British Canoeing had paid £25k to BCE as their NGB contribution to the 2020 ECA Slalom Championships. Rather



than return the £17k surplus funds to British Canoeing, these are to be retained to help off-set contributions to the 2021 ICF Freestyle World Championships.

### ***Audit Findings Report***

Changes to the audit standards resulted in more detailed testing and justification of the management estimate of the membership deferment and accrual calculation, as well as the Director's assessment of the status of 'going concern'. The Finance and Audit committee on behalf of the Directors completed a review and documented justification of the management estimate applied to the membership deferment and status of "going concern". As part of the change to the audit standards these will now be required annually. These were reviewed to the satisfaction of Hays Macintyre.

The high level of fully depreciated fixed assets was raised again and the Finance & Audit committee agreed to review all of our physical assets and write down appropriately and to review the depreciation policy.

A couple of minor housekeeping items were also raised within the Audit Findings Reports.

### ***Letter of Representation***

When reviewing the Letter of Representation last year, the Board had requested a formal declaration from members of the Senior Management Team to the representations contained in the letter. These have been obtained and SMT members have signed to attest to each statement where appropriate. These are held on file and available should Board members wish to see them.

MB conformed that the audit process had gone very well this year, despite being managed virtually, which had created a lot of extra work for members of the finance team.

JC welcomed the clean audit report and positive set of accounts and thanked SH, MB and the Finance & Audit Committee for the work involved.

A point was raised that the Board may wish to consider helping some of the Discipline Committees to get financially back on their feet again after a difficult 2020.

**The Board received and approved the Annual Accounts for 2019-20 and approved the Chair's signing of the Letter of Representation on behalf of the Board.**

### **13. Canoe Foundation Update**

SH presented the paper highlighting that the Trustees of the Canoe Foundation and British Canoeing had agreed some principles to guide its future working relationship;

- To align the objectives of the Canoe Foundation with the Clear Access Clear Water Campaign (CACW)
- To align all grant making to the CACW campaign and environmentally sustainable projects

- To initiate a 3 year investment plan to fund activities in line with the revised objectives of the charity
- British Canoeing to support in communications, administration, digital and fundraising, with the first step being a donation option added to the Go Membership portal
- The Head of Recreational Paddling, Chris Earle, to join the Board of Trustees
- The Foundation to fund a new role to drive the work of the strategy. British Canoeing to employ the charity officer, who will work within the Places to Paddle team to deliver the Canoe Foundation strategy and maintain alignment with the CACW campaign.
- A fundraising and PR strategy Invitation to Quote, had been issued with several proposals received.

It is intended to “relaunch” the Canoe Foundation under its new look and feel in early summer 2021.

**The Board noted the Canoe Foundation update.**

### **15. AGM 2021 Planning**

DJ introduced the report.

DJ recognised the work carried out to date by Nancy Squires (NS), James Unsworth (JU) and the Governance & Risk Committee and that planning was well on track for the virtual AGM to be held on 13 March 2021. It was noted that British Canoeing had contracted with Lumi and Conference Works to deliver the event. There would be a requirement for members to register attendance in advance prior to the event. Full details would be provided to members in the advanced papers, which will be live by 19 February.

It was noted that a motion had been proposed by members but had since been withdrawn.

It was noted that Clare Dallaway had been nominated by the English Forum to serve a second term on the Board and that this would be presented to the AGM for approval.

#### ***Presidential Election***

The Board noted that online and postal voting was currently underway to elect a new President and the final result would then be announced to members at the AGM in accordance with the Articles. It was noted that Members without email addresses had received the voting papers by post.

#### ***Member engagement***

It was recognised that the AGM is an important occasion for the members to engage directly with the Board and officers, but that the virtual setting would make this more difficult.

#### ***Changes to the Articles***

Changes to the Articles were being proposed this year. They all relate to providing for future AGMs, meetings of the Board and meetings of the company to be conducted virtually. These

changes had been considered and approved by the Governance & Risk Committee of the Board.

The Board welcomed the progress made towards the virtual AGM and requested that instructions to members for all aspects were very clear and that there was clarity presented within the papers about the right to hold the meeting virtually and vote virtually.

It was confirmed that British Canoeing was operating under the extended UK Government dispensation which allows for virtual AGMs and online voting.

**The Board noted the progress in the preparation of the Virtual AGM including the election of the President and approved the proposed changes to the Articles.**

## **16. Risk Management**

### ***The impact of Covid-19***

SH highlighted the key risks to the company which needed to be considered by the Board.

SH reported that Covid continues to present ongoing operational and financial risk to the organisation and that the various implications were being continuously managed and mitigated.

