



ENGLISH GYMNASTICS

Representing British Gymnastics Association affiliated regions:

East, East Midlands, London, North of England, North West, South, South East, South West, West Midlands and Yorkshire

Meeting of the English Gymnastics Association 12th April, 2008, Heath Lodge Hotel, Marston Green at 10:45 a.m.

Present:

Jim Moss (Chair, W Mids), Mike Chappell (Sec.), Christine Bowker (Yorks), Alf Dyer (East), Kevin Flynn (E Mids), Joan Jackman (S West), Sue James (S East), Dave Portas (North), Biz Scales (South), Christine Simpkin (N West), Mike Swallow (C. Games) and Howard Todd (ESGA).

In Attendance: Mark Gannon (CEO) and Louise Roberts (England Development Manager).

The meeting opened with a note from the Chairman regarding the plight of Hillingdon GC and the possibility that the club may lose its long-held gymnastics facility. All were urged to sign up to an on-line petition to save the club's venue. Mark Gannon noted that he is soon to have a meeting with Sport England to discuss facility problems.

1] Apologies: Len Arnold (LGF) and Brian Stocks (CEO BAGA).

2] Minutes of Last Meeting: Approved as a true record.

3] Matters arising from the minutes:

(a) Youth Commonwealth Games Proposal:

Jim Moss reported that the proposal to hold a Youth Commonwealth Games gymnastics event in England in 2008 (possibly at the new Alexander Stadium in Birmingham) had fallen through due to a lack of sufficient funding and issues regarding the suitability of the proposed venue.

4] Technical Development Update:

(a) Commonwealth Games:

Minutes of the previous Commonwealth games Council had been circulated. Mike Swallow reported that the Council had a new Chair, Sir Andrew Foster. It was noted that many sports were having problems with their UK governing bodies regarding conflicts of interest and events timetables for athletes eligible for both Commonwealth Games and Olympic/World events. This is to be investigated closely over the next two years. It was also noted that Mike Weinstock had been formally selected as Team manager for the English Gymnastics team for the 2010 Delhi CG.

(b) Technical Strategy:

A report had been previously circulated regarding proposals for the structure of an England JTC. Mike Swallow commented that he felt that the initial structure should include representation from the four Olympic disciplines (WA, MA, RG & TRA) together with AG. He also believed that there might be problems recruiting members for the EGA JTC from current NTC representatives. Jim Moss believed that the EGA JTC should be complementary to the BAGA NTCs with the NTCs aware of the strategy offered by the EGA JTC. It was believed that there is a need to move forward and for the EGA to provide a technical strategy for the Regions, highlighting priorities for the future. The BAGA NTCs would be approached initially with a request for nominations for possible members for the EGA JTC

with responses required by a fixed date. Should no candidates come forward then the EGA would need to look further, to the Regions, to ask for suitable representation. It was felt that this newly formed committee would greatly help in providing the EGA with technical direction for the future.

Action: Jim Moss and Mike Swallow to organise and sound out possible initial membership of the EGA JTC.

5] Policy Issues:

(a) New Corporate Governance Proposals:

A formal report on these matters had been previously circulated. Mark Gannon noted, as per his comments in the report circulated, that due to the changing landscape of sport and the resulting changes in sources of funding, it was vital that the EGA is seen to be fit-for-purpose by Sport England, so that it can receive direct funding and ultimately have a stronger role in terms of direction for the future of the sport.

It was noted that "Fit-for-Purpose" also requires that the organisation has, in place, a competency based board to govern it and as such we need to consider how we reconstitute the current structure to meet these conditions. It was proposed that the new Board structure includes, a Chair, three competency directors for Finance, Legal and Technical matters, an Education/Schools Director, the CEO and four Sport Directors (nominated by the Regions) plus a company secretary.

This matter raised considerable discussion particularly around the concept of 'executive directors and Mark Gannon confirmed that the CEO would not be a voting member of the new EGA Board and that there should not be paid members of the new English Gymnastics Board.

Jim Moss believed that current EGA Committee representatives and/or appropriate candidates from the Regions could possibly fill the competency posts proposed. Concern, however, was raised regarding the Regional representation on the new Board, which would seemingly drop from the current 10 Regional representatives to just 4, and there was also concern as to how these 4 representatives would be chosen.

