

FINAL
BRITISH JUDO ASSOCIATION (BJA)
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
HELD ON FRIDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2024 @ 16:30
MEETING SPACE 25, SCARMAN CONFERENCE CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
GIBBET HILL ROAD, COVENTRY, CV4 7SH

PRESENT:	Gerry Gualtieri, Chair	(GG)
	Alex Slade (via Zoom)	(ASI)
	Neil Fletcher	(NF)
	Paul Ajala	(PA)
	Garth Illingworth (in part)	(GI)
	Delia Wright	(DW)
	Marc Preston	(MP)
	Russell Brown	(RB)
	Rebecca McCreath	(RM)
	Lee Shinkin	(LS)
	Ben Quilter	(BQ)
APOLOGIES:	Diana Hunter	(DH)
	Nigel Donohue, Performance Director	(ND)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Andrew Scoular, Chief Executive	(AS)
	Karen Roberts, Development Director	(KR)
	Sajid Hussain, Finance & Operations Director	(SH)
	Tim Ellis, Operations Director (in part)	(TE)
	Andrew Bowly, Head of ISW (in part)	(AB)
	Ronnie Saez, EJU Executive Committee Member	(RS)
	Maddie Thompson, Club Support Officer (in part)	(MT)
	Ollie Bates, Young Leaders Group (in part)	(OB)
	Isabella Maw, Young Leaders Group (in part)	(IM)
	Isobel Everest, Young Leaders Group (in part)	(IE)
	Justine Lynch, Executive Officer	(JL)

No	ITEM	ACTION
73.1	WELCOME & APOLOGIES	
	GG welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised apologies had been received from DH and ND.	
	GG added a special welcome to MP, now officially a Board member, and to RS who was joining the meeting to provide an international relations update.	
	16:35: It was noted that GI was having travel issues and that the meeting should begin without him.	
73.2	DECLARATION OF ANY INTERESTS/CONFLICTS	
	Members were reminded of the need to declare their interest in any items requiring a decision and to remove themselves from such decision making.	
73.3	ANY MATTERS FOR ANY OTHER BUSINESS	

	AS advised that he had received a late paper in regard to the Promotions & Gradings Commission which he would raise in his report.	
73.4	MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON TUESDAY 27 AUGUST 2024	
	The draft minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting on Tuesday 27 August 2024. Proposer: RB Seconder: NF	
73.5	ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (NOT INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA)	
	AS provided a brief overview of actions that have progressed since the August meeting not included in Chief Executive or Chair reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England Areas Review: AS now has a meeting arranged with the consultant, Kerry Merrill; • Draft Affiliation Agreement for BJC and AJA received from Brabners solicitors for discussion with them by AS and KR; • AS has contacted Martin Poijer EJU in regard to information on European federations in preparation for the Strategy Meeting on 30 November; • Looking at using a UKS diversity reporting tool for staff; • Membership price increase to be introduced from April 2025 to keep in line with the launching of direct debits for membership fees. 	
73.6	RISK REGISTER	
	AS provided an update on UKS funding in that we would receive confirmation of our award on 16 December. Also, UKS had received an additional £9m pa funding in the Government budget. Some of this may be for athlete support but awaiting more information on whether there will be additional funding for NGBs. AS also noted the positive news of being awarded the Commonwealth Games in 2026 and there may be some additional funds to apply for from April 2025 for non centralised athletes. Finally, AS provided more detail on the two new risks had been added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University are looking to redevelop the campus over the next 3 to 4 years. They have made an agreement with us that we will still have a place on campus however there is concern around the timing coinciding with Olympic preparation • Budget 2025/26: Although our funding settlements are good, they are flat so in real terms there is a reduction. Also, the recent NI increases announced in the Government budget would have a significant impact. Currently unclear where we can make cuts so need to look at generating income. The membership fee increase has already been factored in. Revised budget will go to the Audit & Risk Commission for discussion. 	
73.7	YOUNG LEADERS GROUP	
	10:15: MT, OB, IM and IE joined the meeting via Zoom.	

