

ENGLISH SKI COUNCIL LTD

(t/a SNOWSPORT ENGLAND)

Minutes of a Board Meeting held on Saturday 13th November 2010 at 10.00am at Hotel Ibis, Crick, RUGBY

Present:	Barry Spouge	Chairman
	Jennifer Denning	Finance Director
	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

The Chairman welcomed Jemima Barnes, Fergus Bisset and Dan Hardie, who had been invited to join the Board following an application, shortlist and interview process. Their appointment is to fill casual vacancies following the 2010 AGM and lasts until the 2011 AGM when they will be eligible to stand for election.

825 Declaration of Interests

No new interests were reported. Tim will send a declaration form to the new Directors for completion.

826 Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 6th October 2010* were confirmed as a true and accurate record thereof and were signed by the Chairman. The Chairman also signed the minutes of the Board meetings held on 7th August* and 1st September*.

827 Matters Arising

Actions from last meeting:

- 797e Child Protection training – CPSU not available for 29th January.
- 799a Update reserves policy/requirement – covered in Finance Report
- 799c VAT position re invoices from BSS. Tim to discuss with Robin Kellen.
- 809e Accounts reporting in Sage – JD/KR/PH to discuss proposed changes
- 817a ESC Skiers Foundation grant – discuss under Finance report
- 817c Staff Salary Review – covered in CEO report
- 817e Legal expenses cover re abuse allegations – this has been approved by e-mail.
Additional premium £21 per club
- 817h Customer Charter – covered in CEO report
- 818 Strategic Review – on agenda
- 819c 2011 Budget – on agenda
- 822 Board Applications – process complete
- 824 Meeting dates – on agenda

* inserted into the minute book for record purposes.

a) Sport England

Sport England have confirmed that they intend to continue the Whole Sport grants to March 2013, subject to Governing Bodies achieving their agreed targets.

Government funding for the School Sport Partnerships through the Youth Sports Trust is to be withdrawn.

The Facilities Strategy report has identified a reduction in Local Authority grants for Council-owned ski slopes. This may put the future viability of some slopes at risk.

The 18 month review of the grant project is fairly positive. However, we will need to achieve our targets for the 2 year review – especially on participation levels in England. The data for this will be available in December. Early indications are that, although general levels are down, the Development Officers have had a positive influence on participation at some centres, including Chill Factor.

Tim reported that Vicky Pullin had decided to concentrate more on coaching and would be leaving SSE at the end of November. The Development Officer's post has been advertised on the SSE and Sport England web sites – seeking someone with sports development experience. Tim reported that, subject to the continuation of funding next year, the Project Board would be seeking to appoint a third development officer from April 2011.

The Board approved Tim's proposal to rename Jan Doyle's post as Senior Development Officer.

Tim reported that Andrew Bingham (MP for High Peak, Derbyshire) has been matched with Snowsport England under the Parliamentary Sports Fellowship Scheme and will be available to spend seven days with us over the next year. Different sports are selected each year, so this is a one year fellowship. We need to book him early to attend our activities. Jennifer to attend the Launch Day.

See http://www.sportengland.org/about_us/our_news/idoc.ashx?docid=6d69b763-6b46-44e6-a1fc-0d5139b13bde&version=-1

Tim reported that SSE had attained a green light on the recent self assurance report – worth all the hard work.

b) Renewals and Registrations

Renewals are currently about 10% down on last year. Most British snow races for Juniors & Seniors are now on the FIS calendar, for which a Limited FIS Licence is required. On top of the FIS fee of under £25, BSS charge £100 admin fee plus up to £8 per FIS race entry – possibly discouraging Juniors and Seniors from registering. Tim to provide an age-group breakdown of performer registrations.

c) Membership Database

Tim presented a report on the on-going issues with the online database system. Various discussions have been held with InterFuse to resolve these, but progress has been very slow. It was suggested that a project manager with appropriate expertise be appointed to work with InterFuse to save the considerable time currently spent by Tim and Jenny documenting the problems, working with InterFuse and testing any changes. If this proves to be unsuccessful, other options should be considered.

