

THE BRITISH JUDO ASSOCIATION ('BJA') ('ASSOCIATION')
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY 7 MAY 2022 AT 10:30AM
GEORGE KERR SUITE, WALSALL CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON,
GORWAY ROAD, WS1 3BD & VIA ZOOM

Present:

Rowena Birch	President	RBi
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Council Members:

Robin Newett	Northern Ireland Judo Federation	RN
Darren Dean	Welsh Judo Association	DD
John Malkinson	Southern Area	JMa
John Thacker	Navy Judo (via Zoom)	JT
Stephen Watson	Armed Forces (via Zoom)	SW
Matthew Clempner	Police Sport UK & North West Area	MC
Dave Allen	Western Area	DA
Jim McKenzie	Army Judo	JMc
Brian Davies	Vice President	BD
Sarah Newbury	Midlands Area	SN
Seth Birch	Yorkshire & Humberside Area	SB
Rick Kenney	JudoScotland	RK

British Judo Association:

Ronnie Saez	Chairman (via Zoom)	RS
Andrew Scoular	Chief Executive	AS

Apologies:

Dr Colin Draycott	Senior Vice President
Tony Sweeney	Vice President
Richard Barraclough	Vice President
Mick Leigh	Vice President
Garth Illingworth	Northern Area
Stephen Milne	Armed Forces
Marion Woodard	Southern Area
Dave Clark	Northern Home Counties
Denise Oates	Eastern Area
Nadia Minardi	London Area
Colin McIver	Sport Director
Joyce Heron	Deputy Sport Director

1 Welcome

RBi welcomed all attendees and JMa who was representing the Southern region in place of Marion Woodard. RBi also congratulated Sarah Newbury on her appointment as Midlands Area Chair.

Apologies were noted as detailed above.

2 **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 February 2022**

Minutes agreed as a true and accurate report of the meeting with the addition from SB under point 8 where he stated that it would be advantageous if all areas moved on to the same accounting period and enquired if it would be the intention for all the Areas to have the same accounting period.

Proposer: MC

Seconder: JM

3 **President's Remarks**

RBi highlighted that the Council is still using a hybrid system for the meeting and looked forward to the day when we would all meet face-to-face.

RBi had attended the European Championships in Sofia the previous week and it was great to see the success of Chelsie Giles and Gemma Howell who managed to become European champions.

RBi also commented on how well the team performed on and off the mat in very tense and difficult circumstances. It was noted that Kerry Tansey was given an award for her international work developing Adaptive Judo, in particular her work as Sport Director for Virtus Judo, improving opportunities for people with intellectual impairment within Judo, and helping to drive the development of elite sport for athletes with intellectual impairment. It was also a great success to see Lisa Rivers refereeing at her first major championship and being given medal fights in the final block.

RBi also attended several Strategy Roadshows, she found the sessions useful and engaging. However, it was disappointing in some instances where low numbers had turned out for these sessions. What was encouraging was the level of supportive input received and enjoyment from members.

RBi was really pleased to be involved in a Female Fighters Festival which had such role models as Karen Briggs, Jane Bridge in attendance and others which was driven by Sami Smithson. There was a variety of participants on the day, it really showed how special a day it was and illustrated the true heart of Judo.

4 **Chair's Report**

RS highlighted how positive the last quarter of the financial year had been and it looked as though we would have a very positive end to the year. We have over 90% return of membership when compared to the pre-covid level, which is a lot better than originally expected and was unbudgeted for.

RS wanted to congratulate all the clubs who had certainly pulled out all the stops in order to claw our membership back into almost pre-covid levels. We are currently recruiting three new Regional Support Officers with a focus on clubs and membership. This will be headed up by the new Director of Operations for Judo which will cover clubs' talent and a move into performance.

RS updated the Council on the strategy progress to date, we have had sessions for attendance in eight areas, one via Zoom and only Scotland and Northern Ireland remaining.

AS will cover off the strategy when he travels to Edinburgh to highlight the strategic plan process. As mentioned earlier the numbers were disappointing but there was a good quality of discussion, all individuals enjoyed the strategy map video.

RS highlighted that the Board would sign off the strategy later the following week and will plan a mid-point review in 2024.

The first meeting of the Judo Commission will take place on Saturday 14 May and this will hopefully give a much clearer distinction from the old responsibility of the Board to develop real Judo issues and problems on the ground.

There has been a lot of work done in advance of the Memorandum and Articles update, which will be in line with good practice and the Code of Sports Governance. The amendments will be ready for sign off by the Board and members on 12 November 2022 at the AGM.

RS wanted to endorse all the comments that RBi made in relation to the Championships in Sofia, adding there were some very competent and notable performances by Kelly Peterson-Pollard and Reece Thompson. However, there were some disappointments on the day. Overall 2 European champions is a very positive place to be.

5/6 Chief Executive Update

Attached is a copy of the presentation made on the day by the Chief Executive. Following the presentation, several questions/comments were raised.

It was pointed out that RS has been nominated to join the EJU Executive and will hopefully be elected on 17 June 2022. It is important to note that this is the first direct appointment to the executive since Densign White.

BD highlighted that Chelsie Giles and Gemma Howell had been supported by the Trust and it was great to see that those young athletes were reaching the top.

SW asked if the men's programme was a concern and if there were there any plans for improvement. AS advised that this was an area of significant work and had been identified by the Performance Advisory Group and the following activities were in place to ensure a more competitive group of male performers: splitting the male and female programmes; identifying a global Randori programme which would stretch the men's programme together with a much stronger coaching input. This is going to be reviewed on a regular basis and we will see the outcome of this in the business planning process.

RBi also noted that at the European Championships the men's team performed better than expected and that they are not that far away from competing on the world stage.

MC suggested that more weekly national Randori sessions could help this process and help stimulate activity in clubs.

7. Any Other Business

BD gave a short report on the British Judo Trust and stated that the Trust was in a good financial position and asked the Areas to look to see if they had any projects that may be able to be supported by the Trust. He also highlighted the Trust is prepared to work with other partners to support Judo activities across the country and act as a charitable arm for those activities.

It was agreed that a list of Council members and Areas contacts details should be fully viewable on the BJA website.

GM felt that some of the functionality of the new app could note areas for comment and feedback.

It was asked if the hijab head covering would be on the Judo store. AS responded that if Nike approved a version we would ensure that we have some on the store when launched.

RBi then closed the meeting announcing that in future the Council Meetings would be held face to face, without the option for Zoom. Although it was recognised that there were some efficiencies with Zoom, face to face provided better opportunities for effectiveness, focus and quality of meetings. It was also noted that the individual discussions before and after the main meeting were of importance. If members were unable to attend, RBi requested that they asked a suitable representative to attend in their place.

There being no other business than meeting closed at 13:45.