	<p>AB introduced MT, who is part of the support team for the Young Leaders Group, and the three members of the Young Leaders Group. Their action plan had been circulated with the Board papers.</p> <p>IE advised that she felt the Young Leaders Group was important as it gives younger people a voice and makes them feel heard. IE continued that they would like to talk through a few points from their action plan.</p> <p>IE raised the issue of being able to make young people aware of where they could access physio when injured at an event or their club. Also, finding the treatment and support to come back to the sport after injury can be difficult. The suggestion is that an injury report card is issued that could be taken to a GP in order to get advice on how to move forward.</p> <p>KR advised that we are currently working with a company called Podium Sport who are setting up a system that will link to a GP.</p> <p>Action: KR to invite IE to join the next meeting with Podium Sport</p> <p>OB advised that he had joined the Young Leaders Group earlier in 2024 and was really enjoying being part of it. OB raised the Moral Code and whilst they were not looking to change it, they would like to create a shorter version in language that younger people would understand. OB sought approval from the Board.</p> <p>Decision: The Board unanimously supported the proposal to draft a Moral Code that was in more accessible language for younger people</p> <p>IM wished to raise two points. Firstly, reinstating promoting judo in schools to engage more teenagers and suggested utilising Olympic, Commonwealth or younger athletes as it was good to have inspirational people visible. Secondly, the adult behaviour at competitions and to emphasise that it should be a kind, safe and caring environment that is positive for young judoka without pressure and to remember that it is about the sport being enjoyable not just about competition.</p> <p>GG agreed that it was a great idea to look into getting judo into schools. KR added that the Department of Education are currently reviewing the whole curriculum.</p> <p>Action: KR to provide OB, IE and IM with link to the Department of Education in order for them to input their feedback/personal experience into the curriculum review.</p> <p>GG advised that there have been discussions around adult behaviour at competitions and there is a communication being put together that is aimed at adult coaches, parents and judoka.</p> <p>GG thanked OB, IE and IM for taking the time to join the Board meeting, adding that it is important for the Board to receive their feedback. At 17:05 MT, OB, IE and IM left the meeting.</p>	<p>KR</p> <p>KR</p>
--	---	-----------------------------------

	<p>AB raised having a member of the Young Leaders Group attending all Board meetings, however it was felt that attending 2/3 meetings a year would be more appropriate.</p> <p>Action: Include Young Leaders Group on the Annual Board Agenda for 2/3 meetings in 2025 and going forward.</p>	AS/JL
73.8	SAFEGUARDING UPDATE & TRAINING	
	<p>AB provided a verbal overview of his presentation, which would be added to the Board papers on AdminControl following the meeting.</p>	
73.9	CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE	
	<p>GG updated that he and AS had attended the JudoScotland Gathering which had been really well attended and very professionally run event. Also, it was great to see Shohei Ono and Takanori Nagase there. GG passed on his thanks to MP and JudoScotland.</p> <p>GG moved onto the online sessions that had been conducted with club coaches as part of the Paris cycle review and consistent themes were raised around more judo in the Areas and more team events. There had also been a session with coaches that have athletes in the programme which had at times been quite lively. One of the key things that came across was a desire to be communicated with and listened to so need to get to a point where there is a formal process for these coaches to be involved. Overall the session had been positive and the outcomes had been captured which TE would be circulating.</p> <p>There was further discussion with key points noted below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the next steps to address issues raised; • Piece all of the information together and create action points; • Maintain the collaboration with the wider group of coaches; • Entry point into the World Class Performance Programme, engagement and understanding when the fighters come in; • How selections are gauged and how to get funding when fighters are not based at the National Training Centre; • Request for more flexibility and better communication; • Recognition that there needs to be a different approach in regard to development and the talent pathway; • Want to see improvements on the preparation for Los Angeles 2028 but more about peaking at Brisbane 2032; • Strategy day also about increase membership and therefore increasing numbers in the pipeline; • Consider what we learnt from the previous strategy, did we err from it. <p>Action: Produce guidance on subjects to be covered/not covered for the Strategy Meeting on Saturday 30 November.</p> <p>Home Nations Updates JudoScotland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delighted that judo is to be included in the Commonwealth Games 2026; • JudoScotland Gathering had been a great success with 240 judoka on the mat. The AGM also took place over the same 	AS/GG

	<p>weekend which meant that it was a coming together of Board directors, staff and members;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following feedback from members that they don't know what the Board do, JudoScotland piloted a live stream Board Meeting this year; • Articles have been amended to allow for live stream AGM; • Membership has fallen to 8.2k so will not make this year's target of 8.8k; Looking at direct contact with lapsed membership of 3.5k and pushing more members on to direct debits • Obtained funding for 8 clubs for Judo Girls Rise project out of 13 that put themselves forward; • Reviewing the Board membership portfolio and looking to assign specific roles to each Board member that they take control of; • 3 Step Safe programme is being implemented into clubs and schools; • Been shortlisted in to the top 3 for Governing Body of the Year in Scotland. <p>Welsh Judo Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lucy Scott is currently off, Chris Emsley, Chair, has stepped in to support; • There are some challenges at the moment with funding cuts so a budget review is underway. <p>Northern Ireland Judo Federation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport NI have signed off on the funding but it has not been received as yet; • Producing a Memorandum of Understanding between NIJF and Ireland Judo <p>GI then provided an update on the England Areas Review, in that all Area Chairs have now been in contact with 8 of the Areas having had their interviews with the consultant and consultations taken place with 7 of the Area Committees, further Area scheduled for the following week. The consultant has also met with KR, SH and Matt Divall with a meeting scheduled with AS. The survey that was issued to clubs has received 168 responses but the survey has not been circulated to members as yet.</p> <p>Action: GI to submit England Areas Review report 10 days prior to the 30 November Strategy Meeting</p>	GI
73.10	INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS UPDATE	
	RS provided a verbal overview of his presentation which would be added to the Board meeting papers on AdminControl following the meeting,	
73.11	CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE	
	<p>AS opened with seeking ratification from the Board for the proposed appointments to the following Commissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotions & Gradings Commission and High Grades Panel • National Referees Commission • Conduct & Complaints Commission • Coaching Commission 	