CCPR are now promoting an online registration and payments system/membership database developed by IMG Sports Technology Group, and currently being trialled by Snowsport Wales

<http://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/partners/media-marketing/img-sports-technology-group>

https://www.clubsonline.com.au/registrationclubportal/index.cfm?fuseaction=display_main&OrgID=7349

Apart from a bespoke front-end, there would be little opportunity to get the system modified for individual user requirements. While there are no upfront charges, there is a 6% charge on all transactions.

d) New Club

The Board approved an application for full membership from Team Evolution. Attendance at the SSE AGM to be added to the club's constitution.

e) Future Jobs Fund

The advert for this temporary post has just been published.

f) New web site

Tender documents have been submitted by seven potential providers of a new web site. Andrea Grant & Tim will review these next week. Jennifer mentioned an alternative option & agreed to make further enquiries within the week.

g) BSS

UK Sport have responded favourably to the proposal for the WCPP grants to be handled by SSE. We are awaiting their formal response to the draft contract.

The HN and BSS CEOs have met recently to seek joint ways of making efficiency savings and to improve communications between the organisations – minutes circulated.

In order to clarify the alpine performance pathway, especially for Juniors, Tim has tabled a document highlighting some of the concerns aired by coaches. This is to be referred to the BSS and HN coaches to seek agreement. The current confusion highlights the need for a performance director, also agreement of the relative roles of BSS and the HNs. In the meantime, England should aim to deliver the best Junior training programme possible.

Tim reported that a Chief of Championships and Race Secretary have been appointed for the British Children's Championships. SSE has offered the use of its online race entry system.

h) Chill Factor

Tim reported that he has negotiated training and racing facilities with Chill Factor.

j) UK Coaching Pathway

Tim reported on on-going discussions with Scotland and Wales for the development of the Coaching Scheme. England, Scotland and BASI are now progressing the Snowboarding Scheme and starting work on Nordic and Freestyle.

k) Approval of Documents

The Customer Service Standards document was approved

l) Risk Register

Tim to update the register and circulate for approval at the next meeting.

829 Strategic Plan 2011-2014

The Board reviewed Tim's summary of the working group reports.

Participation:

Nordic – increased participation is main focus, possible links with hill/nordic walking to stimulate interest in cross-country skiing and biathlon on snow. Good for fitness training. Good access and low cost.

Freestyle – continue work to attract alpine skiers to moguls and ski cross.

Alpine – encourage 6th form schoolchildren to qualify as instructors so that they can earn money teaching while at university; perhaps link with DofE award. Potential interest from students if we run dry slope races in the winter. Jemima to discuss with Andrea Grant.

Profile:

Agree marketing group required; need to promote SSE with merchandise – clothing etc. Most skiers are not aware of the existence of SSE.

New website will help, but it is only marketable if people know about it. Suggestion to rebrand SSE with a new and more exciting logo to reflect SSE's mission – possible launch at same time as new website. Some external funding may be available for re-branding.

Dan offered to table some proposals.

This would be an appropriate time to change the official name from English Ski Council to Snowsport England

Suggestion that resorts and tour operators would be interested in promoting the sport by applying a small levy on ski holidays, but need to be satisfied that the money raised will be used efficiently and for the right purpose.

Access:

Can we help ESSkiA to develop into new activities – beyond alpine racing?

Need to develop our ability to provide for people with special needs – include an optional module as part of instructor training, perhaps linking to courses run by other organisations.

Support:

Agreed that much more information should be available by the web site to show people how to progress through the sport – applies to officials, instructors, coaches as well as performers – perhaps separate sites for each discipline.

Concern that forum or blog sites would need close supervision. Prefer to offer public answers to questions submitted online.

Crucial that information is kept up-to-date.

SSE should help Regional Associations to support their clubs rather than supporting the clubs direct. This will help to promote a strong regional support network

Recognition:

Support for the use of Facebook as a more immediate addition to the web site, not a replacement.

Support for a recognition of contribution award for schools, but some reservations if extended to young individuals.

Partnerships:

Suggestion to improve discount offers to offset cost of membership/registration.

Tim is aiming to produce a strategy brochure by the end of the year – similar to the Coaching Strategy document published on the SSE web site in September.

830 Finance and Admin**a) Management Accounts & Finance Report to 30th September 2010**

The accounts continue to show an overall surplus ahead of budget. Alpine is performing strongly, but there are significant deficits in the Coaching and Schools accounts where course income is some 33% down on last year.

Jennifer stressed the need to improve the revenue stream and to reduce costs. She also indicated her wish to base the allocation of the HO service charge to disciplines on work done, rather than on a historically fixed percentage.

