BOARD MINUTES – April 2026

Meeting	England Hockey Board Meeting				
Venue	Bisham Abbey				
Date	28th April 2026	**Start Time**	10:00	**End Time**	13:30
Lead	Kath Russ, Chair (KR)				
Present: **Invited in:** **Notetaker:**	Rich Beer (RB), Kuldeep Kaur (KK), Shelagh Everett (SE), Damian Smith (DS), Simon Mantell (SM), Claudio Borges (CB), Angela Durnin (AD), Janet Grant (JG), Anne-Marie Garner (AMG), Nicky Ponsford (NP), Alexa Murray (AM) Bobby Crutchley (BC), Heather Williams (HW), Charlie Wells (CW), Stuart Guise (SG), Don Williams, GB President (DW), Jacqui Barlow (JB), Andy Tapley (ADT) (Online for Item 5.1), John Harrison, UK Sport Representative (JH), Phil Gallagher, Performance Advisor Lead, UK Sport (PG), Paul Davis, Barclays Bank (Shadowing KK). David Ralph, Senior Women's Head Coach (DR) and Zak Jones, Senior Men's Head Coach (ZJ) joined for item 3.2. Michele Townsend (MT)				
Apologies	Alex Danson-Bennett (ADB)				

Opening Comments from the Chair

KR congratulated and welcomed newly appointed Board members, Nicky Ponsford and Alexa Murray and congratulated Simon Mantell on his re-election. She also welcomed Paul Davis who was shadowing KK as part of her Fellowship Programme. Quick introductions were made.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Other than the standing declaration from JG in respect of performance discussions, SE declared an interest in any discussions regarding Talent Academies.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING, MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS

i. **Accuracy**

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate recording.

ii. **Matters arising (see action points tracker)**

Updates and comments have been added against the actions in the tracker and will be circulated with the Minutes.

3. INSPIRATIONAL INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS – FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

3.1 GB Hockey Update and GB Playing Formats Project

The Board were provided with a paper outlining the brief that has been prepared for the project.

i. RB explained that the paper was for information only at this stage and any approval required would be brought back to a future Board meeting.

ii. The purpose of the review is to provide independent, strategic recommendations on how international competition structures and scheduling can be optimised to maximise medal-winning potential for Great Britain, while maintaining strong and viable Home Nation performance pathways.

iii. RB extended thanks to JH and UK Sport for providing funding for the project.

3.2 Performance Presentation with Head Coaches

DR and ZJ joined the meeting and each shared a slide deck on progress so far and looking to the future.

i. BC explained that the Head Coaches, ZJ and DR, would provide an overview of progress so far and preparation plans for the World Cup and LA Olympic games. He added that more detail would be provided after the summer cycle and would update Board further in September. He confirmed that the Performance VMost had been discussed at PAG.

ii. ZJ and DR joined the meeting to provide the Board with both short- and long-term interventions that they were implementing in preparation for the upcoming championships and through to LA.

iii. **ACTION - It was agreed to provide a further update at the September Board meeting - BC**

4. LEAD POSITIVE CHANGE

4.1 Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) – FOR APPROVAL AND ACTION

The Board was provided with a summary of progress to date, and the current DIAP for approval. The papers were taken as read with the following comments:

i. The Board discussed the availability and use of data and the need to be refreshing and reviewing what is already available. HW explained that there is a lot of data available, but it is not collected systematically through our current systems. The Board discussed the plan to collect EDI data more regularly across the sport.

ii. **ACTION - It was agreed to include the collection of demographic player data in the future Data Plan – HW**

iii. CB asked whether or not there is an understanding of the perception of the sport as opposed to the profile and what evidence there is to support this. KK explained that a combination of participants were connected with through the Pulse Surveys to understand their experiences rather than just collecting profile data.

iv. RB added that maybe a household survey might be beneficial to understand how the sport is perceived outside of participants, which would help with our visibility objective.

v. CB asked for clarity on the process for dealing with complaints regarding discrimination and whether or not there is comfort with the process. KK explained that communication channels have opened up since the launch of the Framework and the discipline process is robust, but acknowledged that there is always room for improvements from learnings.

vi. JB highlighted the importance of aligning our IT strategy, to enable members to stay connected and allow for easy updating and maintaining of data in GMS.

vii. It was agreed to create clear KPIs for measuring progress and for reporting to Board regularly. JH suggested that this could be an objective within the DIAP.

viii. **ACTION – key EDI KPIs to be established and reported to Board in 6 months' time – HW/MT**

ix. JH confirmed that from a compliance point of view the DIAP should be reviewed annually at Board.

x. **The Board approved the DIAP, with one abstention.**

5. MEANINGFUL GROWTH

5.1 Finance Update – FOR INFORMATION

Paper taken as read with the following comments:

i. The Board were presented with March results and KK confirmed that the YTD figures are tracking favourably mainly due to people cost savings and delays in recruitment.

ii. She highlighted risks and opportunities identified in the rolling forecast and the work being done to crystalise promising sponsorship opportunities.

iii. The tender process for appointment of the Auditors is underway, and the Finance Sub-Committee will score and make a recommendation to Board.

iv. The Board discussed the possible impact of launching the Euro tickets at the same time as Pro League and the long lead time. CW and RB confirmed that detailed analysis has been undertaken and ADT agreed that it is not out of sync with other major events hosted in the past. CB agreed that timing is key for major events and the lead time should be used effectively, with clear communication about both events.

v. The Board were assured that advice and expert opinion were sought and will continue to track progress.

vi. JG highlighted that most of our opportunities identified are people savings and raised concerns that we can't keep asking people to do more for less. ADT concurred and RB added that resource is being monitored very closely.

5.2 Board Reserved Matters – FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

Paper taken as read with the following comments:

i. KR provided the Board with a draft document identifying what items must come to the Board for approval and what is delegated to the Exec, recognising that there some items outside the register and the relationship and any grey areas will be picked up separately.

ii. The Board discussed the merits of a formal document, whether there is any difference between Non-Executive Board members and Exec Board attendees, clarity on the use of the word 'material' and whether reputational risk should be a separate item.

iii. KR reminded the Board that it is good governance to have matters clarified and asked that any further considerations or amendments be communicated to her promptly.

iv. **ACTION – Any suggested updates to be provided to KR before the next Board meeting – KR/IS**

5.3 IT Incident

Paper taken as read.

KK provided the Board with an update of the situation and confirmed that the ICO had determined the case closed.

6. CEO & EXEC REPORT – FOR INFORMATION

Paper taken as read, with the following items highlighted:

i. RB confirmed that a KPI Dashboard was in progress.

ii. The AGM was well attended, and members approved the membership fee increase.

iii. The Prem finals are being hosted at Surbiton, ticket sales going well and a sponsor has been signed for the event.

iv. CW updated on progress with Mongoose, confirming that following a delayed start a dashboard and deck have been prepared and the focus is on securing a principal partner for EH and a naming partner for the Euros. She added that there is confidence in the conversations relating to the Euros.

v. HW highlighted Project 2011, and the progress in talent.

vi. KK confirmed that at the recent CPSU meeting EH was awarded 'met' status and the newly recruited team is settling in well.

vii. SG confirmed that good progress has been made with clubs to ensure their Welfare Officers are trained, and work is being done with Areas and Counties to support this.

viii. RB highlighted that a member of staff, Stephen Barlow, is retiring after 40 years and noted his distinguished contribution to EH.

7. AOB

i. No other business was discussed

ii. The meeting closed at 13.30