

# ENGLISH SKI COUNCIL LTD

(t/a SNOWSPORT ENGLAND)

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## Minutes of a Board Meeting held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2011 at 7.15pm by conference call

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Present:	Barry Spouge	Chairman
	Jennifer Denning	Finance Director (from 8.00pm)
	Jemima Barnes	Director
	Fergus Bisset	Director
	Dan Hardie	Director
	Nigel Matthews	Director
	Karen Richardson	Director
	Peter Stratton	Director
	Tim Fawke	Chief Executive
	Peter Heath	Company Secretary

Apologies: None

### 846 Declaration of Interests

None reported.

### 847 Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2011\* were confirmed as a true and accurate record thereof and will be signed by the Chairman at the next meeting.

### 848 Matters Arising

#### **Actions from last meeting:**

- 797e Child Protection training – CPSU not available on 16<sup>th</sup> April. New date required.
- 799c VAT position re future invoices from BSS. Agreed to add to list of VAT issues & refer to consultancy. Future constitution of BSS may affect the position.
- 809e Accounts reporting in Sage – some changes have been made for 2011 reports. Further discussions held in Bormio relating to the requirements for reporting the Alpine Squad activity. Review after Feb/March reports are available.
- 828a Andrew Bingham MP – Jennifer to contact him to arrange dates.
- 830d ESC Skiers' Foundation Trust – review terms – outstanding
- 838a Self-assurance action plan. Tim to load the various actions onto the online system by end March with deadlines for each action.
- 838a Risk Management – Volunteers register. Jemima has sent a questionnaire to Key Committee Leaders and Regional Chairmen. 10-15 responses to date. Jemima to collate results & report back. Agreed that the circulation should be extended to other Key Committee members with a deadline set for responses.
- 838a Sports Structures to give presentation at April 16<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.
- 838b Strategic Plan – Dan now leading on this to complete draft for approval at April Board meeting.
- 838h Office accommodation – on agenda.
- 838j 2011 Budget – on agenda

\* inserted into the minute book for record purposes.

- 841a Audit quotations – on agenda
- 841a VAT advice – in hand
- 841a Bookkeeping quotations – discuss under Finance report
- 841b Distribution of monthly accounts – in hand to Key Committees, awaiting advice from Jennifer re layout for reports to Council
- 844a AGM venue. CESA not available to host 2011 AGM, but would like to be considered for 2012. Agreed that the 2011 AGM be held at Halesowen as planned. All Key Committee members to be sent an invite to the AGM with time set aside between the AGM and Council meeting or over lunch for an opportunity for them to meet Board members.

## **849 CEO Report**

### **a) Sport England**

Vicci Wells is unable to take up her appointment as Development Officer, so the post has been re-advertised and over 100 applications received. Interviews later this week. Tim aiming for the successful applicant to be in post by early May. Susie Moore is settling in well. All three will be invited to attend the AGM.

Self Assurance Action Plan – progress reported in minute 848 above.

Facilities Strategy – While some members of the working group are still not happy with some of the report's findings, Tim felt that the report fairly reflects the wide-ranging views of the membership. He has a meeting with Sports Structures this week to go through the final changes from the joint meeting of the working group with Sport England. Sports Structures will present the final report to the Board meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April. Once approved, this will be circulated to all Local Authorities and ski centres in England.

The next step is to persuade SSE members to take the strategy on board and start delivering on its objectives. As this will involve a significant amount of work, Tim sought approval for SSE to advertise for and appoint someone to be responsible for leading a small committee from the membership to deliver on the actions. He suggested a one year initial appointment with a small retainer funded by the Sport England grant. The Board agreed this in principle, Tim to draft Terms of Reference for the committee, a job description for the proposed chairman and an outline advert for approval. Circulation for the advert could include Sport England, UK Sport, Youth Sport Trust, CSPs as well as within our membership.

Active People Survey. The latest report shows a sharp increase in once-a-week participation over the last quarter. This should help to support our position at the 24 month review with Sport England on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

Project Board. With Jennifer concentrating on the finances and Peter standing down from the main Board in June, new members of the Project Board are required. Jemima's offer to join the Board was accepted.

