



In Attendance	Clare Queen	COO/Head of Pathways (CQ)
	Barry Cook	Partnership Manager, sportscotland (BC)
	Jacqui Dunlop	Minute Taker

	Item	Action
1	Introduction 1.1 <u>Welcome and Apologies for Absence</u> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were intimated on behalf of Scottish Fencing Directors Moya Nelson, Paul Vaughan and Stan Stoodley 1.2. <u>Declaration of conflicts of interest</u> There were no new conflicts of interest declared.	
2	Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising 2.1 <u>Review of Minutes of 15 November 2023</u> The minutes of 15 November 2023 were unanimously approved. 2.2 <u>Matters Arising</u> It was agreed that most actions were completed from the minutes of 15 November 2023 with the exception of: a) <u>Bank Account</u> – CW agreed to liaise with LA on new Bank Account. b) <u>Skills Audit and Self-Appraisal</u> – HK agreed to arrange a Board Skills Audit and Self-Appraisal c) <u>Foundation Coaching Course</u> - CQ agreed to circulate a draft to the Board. d) <u>Coaching Outline</u> – CQ and GL agreed to produce a Coaching Outline programme. e) <u>Work with British Fencing on Project</u> – CQ reported that she had a call with British Fencing with the identified project likely to be a U14 Pathways piece. This will be carried forward to CQ’s successor. f) <u>Organise Competition Sub-Group</u> - Sam McLellan had indicated he would be interested in supporting the group and GDL agreed to contact him. (Action GDL)	CW HK CQ CQ/GL CQ GDL

3

Board Look Ahead

GDL gave a summary of Scottish Fencing's activity over 2024 as follows:

Effective Organisation:

- Completion of migration to new SharePoint structure.
- Recruitment of new COO – interviews taking place 9 February.
- Revision of Strategy – including consultation, feeding into next investment cycle with submission to sportscotland in October.
- Election of Directors – HK and GDL at end of their maximum terms; SS and MM at end of first term; Independent Directors GL and JS appointed for four-year term in 2021; CW appointed in 2022 for four-year term.
- Succession planning.
- Encouragement of clubs to engage and work towards best practice.
- Changes to implementation of the PVG Scheme.
- Compliance with anti-doping requirements.
- New Equality Standard.
- New Audit system, previously KPMG but new audit will consider culture.
- Equipment refresh, including planning for office IT.

Changing Lives

- Continuing Easterhouse Project.
- Developing Firhill Project.
- Looking at further projects.

Events

- Delivery of core events.
- Encouragement of Development Activities.
- Events Working Group.
- Commonwealth Cadet and Junior Championships.
- Senior five-nations' match.

Pathway

- Pathway Development.
- Volunteer Development.
- Expansion of Disability Fencing.

It was noted that items have different weightings and some will have more focus throughout the year. With three staff members, reducing to two in the short term, and a volunteer Board, careful consideration has to be given to how everything is managed.

4.	Director Updates Directors who were present were asked to give a brief update on their portfolios. JS sought clarification on the Directors submitting reports which would be read in advance and then any questions would be taken. GDL noted that there had not been much engagement with regard to submitting the reports and in order that the Board was updated suggested that verbal reports be given. HK noted that it was a difficult time of year with the Christmas break, the COO leaving. Governance – HK would work on the Board Appraisal. Succession Planning would also be a focus but this will be more towards the middle of the year. He was also re-writing and would implement the Board training Policy. Development – CQ reported that a meeting was held at the Pheonix last week and CQ will circulate a paper which will also include a review of the activity from September to December. A positive meeting had been held with Kevin Pringle, CEO of Basketball Scotland. CQ suggest that it would be beneficial for JS, MM and Daniel to have a catch up. Equality – MM reported that she and CQ had been on a call about the new Standards with the new framework being more than a tick-box exercise, instead should be embedded in the culture of a sport. There needed to be communication to the wider membership on the good work which was being done by Scottish Fencing on inclusion and also to ensure that it was embedded in the clubs as well as the governing body. There was a resource hub on sportscotland's website and Scottish Fencing would be in the second cohort to go through the new framework. It was noted that the inclusion framework would be incorporated in the revised strategy. CQ noted that, with her leaving, the self-assessment tool and action plan could be done whilst there was no-one in post but suggested that engaging with mentors waited until her successor is appointed which may mean being in a later cohort. BC agreed that there were exceptional circumstances and would speak to Alison Lunn at sportscotland who was leading the project.	
5.	sportscotland Update BC reported that a good piece of work had gone into the recruitment for the COO/Head of Pathways post, which would be a like-for-like recruitment. The advert was live, with a few enquiries received. The Annual Return and Tracker were currently being worked on with the submission date the end of January. BC updated on the Active Campus Network, which was a partnership with SSS, with a number of co-ordinators being appointed through colleges, with 18 being deployed so far. This would be similar to Active Schools. CQ noted that she had met with Stew Fowlie from SSS in November and had been given contacts who could support with the Phoenix Project. BC noted that there would be gap between CQ leaving and the new person being in post and work was ongoing on how to bridge this gap.	