Due to the impact of Covid, our grant funding from UK Sport had only been confirmed for the next 12 months, rather than 4 years. This was the same for all NGBs and was part of the government Comprehensive Spending Review Plans which had only been confirmed for 12 months. The impact on the Sport England funding for talent and participation programmes was still unknown, but the risk to the grant funded programmes from 2022 onwards was evident.

It was reported that the discipline committees and RDTs were finding it difficult to plan for the 2021 season due to the unknown impact of Covid in 2021 and the longer term desire of volunteers to engage in the future. This was being examined.

Staff wellbeing remained a source of concern as outlined by LB earlier in the meeting. Managers were keeping in close contact with teams and the situation was being monitored within the wellbeing group.

SH updated the Board on the two further significant risks.

### **Lack of clear governance, management, process and training within safety management across the organisation**

Reported for the first time at the last meeting of the Board in November, planning to mitigate this risk was still progressing and needed to be accelerated. SH confirmed that additional financial provision had been included in the 2020-21 budget to implement the recommendations of the internal review.

### **Loss or significant reduction in UK Sport funding for sprint programme 2021-25**

This risk had been removed from the register following the UK Sport funding announcement in December 2020 as this risk has been realised. The consequences of the funding reduction were currently under review within the World Class Programme.

SH reported that there are also other emerging risks including retaining the membership growth and income from 2020 and risks already reported around the 2021 World Freestyle Championships.

**The Board noted and approved the risk report.**

### **19. UK Sport Paris Funding Update**

JC took Item 19 next in order to set the financial backdrop to the remaining agenda items. JC invited PR and SH to present the paper.

PR provided the overview of the UK Sport Paris funding Award offered to British Canoeing. This was made in the context of UK Sport not having the same level of funding as in previous cycles and needing to fund more sports. The funding award offered to British Canoeing was £15.1m across both the Olympic and Paralympic programmes, £12.1m for the Olympic programmes, a reduction of £4.2m and £3m for Paracanoe, an increase of £14k. The Olympic award is offered based on athlete places, with 41% of the award allocated to Sprint and 59% to Slalom. The Sprint programme funding was in line with the planning figure provided in 2020 and the Slalom offer was around 10% less.

The Paracanoe funding was around 25% less than expected due to the reduction in athlete places from 17 to 12. This was unexpected and contrary to the planning figures and discussions with UK Sport over the last 12 months. This award presents significant challenge and will impact on the potential to deliver the medal target in Paris and the longer term delivery in Los Angeles. It was noted that there had been no UK Sport investment committed to the new Olympic discipline of Extreme Slalom.

It was confirmed with the Board that we had indicated to UK Sport our intention to challenge the awards in slalom and paracanoe through the 'Representation' process.

The planning budgets in all three disciplines were very tight. There were significant budget reductions on previous cycles within sports science and medicine provision and under 23 camps. There was no funding to continue with the Eton Dorney high performance facility. The Board discussed the overall costs associated with funding the Eton Dorney high performance facility and the options available in renegotiating the lease.

The Board noted the disproportionately heavy financial impact on the paracanoe programme and supported the proposal to challenge this award through the representation process.

It was noted that only the first year funding had been approved and years 2, 3 and 4 were indicative figures subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review and future results.

### ***Tokyo Top Up***

In addition to the Year 1 awards, additional funding had been allocated for the costs of the delayed Tokyo games. These funds provided an additional £861k for the Olympic programme and £183k for the Para programme in 2021.

### ***British Canoeing Co-funding***

It was noted that within the Paris funding award, UK Sport had indicated a requirement for NGB co-funding for each programme. This was consistent within all NGB awards. Should NGBs not be able to afford this contribution, then some funding would be withheld by UK Sport.

In the planning stages, it was suggested that some of this contribution would be grant aided to those NGBs without large earned income, but this proposal was removed as UK Sport funding had reduced.

The Board discussed the principles of this matter in detail. It was noted that whilst the funds could be found in this cycle, they would be more difficult to find in the next cycle and yet the principle of co funding would have been set.

DJ advised that it might be expedient to look at this challenge cycle by cycle and the environment does change within this time period. The requirement in this cycle was affordable and if the next cycle was not, then it could be addressed at that time.

It was noted that the Olympic and Paralympic teams do help bring in revenue and profile across the organisation and that the management re charge to the programme in this cycle would be greater than the NGB contribution.

It was agreed to invite the Finance & Audit Committee to scrutinise the budgets and further consider this recommendation. It was noted that the final budget needs to be submitted to UK Sport in early February and this would include a commitment to meet the NGB contribution.

