Board of Directors Meeting – May 2026

Minutes

Date: Monday 11 May 2026

In person meeting at The Studio, 7 Cannon St, Birmingham, B2 5EP

Board attendees: Rob Woods, Alison Howe, Justine Albert, Peter Brooke, Andy Robinson, David Rosen, Pauline Tryner, Keith Willdig, Zac Randall

Invited Guests: Joe Fermor-Worrell

Apologies: Gregg Peers, Duncan Birtwistle

Minute Taker: Joe Fermor-Worrell

1. Meeting Administration

- The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.
- The Chair informed the Board of the passing of Dave Richardson from Ireland. The Chair and CEO have passed on their condolences to Dave Richardson's family, Orienteering Ireland and NIOA.
- The Chair reported Gregg's apologies due to an urgent family matter and passed on best wishes from the Board.
- The meeting was agreed to be recorded; the recording will be stored on Peter Brooke's personal drive and deleted once minutes are approved.
- The Chair reminded directors that safety, environmental and welfare considerations need to be at the forefront of our decision making.
- David Rosen raised issues with membership renewals and direct debit requirements. The CEO referenced a previous Board discussion and paper on the subject. The Board discussed various options, such as looking for different providers for automatic renewals, and the logistics behind this. the Finance Manager is currently in discussions with providers and will provide the CEO with costings and options for the Board to review.
- No declarations of interest were raised.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

- The minutes of the virtual meeting on 20th April 2026 meeting of the Board were approved without any changes.
- The CEO circulated the reporting of a Serious Incident Protocol to the Board prior to the meeting. The Board agreed that while flexibility is essential, clarity is equally important. CEO to refine the language to balance discretion with responsibility.
- The CEO demonstrated the new data dashboard. The Board welcomed the transparency but stressed that data quality must be safeguarded to avoid "garbage-in/garbage-out" issues.

3. Governance – AGM 26:

- No member proposals were received by the deadline of 10/5/26.
- Two questions have been received from members to date, one regarding the work of the Universities Officer, and how this would look in the future. The second question is regarding BOF's future strategy on the work in schools.
    - Alison Howe questioned whether this would be ready to be addressed before the AGM, and the Chair requested this to be circulated to the Board in advance, the CEO agreed to this.

3.2 To agree proposals from the Board

Membership fees

Proposed membership fees

	2026 fee	2027 proposed fee
Seniors	£17	£20
Young Adults	£11	£12
Juniors	£5	£6
Family offer	£39	£46

The above fees were discussed by the Board at length. The CEO highlighted that BOF have not followed inflation between 2020 and 2025, had not yet received Sport England funding confirmation, and had faced increased costs for significant database and website investment.

- This was agreed by the Board.
- The Chair offered praise for the value for money, and the low cost of the membership compared to other sports' National Governing Bodies.

Event levies

	2026 fee	2027 proposed fee
Seniors (members)	£1.85	£2.00
Seniors (non-members)	£2.80	£3.00
Juniors	£0.60	£0.65

The event levies were discussed by the Board at length alongside the membership fees. The CEO highlighted that BOF have not followed inflation between 2020 and 2025, had not yet received Sport England funding confirmation, and had faced increased costs for significant database and website investment.

- This was agreed by the Board.

Affiliation fees

The CEO presented four proposals to the Board for consideration. These looked at retaining the current fixed fee for all versus a sliding scales for affiliation fees based on different factors.

The proposals considered were:

1. Retain the current structure of a fixed fee for all clubs.
2. Have a fixed fee and an additional small cost per club member.
    a. Have a fixed fee and an additional small cost per senior club member.
3. Have a fixed fee with a percentage fee charged per club depending on their membership fee.

The Chair posed the question of whether clubs comprehensively understand what affiliation provides them, for any reason. The CEO highlighted the web page which has now been added to the website, which outlines a range of benefits and support. The website was praised by the Board for its information and simplicity to understand.

The Board discussed the four proposals and impact on all clubs.

- The Board voted on as follows:
    - Proposal 1: 6
    - Proposal 2: 0
    - Proposal 2a: 1
    - Proposal 3: 0
    - Abstain: 2

The Board voted in majority for proposal 1 - The Board agreed that focus on the additions to the benefits of affiliation and investment in infrastructure (New database, increased safeguarding support), should underpin this increase.

- The Board voted on whether £120 was an appropriate figure for the increase, or a lesser figure
    - £120 – 7
    - Lesser – 2
- The Board offered no objection to freezing of University Club affiliation fees at £25.