Barry to attend the 2 year review. Attendance of other Board members at the review would demonstrate the Board's commitment to the project.

Jennifer joined the meeting at this point.

Sportscoach UK. Reduced government funding (approx. 25%) may impact on the future support that they can offer us. Awaiting more details.

### **b) Strategic Plan 2011-14**

Progress reported in minute 848 above.

### **c) Web site**

Now aiming to go live in April.

Tim to continue with the plan to find media/journalism students to help provide material for the site. An intern may also be an option if one can be obtained on an unpaid basis.

**d) Renewals and Registrations**

Renewals position improved - now only 4% down on last year. Seeking to boost the numbers over the summer.

**e) Membership Database**

InterFuse have now provided a detailed report of the outstanding issues and have committed for one of their staff to visit Halesowen and stay on site until we are satisfied that these have been resolved, subject to Jenny or Tim being on site to test the modifications at the same time. This is likely to happen at the end of April.

**f) Office Accommodation**

Tim reported that he had visited a number of possible office locations. He tabled a summary report on these and recommended two for more detailed consideration:

Sport Park, Loughborough

The Deckhouse, Brierley Hill (about 6 miles from Halesowen)

Tim confirmed that he had contracted with Peninsula Advice Service to provide HR advice and ensure that we follow the correct procedures, and tabled some Peninsula guidance notes.

Following a lengthy discussion on the challenges, risks and benefits of both options, the Board were asked to study the various documents and provide any queries or comments to Tim as soon as possible. Tim would continue to research these two options and provide Peninsula with the required documentation. It was agreed that a final decision is required at the next Board meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April so that the staff consultation process can begin immediately afterwards.

**g) SSE Travel Insurance**

Tim reported that the test web site is now available to view and tabled the draft policy document for comment. Following feedback from the disciplines, Tim is seeking a few changes to the policy terms; also agreement on the use of the SSE logo rights, and confirmation of the commission to be offered.

**h) 2011 Budget**

Following discussions in Bormio with Andrea and Muriel regarding the Alpine and Squad budgets, agreement has been reached to carry over some of the 2010 surplus income to achieve a breakeven budget for 2011.

**i) BSS**

All UK Sport money for the British boarder cross programme has now been received and is being transferred to the athlete.

BSS are planning to hold a meeting in Meribel during the British Championships regarding the consultation on a new constitution. The meeting date has not been confirmed but Tim will be in Meribel for the first week and Jennifer for the second week and able to attend the meeting.

Tim reported that Delancey is to be the new principal sponsor of the British Alpine Championships for 2011 and 2012. With Sir John Ritblat as the Chairman of Delancey's Advisory Board, this continues his long term support of British skiing.

**j) Alpine**

Online Race Entry System – Jennifer reported on a demonstration of the system which she had seen in Bormio, where parts were used for the English Championships. She understood that the supplier LightningSoft Ltd were planning to market the system commercially, not just for SSE, and estimated that some 70% of the program had already been written.

The Alpine Committee are now taking some £160k per year through the existing system, which was written & provided free of charge by Stewart Smith in 1994. It was written for single race events only (e.g. Club National & Grand Prix races). It is now being used without modification for the English, Welsh and British Alpine Championships, which have often presented a challenge to the Race Secretary in preparing acceptance lists for multiple races.

Expansion of the existing system to cope with our current needs is not an option, so the Alpine Committee are seeking authority to accept the LightningSoft quotation of £6000 for the development of the system and first year hosting, plus £2000 per subsequent year for hosting, maintenance and minor modifications. It is intended that the system will be capable of taking entries for other disciplines, training/instructor courses, conferences etc, though additional interfaces may be required.

The benefits are seen primarily as reducing the time spent by volunteers in preparing for events and providing a more professional image/service to our membership rather than reducing current costs.

The Board accepted the need for a replacement system, but were mindful of the on-going issues with the online membership database which is not fully operational three years after supply. The office staff have spent many hours testing, reporting bugs and retesting throughout this period. Online registration is still not available, and the staff still have to double check all online renewals against payments received.

