

THE BRITISH JUDO ASSOCIATION ('BJA') ('ASSOCIATION')
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY 17 AUGUST 2024 VIA ZOOM

Present:

Council Members:

Rowena Birch	President	RBi
Colin McIver	Vice President	CMcI
Richard Barraclough	Vice President	RB
Robin Newett	Northern Ireland Judo Federation	RN
Rick Kenney	JudoScotland	RK
Darren Dean	Welsh Judo Association	DD
Matthew Clempner	North West Area	MC
Seth Birch	Yorkshire & Humberside Area	SB
John Gibson	Northern Area	JG
Fiona Chan	Southern Area	FC
Jim MacKenzie	Army Judo	JM
Stephen Watson	Royal Navy	SW
David Rance	Northern Home Counties	DR

British Judo Association:

Andrew Scoular	Chief Executive	AS
Gerry Gualtieri	Chairman	GG
Justine Lynch	Executive Officer (Minutes)	JL

Apologies:

Dr Colin Draycott	Senior Vice President
Mick Leigh	Vice President
Tony Sweeney	Vice President
Brian Davies	Vice President
Nadia Minardi	London Area
Sarah Newbury	Midland Area
Dave Allen	Western Area
John Malkinson	Southern Area
Raymond Taylor	Eastern Area
Andy Moss	Police UK

1 Welcome & Apologies

RBi welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for taking the time out of their weekend to attend

Apologies noted as detailed above.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting on Saturday 18 May 2024

RBi raised the two actions from the previous meeting:

- Nigel Donohue (ND) to use full names of the athletes on his presentation – **Complete**
- Board members to be asked if they have any potential contacts to assist with initiatives – **Ongoing, AS to follow up**

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Proposer: RK
Seconder: MC

3 President's Remarks

RBi updated that she has recently been carrying out some of the nicest part of the role of Honorary President which had included presenting high grades to Allan Jones (AJ) and Chris Doherty (CD) both of whom continue to be extremely active in the judo community with AJ recently travelling to Paris to increase his knowledge and CD continuing to work with local clubs to develop them.

Also, RBi had a couple of weeks ago travelled to Middlesbrough to award an honorary 6th Dan to Joe Glynn (JG). It had been an extremely special event held in JG's dojo where many stories were relayed to RBi about how JG had changed their lives and continues to coach and mentor them in their later life.

RBi expressed that it is important to celebrate people receiving high grades as it is a lovely celebration of what they have given to judo and the difference it can make to people's lives.

RBi then moved on to the Olympics, adding that she had watched all of our players who looked well prepared, but it was of course disappointing not to medal. RBi also mentioned how many judo players had been flag bearers at the opening ceremony which highlighted what a an international sport judo is, with credit being due to the IJF.

RBi then raised the Paralympics starting in September where we have 3 men qualified and it is important to get behind ND and the team to support them and the athletes.

4 Chairman's Update

GG added to RBi's comments in regard to JG that it was important to support these high grade presentations that are important to the person and everyone in judo, adding that he had received positive feedback with a quote from JG "this was the best day of his life".

GG then moved on to the Olympics where himself and AS had a full schedule attending all the judo sessions. GG advised that he had met with ND the previous day who had advised that the Paralympian athletes are in good shape and ready to compete, adding that he, AS and RBi would be attending the Paralympics to support them.

GG continued that he had received a lot of input from various sections of the judo community on what British Judo should do post the performance at the Olympics, however it is important to remember that this is just one competition and can't just look at these results in isolation. GG advised that Katherine Grainger has advised that the results in Paris would not affect the UK Sport (UKS) or other bodies funding, they were more focused on understanding that there was a plan in place and clear path on the way forward. GG continued that there would be a full review in November with the Council also being involved, however there would not be a knee jerk reaction, decisions would be made on planning and analysis not just on a few disappointing results.

GG then echoed RBI's words in that now is the time to get behind ND and the team, who are of course deflated following the Olympics and taking the results very personally.

GG then advised that he had attended the National Teams competition, which he had enjoyed as there is a different passion which makes the competition special and only happens in a teams event. However, GG had been disappointed by the behaviour of some of the judoka, coaches and spectators which he would be raising at the August Board Meeting. GG requested that the Council also cascade to their Areas that this behaviour is unacceptable and not in line with our judo values and shows a lack of respect for our officials and volunteers. FC added that she had also attended the event both as a coach and athlete and whilst the behaviour had not been as bad as at last year's event, there was still some questionable behaviour and queried if there would be sanctions. FC also advised that Andrew Bowly (AB) had done an explicit and strong briefing prior to the event which had been the first time she was aware of this happening. GG thanked FC acknowledging that she had raised a good point in regard to sanctions that he would follow up with AB and AS.