Proposed affiliation fees

	2026 fee	2027 proposed fee
Clubs	£95	£120
University Clubs	£25	£30

Director nominations

The CEO reported that three nominations for the two elected director positions had been received. These where from: Alison Howe, Rob Lines, John Leeson.

Discussion focused on fairness, transparency, and ensuring an appropriate balance of skills and experience on the Board, with particular reference to future financial expertise.

The Board also considered succession planning and the potential benefits of inviting prospective future directors to attend Board meetings as observers. As part of this discussion, the possibility of increasing the number of elected Director positions from six to eight was explored. This could provide flexibility to appoint individuals with significant skills and experience when no vacancies are available. It was noted, however, that any increase in the number of elected Directors would require an amendment to the Articles of Association.

The Board agreed that there is merit in inviting individuals to observe Board meetings, either as part of a development pathway prior to election or appointment, or where the Board believes their involvement would be beneficial. No action will be taken at this stage to increase the number of elected Director positions, although the option will remain under consideration as part of future succession planning discussions.

Auditors

The CEO confirmed no changes required to the current auditors.

Articles of Association

DR provided an update on the amendments and these were ready for the AGM. Gender neutral wording has been applied throughout the document and timelines shortened ahead of future AGM's.

The Chair suggested in article 3.19 that British Paralympic association should be added to the list alongside British Olympic association. The Board agreed this should be added.

The Board approved the Articles of Association for the AGM.

2025 Annual Report

The CEO was unable to share with the Board the draft version due to delays receiving some content. The report will be shared as a matter of urgency when ready.

Governance – Other

3.8 Trans Policy

DR reported back following the Trans Policy sub group work that had been undertaken. This followed the updating of legislation and guidance recently published by the government.

The updated Trans policy now applies to all events, not just major ones, and the female ranking list is restricted to biological females.

DR raised technical questions about ranking list filtering; ZR will circulate comparative policy wording.

The Board unanimously approved the policy, effective 1 June 2026

3.9 Code of Governance

The CEO discussed the updating on the Code of Governance which was submitted to Sport England, with Sport England complimenting the amount of information available on the website.

The continuity section was updated and submitted to Sport England by the CEO on 7/5/26. The CEO reported that we are awaiting final confirmation from Sport England on our compliance with the code.

The Board noted the update on the on the submission of the code.

3.10 People Plan

The CEO discussed the People Plan, which works to ensure appropriate support and development for all members, volunteers, and members of staff.

This has been agreed by Sport England and is required to be reported back to the board on an annual basis.

The Chair discussed that this can be continually reviewed and improved, but proposed this to be agreed, and further work to be done by the Board to see where this fits in with the overall strategy.

The Chair also offered clarity that an initial version was approved by Sport England, however he highlighted that this can be improved upon through Board feedback and further development.

No current actions were required.

4. Finance

- **Audit completed – no concerns to raise**
    - Board agreed that they're happy for Rob Woods (Chair) to sign off on this.
- **Management Accounts to the end of April**
    - This has been sent out, Andy Robinson highlighted the Super Levy line showing as zero – CEO confirmed that we're awaiting payment from a major event which would populate this.
    - Andy Robinson highlighted a grant of £4k from the Orienteering Foundation for Trail O equipment had been received. The Chair praised the publicity shared about this.
    - The CEO shared that there has been no update from Sport England since the last meeting. Contractually, Sport England have to confirm by December funding decisions from April 2027 and the submission will alter based on the submission window offered, which remains at Sport England's discretion. The Chair shared optimism about our submission but stressed that preparation is required for a worst-case scenario.
    - The CEO shared an update from The Sport & Recreation Alliance. BOF has cosigned a letter (with 76 other NGB's) protesting a rumoured £120million of cuts across the school sport sector from Dept of Education and Health. The Board noted their support for the letter.
- **Annual Finance Report**
    - The CEO shared the intention to do this annually after the audit conclusion, and providing the Board with a report that shows capabilities of staff to meet current business needs and pre-empt any future challenged.
    - It was noted that the current Treasurer Andy Robinson's third term concluded at the 2027 AGM, and the requirement for a new treasurer was discussed. Appropriate planning to be put in place.
- **JK 2026 Finances**
    - The CEO shared that we are awaiting final figures from the JK, the event was 1527 runs down vs JK 2025, and therefore the event will not make the usual surplus and thus the projected levy income will be significantly affected.

- The Board discussed the variability of organiser costs and other factors which have affected the event in 2026 and how lessons can be learnt to support the challenge of ensuring consistent budgeting across regions in the future. The Board believe 2026 to be an exception with the reduced number of entries when assessing trend data from the last few years.

