

## BOARD SYNOPSIS – APRIL 2024

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|---|---|-------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| <b>Meeting</b>  | England Hockey Board Meeting  |                   |       |                 |       |
| <b>Venue</b>  | England Hockey Head Office – The Abbey, Henry VIII room, Bisham Abbey NSC   |                   |       |                 |       |
| <b>Date</b>   | 16 April 2024   | <b>Start Time</b> | 10.00 | <b>End Time</b> | 14:10 |
| <b>Lead</b>   | Royston Hoggarth, Chair (RH)  |                   |       |                 |       |
| <b>Present:</b>   | Nick Pink (NP), Rich Beer (RB), Kuldeep Kaur (KK), Shelagh Everett (SE), Mark Darbon (MD), Sheila Morrow (SM), Simon Mantell (SMa), Jacqui Barlow (JB), Damian Smith (DS), Alex Danson-Bennett (ADB), Heather Williams (HW) |                   |       |                 |       |
| <b>On-line:</b>   | Angela Durnin (AD)  |                   |       |                 |       |
| <b>Invited in:</b>  | David Ralph, Women’s Head Coach (DR) and Paul Revington, Men’s Head Coach (PR) – Item 2.1 International Programme Update<br>Charlie Wells, Head of Comms, Marketing & Commercial – item 6.1                                 |                   |       |                 |       |
| <b>Notetaker:</b>   | Michele Townsend  |                   |       |                 |       |
| <b>Apologies</b>  | Anne-Marie Garner (AMG), Rina Fatania (RF)  |                   |       |                 |       |
| <p><b>1. Minutes of February Board meeting</b></p> <p>i. <b>Accuracy</b><br/>Minutes have been approved.</p> <p>ii. <b>Matters arising (see action points tracker)</b><br/>Updates and comments have been added against the actions in the tracker.</p> <p>iii. <b>Declarations of interest</b><br/>KK declared a conflict with Trans Policy Review given her role on the Women in Sport Board.</p>   |   |                   |       |                 |       |
| <p><b>2. INSPIRATIONAL INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS</b></p> <p><b>2.1 INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME UPDATE (VERBAL) – FOR INFORMATION</b></p> <p>David Ralph (DR) and Paul Revington (PR) joined the meeting and provided the Board with an update on progress towards the Paris Olympics:</p> <p>i. There are some injury concerns within the women’s squad, particularly in the Goalkeeper position which has an impact culturally. However, with a retiree returning to the squad we do have 3 fit goalkeepers while the injured athlete rehabs.</p> <p>ii. There is a focus on what it takes to win, especially in tight games and it is hoped that Pro League games will help address this.</p> <p>iii. Three travelling reserves are allowed and they can enter the Olympic Village - changes can be made until the tournament begins. However, once a change is made during the games it will need to become permanent.</p> <p>iv. Culture is a focus for the men’s squad over the next couple of months.</p> <p>v. The athletes are hungry for performance and podium places, and they have managed to successfully combine both programme and club focus to foster success.</p> <p>vi. NP added how this talks to our strategy – with European success for clubs and individuals winning gold at EHL etc.</p> |   |                   |       |                 |       |

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- vii. The current performance objectives were shared with the Board, the focus on performance and process, and the buy in from the squad to what really matters – to get back to consistently top 3.
- viii. The documentation used in their training sessions and the work that the Psychologists are doing on mental strength and behaviour on the pitch was shared with the Board.
- ix. The aim is to podium at Pro League and build momentum leading into the games.
- x. Selection is planned for 13/14<sup>th</sup> June and the hope is to select maybe 19 plus 1-3 depending on injuries.
- xi. The squad are heading to the Netherlands on 29<sup>th</sup> May for a practice match against India prior to Pro League.
- xii. There are injury concerns in several areas in the Men's squad, except goalkeeper and full-back, but confident all will be fit for the summer and no immediate panic.
- xiii. The coaches are working closely with EDP athletes who are adding value and enabling future preparation for Paris and beyond.
- xiv. Both Head Coaches agreed that a good structure is in place, given that there is no PD at the moment.

### 3. LEAD POSITIVE CHANGE

#### 3.1 TRANS POLICY UPDATE – **FOR APPROVAL AND ACTION**

##### Paper taken as read with the following comments:

- i. NP reminded the Board of previous sessions held and papers circulated which he hoped had provided sufficient context and sought agreement to proceed in line with the detailed paper provided.
- ii. Since the last session, engagement has been completed with four groups of individuals who have indicated they have been or are impacted in some way. The Internal Working Group agreed to review this feedback carefully.
- iii. The board acknowledged that the policy may not gain universal acceptance and agreed on the importance of developing a robust implementation and guidance plan after considering feedback from various stakeholders. The meeting emphasised the importance of clear communication and support for those impacted by the policy changes.
- iv. There was a recognition that the structure of the sport of hockey was complex but that it was important to not lose sight of the fact that we want hockey to be for everyone.
- v. **APPROVAL - The Board was comfortable with the principles and approved the direction of travel.**
- vi. **ACTION - The Board insisted that the implementation plan be brought back to the June meeting or in a special meeting prior to June before final approval of the Policy.**
- vii. There was a recognition of the importance of keeping the Areas up to speed with regard to the implementation plan.
- viii. Scottish hockey and Hockey Wales are up to speed on the developments with our current policy, and we will continue to engage with them on the new policy.

### 4. RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

#### 4.1 FINANCE, RISK AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY – **FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION**

##### Paper taken as read with the following comments:

- i. Financial sustainability was a critical topic, with discussions around the Risk Register and the success of Pro League ticket sales.
- ii. The board reviewed year-to-date figures and initiated plans for a three-year financial strategy, emphasising the need for a careful approach to utilising reserves. Actions were agreed upon concerning digital strategies and improving transparency in financial planning.