Subject to the following requirements to be built into the contract before signing, the Board approved the purchase of the system:

Clear and detailed specification of what the system will deliver with agreed timelines

Details of software licence conditions

Full user documentation on the completed system

Provision for user testing before acceptance of the system

Agreement on stage payments based on delivery of functionality

Detailed specification of maintenance, hosting and “small modifications” contract.

As the new system will be processing a large proportion of SSE’s total income, an agreed risk management plan is required from the Alpine Committee prior to placing the order to cover the necessary actions in the event that the new system does not deliver to specification. This should take into account the various lessons learnt in managing the membership database project.

Jennifer and Tim to discuss how the project is to be financed.

#### Funstar Proposal

This is an awards scheme to be operated by clubs and slopes where anyone can negotiate a fixed slalom course as many times as they wish and earn the right to buy a pin badge or certificate based on their best time compared with that of an authorised pacesetter – similar to the Fleche/Chamois ski school races in France and the USA Nastar system. It was operated by a number of English clubs/slopes in the 1990s, but gradually died out – probably due to inadequate marketing & support and lack of sponsorship to fund the administration.

The Board were supportive of the proposal as a means of increasing participation and asked Jemima to liaise with the Alpine Committee to get more details: costings, proposed operation and administration, documentation and office support required, long-term aim/benefits, promotion, advertising etc.

Peter and Dan to discuss marketing/sponsorship possibilities. To be commercially viable for a sponsor, the scheme may need to embrace other disciplines.

The Development Officers may be able to help in the promotion of the project as part of their increasing participation remit, but the Alpine Committee need to lead on its initial development.

**k) Nordic**

The Committee wish to purchase a projector (approx. £500) for use at their annual camp in Norway. Tim has offered them the use of the office projector and is awaiting their response. If this is not suitable, it was suggested that it would be cheaper to hire a projector each year. Tim to discuss further with Adam.

**l) Freestyle**

Tim reported on the excellent results obtained by James Woods and Katie Summerhayes (both of Sheffield Sharks Club) at the European X Games in Tignes last week.

[http://www.metrosnow.co.uk/ski\\_news\\_events/article\\_display?article\\_id=585](http://www.metrosnow.co.uk/ski_news_events/article_display?article_id=585)

Tim suggested that our best chance of securing world class medal positions lies currently in the Freestyle disciplines.

**m) Communication between Board, Regions and Key Committees**

Some members were still to make contact with their allocated region, Nigel has attended CESA meetings and Jemima is attending the YSF meeting tomorrow.

Jemima attended the recent Alpine meeting, Fergus is meeting Adam Pinney shortly and Nigel continues his involvement with Schools & Coaching.

Jennifer is concentrating on the audit and bookkeeping at present. Will follow up with a Finance meeting.

**850 Strategic Plan 2011-2014**

Covered in minute 838b - CEO report

**851 Finance and Admin**

**a) 2010 Audit**

To avoid a potential conflict of interest, Harrison Salmon are not quoting for the audit. WSM have quoted £3500. Stephen Jones has provided a revised quote of £2300 with his staff carrying out part of the work. Jennifer recommended that we accept Stephen's revised quote and the Board agreed. It was also agreed that there is no requirement for Stephen to attend the AGM. If there are any questions at the AGM relating to the audited accounts which the Directors cannot answer, these can be referred to Stephen after the meeting.

The possibility of a community audit for the 2011 accounts is to be put to the AGM for approval in June. Tim is still awaiting Sport England's approval.

**b) Management Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010**

The draft accounts show an overall surplus ahead of budget. Jennifer to check that all income is accounted for in the correct year, then ask Sara to put together the year end files for audit.

The next task will be to prepare the February management accounts.

**852 Key Committees**

Covered in minute 849j, k & l - CEO report

**853 British Ski and Snowboard**

Covered in CEO report – minute 849i  
Published notes of December Board meeting received.

**854 AOB**

Peter advised that he hopes to provide some ideas on a communications strategy within the next few days.

**855 Next Meetings**

Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> April @ 10am	SportPark, Loughborough (Apologies from Nigel)
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> June	AGM at Halesowen

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 10.20pm