

JudoScotland Board Minutes

6 December 2022

Ref. 2022/8



Notes of the Meeting of the JudoScotland Board held on Tuesday 6 December 2022, commencing at 1830 hours.

Present: Marc Preston (Chair); Mark Brien (MB); Jodie Cox (JC); Susan Wright (SW); Graham Campbell (GM); David Gibson (DG); James McBeath (JMB); Gordon McCathie (GC)

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Judith McCleary (JMc); Tony Penfold (TP); Freda McNulty (FM); Sandy Hodge (SH)

Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest

1. The Chair welcomed Board members and thanked them for attending, both in person and online. He reminded members that the meeting will be recorded and deleted after the minutes have been approved.
2. No declarations of interest were stated by those present.

Leadership & Governance

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: 2022/7

3. The minutes were approved by GC and seconded by MB.

Rolling Actions Register Update

4. JMc highlighted that a Policy tracker and a number of policies need created. JMc and FM had hosted a meeting with Scottish Sports Association regarding their shared resource service and this is something that could be of benefit to JS, particularly from a governance perspective with policy tracker and alerts.
5. JMc mentioned that an Independent Director pack has been prepared and will be checked with MP before circulating.
6. JMc said that whilst the Articles had a significant review this year, the Corporate Working Group is aware there are a number of further small changes that will likely be suggested to the Board at a later date for approval 2023 AGM.
7. In order to support good governance and to progress the rolling actions, JMc highlighted that she and MP will be meeting before end Dec to put together an outline of key topics against the 2023 Board dates.
8. JMc communicated that the National Judo Academy account funds of approx. £17,000 have been transferred to JS bank account with the intention of closing the NJA early in 2023. JMc confirmed that Companies House has been contacted to remove existing named person with significant control and secretary, and her name has been added for these roles to support the process of closing the NJA.
9. JMc said that she will be meeting with the Vice Presidents next week to share some thoughts regarding Honorary role descriptors. She clarified that the role descriptors will be the decision of the Board and it is hoped to have drafts available early in 2023.

CEO Update

10. JMc said that it has been nice to get out and about in the judo community and following the AGM and investment request meeting, she has been able to focus on some other areas of work.
11. JMc shared her delight that JS will be receiving £7200 from sportscotland to support 2 coaches with coach developer resource. An independent coach developer will be recruited early in 2023 to work with the 2 coaches identified through the Coaching Academy and Performance Coaching system.
12. In terms of safeguarding, JMc updated the Board that membership relating to a recent case was permanently removed following the Disciplinary Panel's decision. The appeals window has now close therefore the decision stands. Another investigation is currently taking place with a panel in place. JC asked if the judo community had been made aware. JMc responded that club welfare officers have been contacted to advise them that if anyone turns up at their club, they should check their membership status. JMc said that it was not felt appropriate to publicise as per our disciplinary policy.
13. JMc said that the sportscotland investment meeting went well in her view, and that the challenge just now is the uncertainty of Scottish Government funding into sport / sportscotland. The investment decision for JudoScotland is expected in February 2023 which makes it very difficult to budget now for 2023. She advised that the budget for Jan to Mar 2023 is fairly accurate however she suggests that a budget review is brought back to the March board meeting.