It was agreed that this should be identified within the financial report to members.

**The Board received and approved the Paris Award from UK Sport and agreed to consider again the issue of NGB contribution at its next meeting in March.**

### **17. Sprint Performance Strategy**

PR presented the Sprint Performance Strategy for Board approval.

He identified three key areas of the Strategy;

- The ambitions and detailed KPIs for the next three Olympic cycles
- The philosophies and values that underpin and drive the culture
- The action plans to implement the strategy

The Board observed that the Strategy was well written and incorporated the core components that they had hoped to see.

**The Board approved the Sprint Performance Strategy subject to any minor revisions emerging from the final meeting of the Strategy Group in February.**

### **17.1 England Talent Club Programme**

*[IL and AL left the meeting due to a conflict of interest]*

JC pointed to the paper that had been circulated to the Board seeking Board support for the decisions taken by the Selection Panel to recognise five clubs as Sprint Racing England Talent Partnership Clubs.

JC confirmed that he had been involved in this process as an independent and non-voting member of the Selection Panel. He confirmed that the Panel had managed a thorough and robust process in determining which five clubs should be invited to engage within the programme as Talent Partnership Clubs.

The Board briefly discussed the implications for those Clubs that hadn't been selected and noted that they would be invited to become Talent Club Associates, under Tier 2 within the funding model.

**The Board noted and approved the decision taken by the Selection Panel in the selection of the five Talent Club Partners.**

### **18. World Class Performance Report**

*[IL and AL re-joined the meeting]*

Paul Ratcliffe presented a progress update on the World Class Programme and highlighted three key headlines;

- **Programme Funding** - the team were preparing to implement the UK Sport Paris funding award from 1 April 2021 and were gearing up for the implementation of new events within the Paris 2024 programme. It was reported that Sports Aid had awarded a grant of £145k towards the British Canoeing 'Backing the Best' project.
- **International Planning and Competitions** - the team were focused on planning for the season ahead, including selection and Olympic qualification events. Tokyo planning had been reviewed with the BOA and BPA on how the Games would operate with strict Covid mitigations protocols.
- **Covid-19** - the day to day management of Covid on the daily training environment had presented significant challenges but the athletes and staff across all three programmes had dealt with those well and learned new ways to train within their

environments. It was noted that Covid had placed significant barriers on the pathway and Talent athletes.

On behalf of the Board, JC passed on appreciation to both athletes and coaches for the way in which they had managed momentum during these difficult times.

**The Board noted the contents of the World Class Performance Report.**

## **20. Committee Reports**

The committee reports were taken by exception with only the key issues highlighted.

### **20.1. Finance Committee**

No further updates were reported outside of the Finance report.

### **20.2. HR & Remuneration Committee**

No further updates were reported outside of the latest minutes that were uploaded to the Board Google shared drive.

### **20.3. Governance & Risk Committee**

No further updates were received outside of those matters already discussed.

### **20.4. Nominations Committee**

No further updates were reported.

### **20.5. Scottish Canoe Association (SCA)**

SL advised that the SCA had written a letter to British Canoeing in relation to the implementation of the UK Agreement and looked forward to discussion to overcome some challenges. JC confirmed receipt of this letter from the Scottish Canoe Association and confirmed this matter would be discussed at the next meeting of the Board in March.

### **20.6. Canoe Wales**

DW advised that at the last Board Meeting on 1 December, their CEO had announced that they would be leaving to take up a new role with UK Sport. The recruitment for a new Chief Executive was underway and Canoe Wales hope to make an appointment in February.

### **20.7. Canoe Association of Northern Ireland (CANI)**

SC advised that the CANI AGM was held via Zoom on 2 December. It was reported that membership figures were falling due to the latest lockdown restriction, since a large

proportion of the membership ordinarily renew in January. Coaching income had also reduced.

**The Board noted and accepted the Committee Reports.**

## **21. Any Other Business**

### ***ECA Nominations***

The Board considered and approved the nominations of Jane Gibson and Colin Woodgate to the ECA Medical and Slalom Committees respectively.

### ***British Canoeing Awarding Board***

JC confirmed that on behalf of the Board he had approved and signed the British Canoeing's Awarding Body Annual Report to the Quality and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

### ***Canoe Polo 2026***

GS reported that the British Canoeing Canoe Polo Committee had received interest from within their community to put forward a bid to host the Canoe Polo World Championships in Northern Ireland in 2026. It was agreed that this expression of interest would be picked up as part of discussions within the international events strategy.

## **22. Closed Session with Non-Executive Directors**