Mark Gannon pointed out that although the Board has the responsibility for the governance and strategic direction of English Gymnastics it would seek guidance and recommendations from a number of sources including the forum described below for the strategic direction of the sport.

It was proposed that the current Management Committee would form a Regional Stakeholders or Strategy Committee in the future, retaining representation and input from each of the English Regions and making recommendations to the new board. This committee might also include technical representation. This proposal was agreed by those present, with Mark Gannon also agreeing to Chair the meetings of this committee.

Action: Mark Gannon to prepare terms of reference for the Regional Committee.

(b) Paid Administrative Posts:

A paper on these matters had been previously circulated. With reference to the document circulated Jim Moss noted that there was a need for movement towards provision of resources for the English Regions by the EGA. In addition at the meeting between the EGA and the Regions held in July 2007 there had been a positive response to EGA proposals to support paid Regional posts. Four Regions (South East, South West, East Midlands and West Midlands) had put forward written proposals and requirements for Regional Administrator posts together with an intention to support the funding of such posts.

The proposals put forward by these regions included core requirements of those in post, together with some slight regional variations, the duration of the posts varying between one to three years initially. It was hoped that such posts would ultimately become self-sustainable in terms of financial support. In addition, future changes to coach education with the new UKCC accredited courses would also place an additional burden upon the Regions, which such posts might also help to support.

At the meeting two further Regional representatives (South and Yorks) also expressed a strong wish for their Regions to be involved in this (pilot) scheme and to appoint paid Regional administrators. Yorkshire in particular wish to use the £10K EGA support that they have not yet claimed to match any additional funding offered.

Discussion arose as to how these posts would be recruited and administered. Kevin Flynn, as Treasurer, reported that (financially) the EGA could cover up to 50% of costs and up to a maximum of £15K per year for a period of two years to support these posts.

Mark Gannon agreed that the EGA would oversee recruitment operations, selection procedures and that EG would act as the line manager of these posts accepting that the regions would set the work programme specific to the region and provide day-to-day input as to specific work required. A service level agreement would be agreed with the regions and should there be any issues re the employee these issue would be relayed to EG. Mark Gannon explained that this would reduce the risk of working relationships being compromised within the Regions as well as reducing the risk of time consuming elements that can result from any disputes for example grievances.

Those present from the remaining four English Regions yet to provide proposals for Regional Administrators (East, London, North West and North) also wished to remain in consideration as far as these posts were concerned.

It was agreed that the EGA would provide support for the six Regions for which clear proposals had been submitted or stated with matched funding up to a maximum of £15K per year for a period of two years to support the appointment and instigation of these paid Regional posts. The remaining four Regions could submit proposals for similar posts for their Regions for consideration at the next meeting of the EGA Committee (July 2008). Mark Gannon would oversee appointment procedures and service provision issues. All of this to be reviewed in 12 month's time.

6] EGA – Planning for the Future:

Four presentations were provided by Jim Moss, Mark Gannon, Louise Roberts and Kevin Flynn on the present achievements of the EGA and plans for the future. Copies of certain of these presentations are attached.

The meeting then broke at 3:15 p.m. for the EGA AGM, with the Business meeting resuming at 4:00p.m.

7] CEO's Report:

Mark Gannon referred to his earlier presentation, but also noted the following issues:

Management of the RDOs:

Mark had instigated a group of management co-ordinators for the English RDOs to provide (geographically) closer line management and support. The co-ordinators for the groups of Regions is as follows:

North West and West Midlands – Catrin Devonald

North, Yorks and East Midlands – Louise Roberts

London and East – Lindsay Palfreyman

South, South East and South West – Gayle Mahoney

This instigation appeared to be working well.

Information Issues:

There appear to be severe difficulties in communications and the sourcing information from BAGA. This appears to be due to the fact that BAGA have lost their Human Resources Manager who has left the Association and the BAGA Ethics & Welfare Manager is also away on long-term sick leave. David Brush (BAGA Legal Director) has been informed of this situation and the concerns of the EGA CEO.