14. SH updated the Board that the direction of travel for JudoScotland was seen as extremely positive. The difficulty SH shared is the re-profiling of Scottish Government funding so sportscotland can only follow the process as outlined. SH said that he feels there is good communication all-round and JudoScotland's investment ask was aligned to a well thought out strategy and was received very well.
15. JMc highlighted that she, TP and EB had attended a Home Nations meeting on 1st November and it had been a positive day with many shared objectives and overlaps across the 4 nations, and discussions about how to best maximise resources to support each other. There is the intention of having meetings a couple of times a year with meetings moving around nations.
16. JMc said that she and EB had attended the Commonwealth Games Scotland review and it had been mentioned that there is some potential financial support for sports that aren't in the Games but have the potential to be re-instated. One thing that JMc mentioned was that she isn't aware of how high a priority the Games are from IJF's perspective and that she would investigate this.
17. JMc shared that Commonwealth Games Scotland had noted that JS was 1 of 7 sports that had no female coaches at the Games. JMc has had a discussion with Gillian Jones at sportscotland with some very initial conversations about the potential of linking with some other sports to support women in leadership.
18. JMc communicated that it has been good to attend some external events including the Scottish Sports Association Leaders dinner. During the SSA dinner, the Judo Player Development Framework received praise from some other sports as well as another leader sharing the benefits and fun that her son has at his local judo club. JMc has also attended CEO SGB groups to discuss Charitable Arms and Sponsorship, both areas that JS has intentions to develop.
19. MC said that he had thought things were going to slow down after the AGM but there has been a phenomenal amount of work ongoing since as reported, and he thanked JMc and the JS team for all their hard work.

Safeguarding & Welfare Update

20. JMc advised that of the 2 cases referred to earlier, the newest is operating under the new Disciplinary Policy that was approved by the Board in October. The panel for that case has Colin Aitken as Disciplinary Secretary and a panel of 3 independent individuals.
21. JMc highlighted again that safeguarding staff is significantly under resourced. Colin Aitken was thanked by JMc for the additional work that he has provided over the last two months, and informed the Board that this will be recognised appropriately.
22. JMc informed the Board that the Disciplinary Policy will be added to JS website shortly. JC advised that there are a couple of minor typos to make before posting.

Board Skills Audit

23. MP highlighted that DG's skills have been updated into the Board Skills Audit sheet and asked JC to send hers ahead of the next Board meeting to be included. He said that there are clearly some areas where we are strong but we have areas we are lacking including EDI, safeguarding and welfare, business marketing & PR and high performance athlete / coach.
24. JMc shared that the areas drafted in the Independent Director pack highlight that expertise is required within Digital Communications, Finance (given succession planning for Graham Campbell), Safeguarding & Welfare and Data Intelligence.
25. SH mentioned that there had previously been talk about getting a youth voice and asked if this is something JS is thinking about. JMc said it hasn't been talked about in any depth but her thoughts were that this might be linked to the intended Young Leader programme.

Board positions

26. MP said that he had spoken to SW ahead of the meeting and asked if she'd be interested in being the JS Safeguarding Lead for the Board; SW confirmed she was happy to take this role on. The Board gave unanimous approval.
27. JMc communicated that SW also sits on the Equality Group which had a meeting earlier today. One of the things that is being progressed is signing up to the Scottish Mental Health Charter, and an action plan is currently being created.
28. MP said that he was aware that workload isn't evenly spread across the Board and had received feedback that people may have felt excluded from positions previously. He shared that it is the intention to make sure that everyone has an area that they are specifically supporting.
29. MP shared that a recommendation from KPMG is to have an appraisal process for the Chair. MP said he is an absolute support of this and believes it is good governance. Following an earlier conversation with JMc, MP suggested that the Board consider the Vice -Chair to lead the appraisal process with the support of the sportscotland Partnership Manager, and with feedback into the process from other Board members and Senior Staff. MP asked for the Board's thoughts; all were in

agreement with the suggestion. SH said that he could also involve a Chair from another sport to support the process from an independent aspect.