6.	Finance Update Finance reports were circulated. CW noted that the projection for the end of this financial year was a small loss of £1,500 which was a worst-case scenario, with a lot of budgeted figures likely to come in lower. CW noted that there was now a spreadsheet used when budgeting for events which would allow for clearer budget planning ahead of each event. Membership income was £13,000 and overheads were £14,000: CW noted that Scottish Fencing should be looking for the income from membership to cover the overheads, which it hadn't for the last few years. The performance programme was breaking event and Development work was showing a bit of profit. Effective Organisation budgets were expected to break even this year, with the £1,500 deficit a worst case. The cash balance at the end of the year was £65,000 which covered reserves. Tax was required to be paid in December, and CW explained that Scottish Fencing made losses for a few years and the tax deficit was retained, but this is exhausted now so if there is a profit the organisation would be liable for tax. BC noted that sportscotland would normally try and recover the savings in staff salary savings whilst there was a gap but if someone was covering it all, or part this will be considered.	
6.	Submitted Papers Approval of 2022/2023 Accounts – as the meeting was not quorate CQ agreed to send them around the Board for approval. CW noted that due to delays by French Duncan, there was an extension until the end of March to submit the accounts.	CQ
7.	Standing Reports COO/Head of Pathways CQ submitted a report, the two-month summary was noted as: SF Membership Number at 1st January 2024: 919. Cash at Bank (From Xero/Paypal) 12th January: c.£116,603. Sportscotland annual return in progress, deadline 26th January. SF Club Welfare audit completed. Now cross-checking coach register with active coaches. SF AGM completed. SF Awards took place alongside the AGM, engagement was disappointing. Successful delivery of Senior Five-nations' Match at Inverclyde. Scottish Open delivered successfully, new venue of The Peak, Stirling received positive feedback. Scottish Open featured a seated event for the first time. Completion of the reorganization of SharePoint would be a priority ahead of her departure. British Fencing delivered the Wheelchair World Cup in Cardiff. They had been able to access wheelchair frames and funding for clubs. Braveheart and Dunedin both had wheelchair frames on loan from British Fencing, and Scottish Fencing had one to loan to Orkney, with one further frame available.	

	Viv Mills and Beth Davidson would also be coming to Scotland to deliver Wheelchair Fencing coaching CPD. HK asked how many wheelchair fencers there were in Scotland; CQ confirmed that currently there were three. CQ had been liaising with Scottish Disability Sport regarding including Fencing in their programmes was that there had been no clubs to feed participants to, so with the new CPD and access to wheel frames this should enable the community to grow. Safeguarding A safeguarding report was submitted. HK asked if Scottish Fencing was going to be able to handle the changes which will be required in the PVG scheme and CQ noted that it remained still a bit of an unknown with further meetings being held. BC noted that sportscotland didn't have the expertise needed, so Children 1st and Harper Macleod were dealing with this, with six workshops being run with governing bodies and a list of questions being collated for Harper Macleod. HK was concerned about the resource implications, and noted that sportscotland needed to recognise that any changes required may have an impact on staff resource. BC noted that once the legal implications were worked through, and governing bodies decided the best way to action, then there would be a better understanding of the resources required, but he had noted the implications. HK asked if the safeguarding audit illuminated the point of absence of cases as being procedural or if there were no cases. CQ explained that she felt there was not a strong enough culture of understanding, and it didn't mean that there were no concerns. CQ noted that the plans in place to support Welfare Officers through forums were the first steps in linking up the network and work was ongoing with the Clubs. There was a discussion on whether the carrot or the stick was the best approach, with BC noting that Scottish Swimming had gone for the stick approach, which had saw the best levels of compliance. However, it was noted that there was a smaller community in fencing. CQ noted that it may be a good time to put out a comms piece about Safeguarding and Coaching qualifications.	CQ
9.	Record of Decisions made Outside a Board Meeting None to record.	

10.	AOCB a) CC&JFC Update GDL noted that he and Paul Vaughan had talked through the selection process from an overall team management perspective. CQ noted that there had been no update from New Zealand since 2 November. With the selection announcement due on 2 February, there were concerns that no indicative costs were known. CQ and PV were discussing logistics for travelling. b) Strategy Refresh Process and Timeline GDL noted that previously a sub-group of the Board had been formed to lead on the Strategy Refresh, led by the COO. It was noted that the February Board meeting could identify Board members who would like to be included. c) Henry de Silva GDL noted the sad passing of Henry de Silva. d) COO/Head of Pathways The Board and staff team wished CQ all the best in her new job, and she thanked everyone for their support.	
11.	Future Meetings Tuesday, 27 February Wednesday, 10 April Thursday, 6 June Wednesday, 25 September Wednesday, 6 November	

Actions

CW	Liaise with LA on new Bank Account – c/f	Next Meeting
HK	Arrange Skills Audit and Self-Appraisal – c/f	Next Meeting
CQ	Circulate a draft to the Board on the Foundation Coaching Course.	Next Meeting
CQ/GL	Produce Report on Coaching Outline Programme – c/f	Next Meeting
CQ	British Fencing Project to be carried forward to successor.	Next meeting
GDL	Contact Sam McLellan about Competition Subgroup	Next Meeting
BC	Speak to Alison Lunn regarding Equality Cohort	Next Meeting
CQ	Circulate 2022/2023 Accounts for Board approval	ASAP
CQ	Issue comms on Safeguarding and Coaching Qualifications	ASAP
GDL	Email Board about February Board Meeting	ASAP