As required by Sport England, Jennifer confirmed that she had reviewed our audit provision and recommended that we retain Stephen Jones to provide a full audit of the 2010 accounts – our first year using the Sage accounting system. This was agreed.

Jennifer also recommended that we seek Sport England's approval to move to a community audit from 2011. This would be in place of a full professional audit which has been required by Sport England in the past as a pre-condition of grant provision. SSE's turnover and assets are well within the exemption values below which a statutory audit is not required.

Tim to advise Sport England of our decision for 2010 and to discuss the community audit option with them for 2011 onwards.

Progress on post-audit actions required by auditor – nearly complete as detailed in finance report.

VAT: The Board agreed to Jennifer's proposal for:

- a one-off external VAT review
- subscription to a VAT advisory service
- move to in-house production of VAT return direct from Sage

Jennifer to obtain quotations for the review and advisory service. As these may need to be in place before the next Board meeting, Barry was authorised to approve the review and subscription quotations in consultation with Tim.

b) Budget 2011

Jennifer reported that the Central Services budget is in preparation and is expected to result in an overall service charge no more than for 2010. She proposed that we aim for a 5% overall surplus before tax to boost reserves (see minute 830c below). Budget templates will be issued shortly for completion by the Key Committees.

c) Reserves

The current policy is to retain reserves equivalent to 3 months' turnover. The following revision was agreed:

- Increase reserves year on year by means of retaining surpluses
- Set a firm target of 3 months turnover as a minimum
- Once the 3 month level has been reached, continue to increase reserves slowly until 6 months turnover is reached, but understanding that this is a lower priority than the 3 month target
- Target overall surplus at 5% before tax, 3% after tax
- Where surplus is above target and reserves are improving, invite the Board in November to allow Committees to tap into some of this surplus, provided commitments are entered into by 31st December each year with the money to be spent by 30th September of the following year.

Proposed criteria for approving this discretionary spend:

- Entirely at the Board's discretion as to how much and to which Committees the discretion be allowed
- Allocations to be decided by the Board
- Allocations to be made only to Committees whose financial control is adequate, as decided by the Finance Director, taking into account audit and Board feedback
- Allocations can only be used where the purpose has been approved by the CEO and where it is aligned to the strategic objectives of SSE

d) ESC Skiers' Foundation Trust

It was noted that the Trust's purposes as established in 1998 are not linked to SSE's current strategic objectives. The Board agreed that the terms of the Trust should be reviewed before any decision is made on making further grants to the Trust. To fit in with the Trust's annual grant cycle, a decision should be made by April 2011.

e) Risk Register

See minute 828l above.

* inserted into the minute book for record purposes.

f) Insurance – Abuse cover

See minute 827 above.

831 Key Committees

Minutes of the following meeting were received:

Freestyle – 11th October 2010

Any comments or queries should be made to Tim or Martin Carr as appropriate

832 British Ski and Snowboard

Covered in CEO report – minute 828h

It was noted that a brief report of the 24th September Board meeting and a statement (5th Nov) from the Chairman have been published on the BSS web site.

833 AOB

a) Club Award

Nigel reported on the final outcome of these awards. Following some issues over the selection process, it was agreed that the process should be reviewed if the competition is to be held next year.

b) Nordic Level 3 Coach Award

Nigel confirmed that a ratification course has been held at Chill Factore to enable those who attended the Nordic Coaching Course in Norway last April to qualify as a Nordic Level 3 Coach.

c) Nordic Equipment

Tim reported that the Nordic Committee are seeking approval to spend £800 for ski poles, 50% funded from the Nordic reserve & 50% from a Sport England grant. Nordic to be asked to provide further cost details as the amount quoted appeared high.

d) Peter Stratton advised the Board that, due to other commitments, he will not be seeking re-election as a Director at the 2011 AGM. He intended to keep in touch with his trade connections in support of SSE.

On behalf of the Board, Barry thanked Peter for all his input over the last five years, most notably for personally raising so much to fund the coaches' costs for the 2010 Olympics after the collapse of SSGB.

834 Next Meetings

Barry to propose dates for early 2011
AGM – Saturday 18th June at Halesowen

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 4pm

POST MEETING NOTE: Agreed Board meeting dates:

Saturday 29th January @ 10am Hotel Ibis, Rugby East

Tuesday 22nd March @ 7.15pm Telephone conference

Saturday 16th April @ 10am Hotel Ibis, Rugby East

AGM (as above) - Saturday 18th June Halesowen