5 Qtr 1 Business Plan 2024 to 2025

The Business Plan was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

6. Chief Executive Update

AS firstly apologised for the not providing the papers for this meeting more in advance, however it had been difficult to finalise them due to people attending the Olympics or on annual leave.

AS shared his presentation, with additional detail noted below:

- Business Plan: been revamped, however still work in progress
- Facility development: in discussions with Walsall Football Club and the University. The University are very keen for us to stay on campus and there is the potential to purchase some land and build a facility. Still a lot of work to do in regard to raising finances etc, however this is a long term programme with the aim of creating a real venue for judo along with a multi sport function
- International relations: have developed strong relationship with the French federation
- International relations: EJU elections are coming up later in the year for the President and his Executive Committee. In conversations, it is clear they would welcome a British Judo representative to the Committee. GG added that we are treading carefully as it is not currently known who will be also be running for the President role. GG added that he and AS would be travelling to Budapest to meet with the President in the next couple of months, but any decision on whether to join the Executive Committee would be subject to Board approval
- International relations: AS is participating in an IJF led project ahead of the LA Olympics which also includes representatives from USA Judo and Judo France
- BJC/AJA Affiliation: this situation has now settled down and we have engaged a solicitor to review/redraft the Affiliation Agreement. By way of background, AS advised that there had been an extremely historic agreement and we are now looking to align it with the Three Step Safe guidance and aligned standards
- Audit: been completed, signed off by the Audit & Risk Committee and it will now go to Board for final sign off. Clean audit with a couple of recommendations that have already been actioned

- Byelaws & Commissions: general update taking place and will go to Board shortly for sign off. There has been a few changed to the Conduct & Complaints Commission with the Chair and another member resigning as well as one relocating to Japan shortly. Interviews have taken place so new appointments should be made shortly and from that membership they will appoint a Chair and Vice Chair
- Staffing: mainly changes in the Marketing & Communications Department with both Katie Edwards and Lynn Madeley leaving, The department has then been restructured and Ben Pollard has re-joined as Head of Communications. Also, Jarryd Dunn has submitted his resignation in order to pursue a Physiotherapy degree at Wolverhampton University. Tim Ellis, previous Performance Operations, is now Operations Director and taken over most of the NGB Operations duties that Sajid Hussain (SH) previously covered. This has freed up some of SH's time and releases him to do other roles that will bring income into the Association, predominately at the moment with the Muslim Sports Foundation
- UKS and Sport England (SE): as GG mentioned, KG has made a statement in regard to funding and we don't believe there will be any change to the indicative funding figure provided and there was a slight uplift. Following the review, we will look to recruit new coaches and invest more in the pathway, which is also being supported by SE. UKS have also provided Wrestling with some addition funding purely for collaborative working with us so we will be working closer with them and it should also generate a small income
- Events: keen to support the Commonwealth Judo Association competition in 2025 and include this is in a month of activity next July. We have also secured the European Junior Cup for the end of July taking the slot that Berlin used to have which works out well for us in regard of accommodation and being outside of term time
- Home Nations meetings; Hold regular meetings with Home Nation CEOs and senior staff with a focus on collaboration opportunities with the challenge being prioritising them. We have started working on joint gradings in the same style with an agreed amount of money from each grading going to each Home Nation
- Commonwealth Games 2026: rumours are that it will be Glasgow with an official announcement expected imminently. The Games are likely to be limited to 10 sports and we are hopeful that judo has a good chance of being one of the sports and to facilitate this we have offered to provide the mats, care system and staff and to take on the running of the event, we would just need a hall which could also be used for wrestling.
- Head Office entrance: new main entrance has been installed for Head Office which is going to be branded and will provide us with more identify on campus
- Website: BP is driving a new website design working with Platform81. There will be a new look and feel with a members only area as well as a link the IJF site, due to be launched prior to the AGM
- Membership review: Karen Roberts and her team have commenced this and looking at a drive towards more direct debits, addressing the issue around gapping in membership, Home Nation coordination and rationalising the membership categories with recommendations being presented to Board at the August meeting
- Strategy: the current Strategic Plan comes to an end in 2025 so commencing a review process with a meeting at the end of November. Timeline is going to the Board at the August meeting. Plan is to take out to the Ares and involve clubs. The new strategy will incorporate what is needed for both the LA and Brisbane Games