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iii. Exec and SMT have considered prioritisation of activity and will present recommendations to the next Board meeting.

**iv. ACTION – It was agreed to review the Digital plan - DS**

### 4.2 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION

**Paper taken as read with the following comments:**

- i. Current case management stats are provided along with any EH interventions for information.
- ii. Disciplinary Regulations will roll out towards the end of the finals, linked to Code of Conduct.
- iii. Code of Conduct is progressing well and will be with the areas next week for consultation over the summer.
- iv. Anti-doping education has been completed for the GB Teams.
- v. Additional support from Sports Resolutions is being utilised to help with safeguarding cases and the team have been made aware of the System Master Planning work.
- vi. Our Insurers review safeguarding cases every 6 weeks and haven't raised any issues.
- vii. The current concussion policy will be updated to reflect umpires and officials.

### 4.3 GMS UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION

**Paper taken as read with the following comments:**

- i. KK confirmed that significant work is continuing in this area. The GMS Working Group is now established and is working well.
- ii. No significant platform performance issues reported and no downtime.
- iii. A clear communication plan is needed now in readiness for the new season.

### 4.4 SYSTEM MASTER PLANNING – FOR INFORMATION

- i. NP confirmed that UK Sport will attend the June Board meeting to provide an update on progress to date.
- ii. There are a few areas of particular interest related to work being carried out by Two Circles around the relevancy and revenue generation opportunities of Para and Olympic sport to develop regular content and interest at and between the Games.
- iii. Discussions are ongoing to determine how England and GB can connect into this and any commercial value that can be realised.
- iv. In relation to data, RH has been involved in discussions around how we align our data forms and establish a centralised programme that brings the communities of Olympic and Para sports together. He emphasised the importance of understanding the data piece, especially given the current digital landscape - societal cyber-attacks, AI, password breaches etc.
- v. Safeguarding is another area of focus and particular consideration is being given to the possibility of a national body overseeing safeguarding which may help alert NGBs to people moving from sport to sport and links to the Coaching registration scheme we are currently investigating.
- vi. NP highlighted the pressure the World Class Programme is under given the static nature of funding awards and increasing costs.

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### 5 MEANINGFUL GROWTH – FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

#### 5.1 CLUB MEMBERSHIP DATA 2023-24

RB provided the Board with detailed club membership information gathered from the 2023/24 member process.

**ACTION - It was agreed to bring this topic back to the June Board, for further discussion – RB**

### 6. DRIVE VISIBLE IMPACT – FOR INFORMATION

#### 6.1 COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING AND COMMERCIAL UPDATE

Charlie Wells, Head of Communications, Marketing and Commercial joined the meeting

**In addition to the paper provided, CW presented a slide deck highlighting plans for Olympic Engagement, Commercial, Pro League and Communications.**

- i. A focused resource has been recruited to concentrate effort on Olympic engagement pre / during and post the games with grassroots and community.
- ii. Good interest from Talk Sport and Radio 5 live, media days have been arranged and the BBC are keen to talk to us following OQ success.
- iii. Our Comms and Media manager will be attending the games in a formal role with Team GB to help generate more content. Once the games begin there are restrictions placed upon us as athletes become 'Team GB' athletes. We are able to collaborate with them and repost anything they post themselves, but we are limited to what we can create ourselves.
- iv. Communications are all GB focused, and regular meetings are being held with Scotland and Wales so as not to duplicate effort.
- v. The chosen retail partner is The Hockey Centre (THC), backed by Total Hockey who will manage the England Hockey online store, all stock management and fulfilment, and be present at events to sell on behalf of England Hockey. The new retail offering will be available at all events.
- vi. Playing kit will be uniform for Seniors through to U16s, and EAG will be wearing the new England kit in the summer with an official launch date in October. Other retail options are being considered, eg, B2B for officials and umpires, etc.
- vii. Pro League ticket sales are going well. Consideration has been given to sports presentation and the event experience for young people, including how we manage the schools' days.
- viii. Communications are still focused through an EDI lens – celebrating moments and currently trialing different formats, ie podcasts, TikTok and youth partners.

### 7. EXECUTIVE REPORT – FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

**Paper taken as read with the following comments:**

- i. NP highlighted the success of the finals at Surbiton, attended by President and both VPs and expressed thanks to all involved.
- ii. Following our decision to bid for the 2027 Eurohockey Championships, we are expecting information on the bidding process this month. **ACTION – Bring back to June Board - NP**
- iii. The Board was made aware of the success of the recent State Schools Festival with record numbers of schools attending.
- iv. England has expressed interest in the Nominated Country process. Discussions regarding the process and make-up on the GB Board are ongoing and will be itemised for the next GB Board meeting after Paris.
- v. UKS culture health check has been completed with the Senior squads and soon to be completed with EDP

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- vi. Review of the Olympic cycle is underway as a responsibility of the GB Board and led by the GB Independent Director and will be discussed at the November GB Board.
- vii. The new talent confirmation process is in place.
- viii. EAG and U21s played at Easter with encouraging results, winning both series.
- ix. Two new Talent Academies were established in Birmingham and North Staffs. Significant effort is being made to communicate the principles and key messages, including a new on-line 'parent' module which has been developed.
- x. The Board recognized the volume of work that people are doing to support our sport, with a special shoutout for volunteers and staff who run end-of-season events.
- xi. **ACTION - It was agreed to consider progress of the Facilities Loan Scheme at the June Board meeting – RB**

### 7. AOB

- i. It was agreed that the Sport and Development Director follow up with the Areas representative regarding the recruitment of volunteers and how EH can further support the sport in this regard.
- ii. **ACTION – JB and RB to follow up - RB**

The meeting closed at 14:10