30. MP gave an update on the Area Director of Examiner role; he believes that an open process should be in place rather than being a role that is awarded. MP said that the recruitment has not been at the top of the list and apologised for the delay, although it was a conscious delay to allow time to review the role descriptor thoroughly. MP shared that a working group firstly reviewed the job role; this was TP, Jo Imrie and Paul McGuinness with Paul being a Senior Examiner. JMB raised that Paul isn't yet a Senior Examiner and TP confirmed that he is awaiting sign-off but is a trainee Senior Examiner just awaiting one more grading. BJA gave their approval and then the Job Description was circulated via the Senior Examiners in Scotland with some minor amendments following feedback. MP suggested that the Nominations Committee undertake the recruitment process following the closing date and make a recommendation to the Board. As it stands right now, the Nominations Committee includes the Chair, two directors (1 of which is independent) and Partnership Manager or someone similar; MP said he would personally like to see an interview but it would be up to the Nominations Committee. MP said the system suggested is fair, transparent and gives opportunities and he would strive to do that with every position. DG asked if 1 director could be a Senior Examiner as there are 3 on the Board at present; MP said he didn't have any problem with that but didn't think it was essential. DG said that he thought a Senior Examiner could help steer the interview process with knowledge of the role. GC said he personally thought it could put them in a very tricky position. DG said he thought the Senior Examiner could be involved prior to the interview and GC responded that is more about supporting the process and would be great to give feedback prior to the panel. MP said he'd keep everyone informed as this progresses.
31. Three candidates put themselves forward for the Vice-Chair role. MP shared how fantastic it is to have multiple people wanting to get involved. MP asked the three individuals; MB, GM and JMB to each spend a few minutes to talk to the other Board members about why they want the role and what their aims in the role would be. The candidates each did this whilst the other two candidates were asked to vacate the meeting. Following the three talks, the remaining members each shared their thoughts and provided a vote. A majority vote was in favour of GM as Vice-Chair. The three candidates were invited back into the room and the outcome was shared with congratulation messages from all to GM. It was noted by SH that no female candidates had put themselves forward and again, in future, we should consider how we can encourage women into leadership positions. JMc communicated that the Vice-Chair role, as stated currently in the articles, is until the next AGM and is something that the Corporate Working Group will review. MP thanked each of the candidates again for applying for the Vice-Chair role.

Disciplinary Policy

32. JC informed the Board that there some minor changes have been made and the table has been inserted at the end which JMc said was better from a user's aspect. JC said that it was good that we have a case running under the new policy to test it. JC advised that the policy goes live on the website and there was unanimous agreement for the minor changes. JMc mentioned that there is an existing Disciplinary Policy for staff and asked if the Board would approve it being renamed to distinguish it; all were in agreement.

Financial: current accounts to 30th Nov 2022

33. GC referred to some key things; assumption was made that membership would reach 70% however it is now 95% which is an incredible achievement. As a result, we have a surplus at the moment and expect to break-even for the year which is substantially better than what was budgeted.

Financial: Draft budget for 2023

34. GC reiterated JM's earlier statement that the budget will likely have to be reviewed in March due to sportscotland investment decision taking place in Feb 2023. GC said that nevertheless the annual budget as it stands is at an £18,000 deficit which is ok and manageable however events are at a substantial loss and he thinks this needs to be re-looked at and consider different ways of doing things.
35. DG said he had a thought in relation to travel subsidy and that many non JS events provide 30p per mile whereas JS offers 45p per mile; by reducing that, potentially it could make a saving. JMc shared that she thought it would be difficult to reduce a rate given the current shortage of officials and some other requests from officials such as greater refreshment provision, but would certainly look at the impact.
36. MP suggested that some 2 day events may be possible to become 1 day events. DG also stated that Inverclyde, whilst a good venue, is a significant distance and suggested other more central venues may reduce costs. JMc responded that this is an area already being investigated. FM said that fuel costs is only one factor and that we are very limited with venues due to varying costs and transporting mats; to take mats to Inverclyde was £800 one-way.
37. MB asked if we should consider a van purchase and JMc replied that this is also an area currently being investigated in terms of a replacement for the minibus and whether it may be more useful for the organisation to have 2 x 9 seaters or a minibus or a van plus a minibus for example.
38. MP rounded off the discussion by saying that the events cost is too high and that this will be need to be reviewed. JMc did say we also need to be careful that we spread events across the country geographically too. DG asked if sponsorship had been considered; JM responded that this development is underway but no revenue has been included in the budget for 2023. It is the intention to host hospitality for potential sponsors at an upcoming JS event. MP said that operationally, the staff team will review the events and come back with any reductions that can be made.