	<p>Decision: The Board unanimously ratified all Commission appointments</p> <p>AS then provided a brief overview of the other points in his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commonwealth Judo Association (CJA) had approached us about hosting their 2026 championships, however it had costed out too expensive. AS has informed the Chair of the CJA; • Been asked to host a EJU Cup, however we would require 300 entries to just break even. There was further discussion around the increased international visibility this would provide; looking at getting event sponsorship, however this is complex and requires lengthy relationship building; run as a British Open; would address comments about fighting in front of a home crowd; already run events programme at a deficit of £140k; look at building this in to the budget for future years; combine a junior and senior event <p>Action: There was agreement from the Board for the possibility of hosting a EJU Cup to be researched further and revert back to Board for further discussion.</p> <p>Two further recommendations were presented by AS for ratification.</p> <p>Decision: The Board unanimously approved the Honorary Life Membership for John Thacker who meets all of the requirements.</p> <p>Decision: The Board unanimously agreed the approach outlined in AS's report in regard to a recognition certificate for honouring achievements in judo outside of Dan Grades.</p>	AS
73.12	FINANCE UPDATE	
	<p>SH provided the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership income under budget by £5k and gradings and education income by £11k – will struggle to hit target set for end March 2025; • Deferred income is accumulating steadily; • Humble Warriors Campaign was expensive and did not realise the 3k members predicted. GG added that this was not launched and run properly. AS advised that this was now being picked up by Ben Pollard (BP) for re-launch with a stronger campaign around it; <p>In regard to the strategy going forward, SH advised there would be a review of where we are spending our money and what provides the best return, which may not always be financial. There was also a need to factor in potential funding cuts from Sport England in a few years time. GG agreed that it is the correct approach to look at return on investment.</p> <p>RMc raised making it clear which funds are ringfenced. AS advised that we have three pots of money: UKS which is for Performance; Sport England which is for Development; and income from membership. SH added that the membership income is just under £1m and need to consider how we would spend that £1m if we did not have the UKS and SE funding. KR added that we have to change our approach if want to</p>	

	increase membership and promote judo as an educational activity not just a sport. DW further added it would be good to see what a good budget/spending allocations would look like ahead of the strategy meeting.	
73.13	DEVELOPMENT UPDATE	
	<p>KR's report was taken as read with the following additional comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking to draw attention to 3 Step Safe as believes this will be a good selling point for the sport in the future; • The Coach Register is due to go live the following Monday, presuming that the new website is stable; • 7 out of the 9 England Areas have now submitted their Qtr 2 reports which KR and GI are reviewing and looking at how they are investing the money they receive in rebates; • Looking at more ways to showcase judo. 	
73.14	OPERATIONS UPDATE	
	<p>TE provided further updates on his report below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Office front door now complete and looking at branding; • Tom Llewellyn has joined as Media & Communications Officer, setting in well; • Staff Survey has been rolled out and was separated between Head Office and Performance staff. Responses are anonymous. A summary of the responses will be ready for the next Board meeting; • Looking at how Performance record their leave as they are not using BreatheHR which causes discrepancies when producing reports; • Had to submit an environmental impact report to SE and looking at what we can do to actively offset our carbon. More about small wins as main issue is the amount of travel which is out with our control; • Run a test of the new clothing brand with our adaptive squad. Joined up with Team Elite and Adidas and looking for it to return a small profit to assist with non-ringfenced money. AS added that this will be promoted to clubs as they will be able to personalise the clothing; • New website has been launched with some small teething issues being worked through; TE wished thanks to be noted to BP for delivering this within 5 months. Positive comments also noted in regard to feedback on social media; accessibility; and ReciteMe tool. DW further commented that this would now be a good time to start tracking the metrics which would also be a benefit when looking to obtain sponsorship as potential sponsors will be interested in the data from across all social media platforms; • Looking to progress the Humble Warriors Campaign, DW and RMc confirmed they would be happy to assist with this; • The World Anti-Doping Association have released their new list of prohibited substances and guidance which TE and PA would be reviewing. Would be considering whether there should be an addition to the Risk Register in regard to this. 	
73.15	PERFORMANCE UPDATE	
	With apologies received from ND, his report was taken as read.	

	TE mentioned that Ian Johns has been nominated by the Paralympians for Coach of the Year for his work with them and with the pathway. We will find out in December if he has won.	
73.16	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	With there being no items for Any Other Business, GG thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 19:30.	