Membership:

Mark raised concerns over the uncertainty of the relative roles of BAGA and the EGA regarding membership and associated rebates. Meetings with Sport England, Brian Stocks (BAGA CEO) and Alan Sommerville (BAGA Board Chairman) are planned in the near future to discuss these issues further. There is also Home Country meeting scheduled with the BAGA President Paul Garber to discuss this, and other, matters.

Mark thanked Louise Roberts for her help and support during his first few months in post and for her outstanding work in terms of planning for the EGA.

Communication with the Regions still seemed to a huge stumbling block and it was essential that this was overcome in order to build a key partner framework. It was hoped that the recruitment of paid Regional Administrators would go a long way to overcoming this communication hurdle.

8] ESGA Update:

Papers relating to the two meetings held by the recently formed Steering Group had been previously circulated. Howard Todd commented that it was felt that this was proving to be a really useful forum. In particular it was noted that at the last meeting the WSP had been discussed and the group were also looking at improved communications.

9] Secretary's Report:

Mike Chappell noted that the EGA had received an invitation from Wayne Smith for all Regions to enter teams for the forthcoming English Trampoline Championships (22nd & 23rd Nov. 2008). It was intended that these Championships would stage also a Home Nations competition on the Sunday.

10]. Treasurer's Report:

Details of recent income and expenditure were tabled by the Treasurer. A net balance of £318,671.78 was reported. Overall finances currently appeared to be healthy with a further rebate of £177K due to be received from BAGA. Issues regarding BAGA Merchandising and income expected from this for the EGA were raised in Kevin's earlier presentation. Kevin raised deep concern at the decision made at the last BAGA Board meeting to disband the Finance & Audit Committee of which he was a member. This decision had been made based on a vote of five for, two against and seven abstentions of the Board members. The legality of this outcome was being questioned. (Treasurer's Report attached).

Jim Moss thanked Kevin for all his hard work in dealing with the EGA accounts.

11] Development Report:

Written reports by Louise Roberts had been previously circulated. Particular attention was drawn to the following:

Participation & GymMark:

There had been a notable increase in those taking part in gymnastics and becoming BAGA members. In addition the number of GymMark accredited clubs had risen by over 140 in just one year.

Club & Coach Programme:

The funding received from Sport England was being implemented with the employment of coaches within 47 projects across England to support the Programme.

Funding:

All CCDP grants have been allocated. In addition the EGA has been complemented on meeting Sport England KPIs for March 2008. The sport is held to be position leading in many aspects, particularly with regard to issues such as development and volunteers. This has led to an additional £100K in funding supplied by Sport England. This funding will be used to support UKCC issues and the production of new resources.

Community Sports Coach Conference:

This had been held in early April at Lilleshall. It had been well attended with positive feedback received.

12] Volunteers:

A paper submitted by Helen Webb had been previously circulated. An additional report on the recently held Leadership Camps had also been circulated. These were deemed to have been highly successful with more to follow.

13] Ethics and Welfare:

a) A report provided by Avril Spriggs had been previously circulated. It was noted that the South Region have now have appointed a Regional Welfare Officer (Val Brown).

b) Equity Action Plan: A copy of the draft Action Plan had been previously circulated. It was noted that the EGA needs to pass the preliminary standard for equity and that an agreed policy was required as part of its wish to become fit-for-purpose. Jim Moss raised the issue of the costs and resources that would be involved in implementing such a policy. Mark Gannon responded that Sport England would be asked to fund this activity. There would be a need to allocate EGA staff time to support this, but this should be integral to what already exists in terms of staff to support such matters. The action plan was agreed by those present, subject to the required funding becoming available.

14] Any other Relevant Business:

BAGA Board Report: A report by Sue James on the Recent BAGA Board meeting, with additional comments by fellow Board members Jim Moss and Kevin Flynn had been previously circulated.

The meeting closed at 5:00p.m.

15] Date of Next Meeting: 5th July, 2008, at the Heath Lodge Hotel, Marston Green - Board Meeting – 10:45 a.m.

If no remarks are addressed to the Chairman by 10th June 2008, these Minutes will be considered to be Adopted and signed immediately by the Chairman (as Chair of the Meeting) as a true record of proceedings.