39. GC said that the Corporate Working Group recommend that a membership increase is made from effect from 1st February 2023. JMc confirmed that the fee increases would be £15 to £17, £24 to £26 and £36 to £40 which would bring approximately £17,000 additional income which has already been included in the budget. MP said that the Board should review fees annually and shared that he is very comfortable with the suggested increase. He asked for the approval of the Board; all were in agreement and this will be communicated with the membership.
40. JMB asked if the grading fees should be increased as he feels they are very cheap compared to other sports. MP responded that some clubs are opting out of the gradings and he feels the gradings themselves need reviewed first to make them more valued by clubs. DG reminded the Board that clubs often add a service fee of their own onto gradings costs so it is difficult for members to be aware of, and value the JS gradings fee structure.
41. GC said that on a related subject, the Corporate Working Group had discussed the Gradings Discount which hasn't had the planned impact of increasing the number of third gradings. JMc confirmed that this is an area that will require some figure breakdowns to help a decision to be made.
42. GC said that one thing he had been reminded of was that there isn't currently a lease in place for the offices. GC said he thought a lease contract had been signed by JS but not be EICA; this will be followed up by JMc who has already raised it with the EICA Manager.

Business Delivery Update

43. TP highlighted the soft launch of the Judomark which has taken place. It is being viewed as a club development tool primarily which supports the aim to have better run clubs.
44. TP shared this year's Coaching Awards which have been presented differently this year. The announcements were made at The Gathering with the awards presented at the clubs themselves where award winners were surrounded by their own judo community. The communications plan to provide press releases has come to fruition with a number of local press sharing news. JC said she thought the increased exposure was fantastic and by going into the communities, the reach and impact will be phenomenal. JMc said that it also links nicely to the feedback from the strategic consultation asking for greater connections with clubs and more visibility of staff locally. MP asked if it was a deliberate ploy to deliver the awards in this manner which TP confirmed, and shared how exciting it has been to do things a bit differently. SH commended Rosanna for the great job in terms of communications.

Business Support Update

45. FM highlighted the membership is back to 96% as of today and gradings are sitting at 8,500 currently for the year.
46. JMc said that there had been a question at the last meeting as to why the social media interactions were so high in Oct 2021; Rosanna had informed JMc that this was due to paid adverts.
47. MP asked FM about the membership renewal process; FM said there are very few outstanding that are expected to renew. MP shared a thought that it would be good to try and do a promotion to get membership back to 100% of pre-covid levels; FM said she would discuss this with Rosanna. JC highlighted that the content on social media is fabulous and knows how time consuming it is but the reach is worth the effort. MB said that the introduction of Telegram at the National Closed Championships had been brilliant. JC asked if Rosanna times posts to hit peak visitor numbers online; FM confirmed she does that.

New Club Application: Tora Judo

48. The Board unanimously approved Tora Judo's club application.

Performance Update

49. MP asked for any Qs to be directed to EB
50. MP asked if EB could come to the next meeting to give the Board an update.

Talent Development Update

51. MP asked for any Qs to be directed to GE and as with EB, suggested GE also attends the Jan Board meeting if possible. JMc said she would check their availability and if not possible for Jan, she would schedule them for a suitable meeting.

Dates for 2023 Meetings

52. 31st Jan, 7th Mar, 2nd May, 27th June, 15th Aug, 26th Sep, 28th Nov.
53. MP suggested that the Jan meeting is held online as traditionally, it can be challenging weather and travel-wise for Board members.
54. Following a discussion, it was agreed that there would be a mixture of online and in person meetings for 2023.

Close of meeting - the Chair closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.