5. Matters of Significance

5.1 Insurance Claim

An insurance claim has been received following the British Championships in South Wales, site staff reported being happy on the day, but the landowner objected and alleged damage to the grassed area used for the arena. There are conflicting accounts to the extent of the alleged damage.

This case is being dealt with by the insurers. A progress update will be provided at the next Board meeting.

5.2 Complaint Update

The Chair shared that the investigation part of the complaint has concluded, an independent panel will provide recommendations based on the independent report.

This will result in recommendations to be provided to the British Orienteering board, and to SOA.

6. Welfare & Safeguarding

No cases to report, and the Chair thanked everyone who attended the Board Safeguarding training.

7. Strategic Plan

The Chair introduced the session in which the Board aim to confirm the strategic intent to 2032, articulate the organisation's desired future state, and provide initial direction on the proposed strategic framework.

The goal for the Board, is to differentiate the overall strategy from the operational plan, and to enable British Orienteering's workforce to be able to operate without the need to constantly ask the Board.

- The values had been discussed previously and will be discussed further at the July Board meeting.
- The Board considered and discussed the requirement for the strategic plan, and

- The difference between the 'headlines' of the Strategic Themes, and the 'how' of the themes in practice is significant. Separating strategy from plan, and how they differ.
    - JA highlighted the requirement for flexibility, change and pivoting that is inherent with this.
    - KW discussed how the data dashboard and metrics are an important step to showing how the sport is growing and developing.
- The Board discussed the strategies of other sports and areas we could learn and develop our own plan.
- The Board agreed the new plan will be evolution rather than an entirely new plan. There will be work to develop a 'Balanced Scorecard'. This will provide key metrics including data, satisfaction and other measures which can demonstrate success or identify areas for further work.
- At the July Board meeting the strategy section will form the main part of the agenda and specifically discuss the values, balanced scorecard and headline themes.

8. The JK & Major Events

The Board discussed the JK and Major Events, their purpose and challenges being faced. This supported the later discussion regarding the challenges faced for the JK 2028 following SWOA withdrawing as hosts.

Key Discussion Themes

- **Purpose of the JK:** Discussions centred around whether the JK should primarily serve elites or be a broader participation festival. The Board wished for the JK to remain at Easter and be a primary orienteering competition. Ideally in the best terrain available.
- **Course progression:** CEO noted feedback that the jump from Light Green to TD5 is significant. When looking at adults, not all will have the technical capability or desire to complete their age category courses but would take part in a longer less technical course. The Board discussed whether adding an intermediate course would offer a middle-ground for intermediate-level orienteers. This can be an option moving forward.
- **Hosting challenges**: PT raised whether the event's size is itself the barrier. The discussions noted that over-organising leads to burnout and reluctance to host again. The Board discussed the need to reduce expectations and avoid "perfection pressure." There will be a need to review the JK handbook and minimum requirements.
- **Standards vs bidding:** Chair proposed a set of compulsory standards plus recommendations. Board supported standards but rejected a bidding process for the hosts.
- **Rules and barriers:** The Board discussed whether complex rules deter less-experienced organisers. Additionally, the application process for Planners at JK events and rule inconsistencies (e.g., timed road crossings) between IOF and national events were discussed.

- **Supplier consistency:** CEO raised the consideration of central contracts/ agreements for event services across major events to reduce volunteer workload in repeating the same requirements across events.
- **Calendar control:** CEO suggested reducing embargo periods for Major events to 12 months. This is to be suggested to the rules group for consideration.

  The Board agreed the JK should remain at Easter with a protected two week window on either side, where unless in exceptional circumstances, no other major events can take place.
- **JK2028:** The CEO provided an update on the challenges in finding a host/ venue for the JK in 2028. Work was ongoing with the sub group to explore various options. PT suggested asking JK29 organisers if they could host JK28 instead, then returning to South West for 2029. Chair and AH to approach South West; CEO to approach South Central. CEO to also make enquiries to see if the British Championships could move date in 2028 due to the JK, the British Sprints and BOC taking place within a five week period.
- **Alternative festival events:** PT proposed exploring a proposed a newcomer-friendly premier orienteering event during the summer to encourage families, newcomers and all orienteers to enjoy a variety of orienteering including building on the Quid Games concept for engagement. This will be explored within the development of the next strategic plan.

11. International Matters

The Board noted and congratulated John Kewley's re-election onto the IOF Athletes Commission for Trail O.

The CEO will attend the IOF General Assembly on British Orienteering's behalf. The Chair is intending to join the meeting online.

Any Other Business

No further business was raised.

The meeting closed at 16:08.

Next meeting to be held on Monday 13th July 2026 at The Studio Birmingham.


British Orienteering