- Club Welfare Officers (CWO): most clubs now have a CWO in place or have an action plan in place to appoint one by October
- Finding Your Feet: this is the learning to fall programme which now has over 100 coaches able to teach this and is gaining a lot of traction from external organisations
- Safeguarding: conference organised for later in the year. Also, we are now going to accept non face to face training which is a very positive improvement for coaches
- IJF Academy: we will be hosting the final practical week of this award for the 3rd year running
- EJU Junior Cup: for this event in June we managed to secure some grant funding from the West Midlands Combined Authority (CWG Legacy Fund) which also allowed us to purchase equipment we can utilise again
- Kata: really positive to see the increase in participation in Kata
- Olympics Fanzone: received very positive feedback from UKS and Team GB on what judo provided at the Fanzone. Thanks to be passed to the London Area who helped Nick Shepherd coordinate this
- Get Together Swansea: very positive feedback received from the EJU on this event
- Finance: difference in our dependency on UKS and SE funding to be noted, with the NGB contributing 43% of income in the first quarter (usually around 37%) which is due to the grant received for the Junior Cup
- Deferred income: membership income is split into 12 monthly slots and the deferred income is what sits on the balance sheet and is higher than it has been for a long time
- Balance sheet: approximately £10k been put into reserves. We have also invested £0.5m into a fixed term account which should generate between £18k and £20k over the year
- Membership income: tracking slightly better than the previous year and July is around £55k (£40k last year). Next key time is August as tends to dip that month
- Cash: good position and no risk to the Association
- Junior athlete performance: been some very positive results in the first quarter of the year
- Senior athlete performance: qualified 7 women for the Olympics but could only take 5 and we were not able to qualify a man even through a Continental place. Performance to note was Emma Reid getting Bronze at the World Championships
- Paralympics: qualified 4 men but 2 are in the same weight category so only 3 can compete. Unfortunately Kirsten Taylor was not able to qualify, got measured against an Australian judoka who got the bi-partie place. All of our Paralympians will compete on Saturday 7 September
- Athlete gym: new gym that has been funded by UKS and the University and a much improved facility
- Environment: working with the athletes on UKS initiative “Game Changers” which has athletes working in the community with UKS, our UKSI Lifestyle Advisor Esme Steele is coordinating this
- Athlete apprenticeships: we are looking at the potential of developing some athletes via an apprenticeship scheme working in the NGB

RBI thanked AS for the presentation and opened the meeting for questions.

SW raised the point that there are a lot of conversations already taking place following the Olympics and queried whether an update on the cycle review findings could be presented at the AGM as this would be a couple of months after the Games. AS and GC agreed with this suggestion and could be included in the

update at the AGM. GG added that it is not just a cycle review taking place, it is a review of all our activity but we should be in a position to share the themes of this at the AGM.

GG and RBi both reiterated that this is an opportunity to feedback and that the Council were vital in this consultation and review process.

AS added that a point on judo Olympic statistics – there were 132 countries participating in judo, 11 different countries got Gold medals and 23 countries got medals in total. The significant change was that Japan only got 3 Gold medals and France 2 Gold medals. GG added that having talked to other sports, judo is one of the most difficult to qualify for as others are based on time, distance and athletes knew if they had qualified months prior to the Games, whereas our athletes only found out weeks before.

7. Any Other Business

SW raised that himself and MC had recently been appointed on to the EJU Military and Police Commission. There had been an initial meeting which had primarily been the President welcoming everyone and stating his vision for the Commission. SW continued that the Hungarian Federation had a programme similar to Finding Your Feet, but also incorporating unarmed combat, that they are looking to push across other nations militaries. SW would be presenting this to the UK military, however he was not sure it would be accepted but MC felt more positive that the Police would.

SW also advised that he was keen to use the Commission as a vehicle to push the idea of an EJU police and military championships which he would put to the Commission at the next meeting, although the President and the Commission have already been advised. If approved, SW would be looking to arrange the first competition in the autumn 2026 and queried if he could lean into the British Judo Events Team for assistance. AS confirmed that British Judo would be happy to support where they could.

With there being no other business, RBi thanked everyone for their time and the meeting closed at 11.45am.