



## Annual General Meeting of Scottish Fencing Ltd

Held at the Scottish Fencing's office, Caledonia House, 1 Redheughs Rigg, Edinburgh EH12  
9DQ Saturday 24 February 2018

### Attending:

#### Board of Directors

George Liston, (GDL) President and Chair  
Sheila Anderson, (SA) HR Director  
Dave Carson, (DWC) Finance Director  
Martyn Foley, Events Director  
Hugh Kernohan, (HK) Performance and Governance Director  
Gail Prince, Communications Director  
Bill Steele, Selection Director

#### Staff:

Vincent Bryson, (VB) Chief Operating Officer  
Liz Anderson, Executive Administrator (West Lothian Fencing Club)  
Alex Pearson, (AP) Club Development Officer

#### Attending:

Andy Bryson (Dunblane Fencing Club)  
Keith Davidson (KD)  
Stephen Ferguson (Salle Ossian)  
Clyne Grant  
Alan Loveland  
Iain Morrison  
Glen Sancroft  
Jennifer Sancroft (JS)  
Paul Thomson  
Ruth Thomson  
Sean Walton (Salle Holyrood)

#### Apologies received:

Phil Carson, Coach Education Manager (Salle Ossian)  
Ross Morrison, Director responsible for Development and Safeguarding  
Jennifer Griffin, sportScotland Partnership Manager  
Sarah Dolan  
Rob Blackburne  
Karen Grant  
Charity McArdle  
Sam McCarlie  
Mhairi McLaughlin  
Paul Neil-McLachlin  
Lesely O'Donnell  
Mike O'Donnell

## Minutes

### 1 Minute of Scottish Fencing AGM, 18 March 2017

The minute of the Scottish Fencing AGM held on the 18 March 2017 were agreed. Proposed by Hugh Kernohan, seconded by Keith Davidson.

### 2 Presentation of Accounts for period 01/04/2016 – 31/03/2017

DWC summarised the accounts. 2016/17 was a successful year which generated a £7k surplus resulting in a £5k tax charge. Reserves climbed from £39k to £65k. It was stated that there was likely to be a deficit this year with the focus on development spend. Currently cash reserves were £55k.

In response to a question, SF had not asked sportscotland for an increase in their investment for the year to March 2019. The budget for 18/19 was likely to look different from the previous year but SF had still to hear the outcome of the investment bid submitted in October.

The accounts to 31 March 2017 were proposed by Jennifer Sancroft, seconded by Glen Sancroft.

### 3. Election of Director

(No nominations were received so no director was appointed.)

### 4. President's Report

GDL presented SF Milestones for this year:

- Induction of New Board
- KPMG governance audit was satisfactory with comments which were all subsequently addressed.
- Appointment of a COO (this was in line with other sports of a similar size)
- Creation of a strategy to focus on clubs as the key to developing the sport through an increase in participation and membership
- Building on SwordMark accreditation scheme, with two clubs achieving super club status (and more following soon)
- Providing staff with a better infrastructure and IT access.
- Team clothing – outsourced giving others the work overhead and financial risk and releasing the SF staff and volunteers resource to focus on other projects.
- AA's resignation enabled SF to recruit an external consultant to review development and performance

Looking to 18/19 the Board would continue to deliver the annual plan and would map SF's strategy for the next four years (possibly longer). SF needed to continue building the relationship with sportscotland which remained key and to be prepared for a possible reduction in investment (lottery income had reduced significantly in recent years).

The meeting opened to the floor for questions.

JS suggested that if future club/new member initiative grants gave funds earlier in the process it could help those clubs without reserves to run introductory sessions. Also not all clubs were in a position to

run after-school activities as their coaches worked full time. VB replied that SF was trialling club grants and that if SF received similar funding in the future SF would review if and how these were awarded.

JS suggested the Board look to introduce referee training. VB replied that referee training was not isolated, but interlinked with the Coach Education programme, performance squads and talent development, all of which were under review.

It was added that, as a small organisation, SF could not do everything; the Board could provide direction. On the theme of looking to widen the capacity of the Board, the meeting discussed the role of weapon captains to help with the identification of talent, feeding into the BF Talent pathway which was funded (£250K per year), looking for clubs and sections to provide opportunities for recreational fencers.

With regard to Coach Education, SF needed to focus the current programme on where there was a need for coaches and to recruit coaches in locations where SF could build capacity. The Coach-education scheme, led by Phil Carson, had delivered the sportscotland investment target, which was to increase the number of qualified coaches at Levels 2 and 3.

KD asked the Board to review the date of the AGM as, at this point, SF did not know the outcome of its investment bid with sportscotland. The Board added that they had considered holding the AGM in conjunction with another event to increase opportunities to attend.

VB presented information on membership. SF was looking to understand membership turnover or churn and focus on development activities to look at projects which provided sustainable growth. AP had been analysing membership information identifying underlying trends so that SF could understand the drivers behind churn. In future the key was building a framework and structure, investing in clubs. AP highlighted a new pilot with South Lanarkshire which had youth leaders trained as Level 1 coaches with the long-term view of starting a club in the area led by a more experienced coach. VB added that the benefit of having a consultant who had experience of other small sports was to find other new ideas and initiatives like this pilot.

The Board confirmed that they were in the process of reviewing what organisations were involved in Scottish Fencing (the Scottish Schools Committee, F4SF etc) with the view to building a competition calendar which was fit for purpose and which, for example, met younger fencers' development requirements.

In response to a question, GL stated that there was no plan to do any formal fundraising for teams travelling to the CFC or CJCFC. Previously, effort had gone into fundraising without much success.

## **5. Awards**

The following awards were made.

**Sword of Merit:** Lesley and Mike O'Donnell.

SF recognised their contribution and commitment to volunteering for fencing in Scotland. Bill Steele accepted the award on their behalf. SA thanked VB for his efforts in acquiring invitations to a Royal Garden Party at Holyrood for the O'Donnells.

**Leon Crosnier Award:** Mhairi McLaughlin

SF recognised her notable victory in U23 GB Ladies' Foil Championships. Sean Walton collected her award.

**Crosnier Award for Coaching Achievement: Dunblane Fencing Club**

In light of the coaching work by Charity McArdle and Rob Blackburne and as a result the number of young fencers from Dunblane that had represented GB at Junior and Cadet level. Andy Bryson collected the award on their behalf and added that Gregor MacCallum had also done a huge amount of coaching on behalf of the Club and it was agreed that the minutes should highlight his contribution to the Dunblane Fencing Club coaching team.

To mark their accreditation as "super clubs "Swordmark banners were awarded to both Salle Holyrood (received by Sean Walton) and Salle Ossian (received by Stephen Ferguson).

The meeting closed at 11.30.