

Board of Directors Meeting – February 2026

Minutes

Date: Monday 9 February 2026

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

Board attendees: Rob Woods, Alison Howe, Justine Albert, Duncan Birtwistle, Peter Brooke, Gregg Peers, Andy Robinson, David Rosen, Pauline Tryner, Keith Willdig.

Invited Guests: Kay Hawke, Joe Fermor-Worrell

Apologies: Zac Randell

Minute Taker: Joe Fermor-Worrell

1. Meeting Administration

- The Chair welcomed attendees and congratulated Alison Howe on her British Night Championships win.
- The Chair set out his expectations for the meeting and encouraged the directors to adopt three working principles: **challenging, considerate, collaborative**.
- The CEO reported Zac Randell's apologies due to an urgent matter at work.
- The meeting 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.
- No items for any other business or declarations of interest were raised.
- The CEO highlighted James Hammond's success at the Edinburgh University Sports Awards. The Board passed on their congratulations.

2. Partnerships & Concepts

The CEO welcomed Kay Hawke to present on Partnerships & Concepts.

Kay reported on the success of Quid Games 2, including reflections, updates, and future direction for the concept and partnerships that have been developed.

Quid Games 2 built on the first event linking in with more established and well known partners and showed a significant increased reach across social media platforms. In addition, a two-page spread in Sportshoes magazine on the event and orienteering will reach every sports

shoes customer providing an exciting and valuable marketing opportunity provided by the work with Sports Shoes.

Discussions were raised about the potential for clubs to take learnings from the events and formats, to host their own events. A webinar will be delivered by Kay in February to support this.

David Rosen raised issues around delayed results posting compared with other events, and further discussions around limited entry numbers and potential for intermediate-scale events supported by clubs. Delays in result publication was recognised and will be improved. Event numbers had been restricted due to both commercial and strategic decisions.

The Chair emphasised the strategic priority to increase participation and the need to convert event participants into regular club members.

The Board thanked Kay for her work on Quid Games.

KH left meeting at 11:47

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the 8th December 2025 meeting of the Board were approved without any changes.

Gregg Peers requested a BOF email address for external collaboration; PB confirmed this is in progress with Air IT.

Actions updates

Reserves Project Funding:

- As expected, no request from JEC at this stage.
- Competitions Group Coordinator: Volunteers Dom Green and Thomas Laraia are leading engagement in this area with the support of the Performance Team;
 - Focus on M/W21E aspirations; 65 athletes signed up so far, 15 attended the first training camp.
 - RW requested brief progress update for a future Board meeting.

JK 2028:

- A subgroup has been formed; first meeting scheduled for 10 February with BOF/ SWOA/ Board representation.
 - Josh Wright is coordinating for BOF.
 - Access enquiries already underway with Forestry England.

Transgender Policy:

- We are still awaiting government guidance; proposal to reform the working group to discuss areas ahead of published guidance.
 - Volunteers to sit on the group: PT, GP, DR, AH.
 - RW requested any additional information available. The CEO is to check files and share any notes.

4. Headline End-of-Year Data

The CEO reported the following end of year data:

- Membership remains stable: **8,920 (2025) vs 8,963 (2024)**.
- Runs at events increased by 7,000: **156,299 (2025) vs 149,294 (2024)**.
- Discussion on membership lapse rates (cited in the 80% range which is in line with previous years).
- As set out in October to the Board and membership, the aim is to reach 10,000 members within five years and 160,000 runs within three years.

The CEO noted major event participation remains consistent; two thirds of increased runs occurred at local level which is a positive reflection of the work clubs are doing.

5. Finance

End-of-Year Accounts

- End of year deficit: **£18k**. this is in line with expectations and the Boards desire to reduce the levels of reserves.
- The annual audit has commenced with no concerns raised at this stage.
- Sport England Award. The application window is due to be open between April and September with a decision expected by December for funding from April 2027.
- Query raised on performance funding data to support projected expenses for international competitions.
- Commercial income line reduced in 2025 due to less coaching activity; The 2026 budget has been adjusted accordingly. But the new instructor award will be applicable to clubs in 2026 so this line should return to a more stable level.

Insurance Policy

The CEO provided an update that since the last Board meeting, Howdens had been able to arrange a three year deal with the insurers. The three-year deal sees a 2% increase in 2027 and 2028 pending no significant claims. This was agreed offline between the Chair, Treasurer and CEO due to time constraints.

It was agreed that at the end of the three year deal (in 2028), to consider tendering for the insurance to ensure the deal is appropriate for our sport.

RW reported contact with *Compass Sport* regarding a planned publication on insurance and access; The CEO has since spoken with the member to clarify their concerns and expects the article to be withdrawn.

The Board noted potential misunderstanding among members regarding insurance. Phrasing was to be considered in any further communications. It was suggested to reword the event disclaimer to remove double negatives and emphasise insurance as a member benefit.

Trail O Equipment Funding Request

Trail O have submitted a request: £6,500 for equipment to host WREs in the UK.

The Orienteering Foundation have confirmed a £4,000 contribution and requested BOF to fund the remaining £2,500.

The Proposal was approved (seconded by GP, no opposition).

PT highlighted potential for a junior Trail O event for South Yorkshire Orienteers.

6. Governance

AGM 2026 – Saturday 27th June 2026

The CEO is exploring hosting the AGM at the British Sprints. Awaiting confirmation of a room at the event.

The Annual report is underway; Orienteering Foundation submission received and all contributions required by the end of March.

No proposals have been submitted to date.

Action: The CEO is to arrange an additional online Board meeting to discuss any proposals ahead of the AGM ahead of sign off at the May Board meeting.

Articles of Association

DR summarised the previous review history and areas of disagreement.

The Board agreed a full rewrite is unnecessary but that areas of minor updates suggested by DR were required.

Action: DR to locate and circulate the most up-to-date version with tracked changes for Board feedback.

Day Membership

The Board discussed whether day membership should be an option as part of our structure.

AH suggested integrating into entry platforms such as race sign-up to feed data into BOF systems. The consideration is GDPR and how different systems work across each other.

PT queried the rationale for day membership and the Board felt more information would be needed to consider if this type of membership would be appropriate.

PB referenced the free Digital Membership which was used for the first time at the Running Show. This membership provides those interested in the sport an opportunity to engage with the sport, find out more about local orienteering opportunities and receive a targeted newsletter. Other sports have used this successfully as a first step to full membership and provide additional data capture.

Direct Debit / Auto-Renew of membership

The CEO highlighted that the executive was to investigate an auto-renewals process for members. This would simplify the renewals process. The Board approved this proposal in principle. More information will be brought to the Board for further discussion at a later date.

The CEO noted current challenges of the direct debit method including cost and current requirement for wet signatures.

The CEO and Kelly Perryman are to investigate this further.

7. Strategic Plan 2027

Values

The CEO presented the proposed values from BOF staff following the previous Board feedback.

There was a discussion on whether values should apply to staff, Board, and members collectively. With agreement like the strategic plan itself, these should be a whole sport set of values.

It was suggested to merge/remove 'Passion/Commitment' and reduce the total number of values. The suggested values will be kept in draft as the strategy develops and confirmed with the final strategy.

The Board is supportive of current direction.

Strategy to 2032

There was a good discussion on strategic direction and proposed pillars. This reflected on feedback from the staff and suggestions of future strategic pillars.

- Consideration of what success in 2032 looks like:
 - AH and KW highlighted the importance of membership growth and volunteer sustainability.

- DB discussed orienteering as a brand and what orienteering is. What is participants experience of orienteering and how do we understand their journey?
- Improvements to event experience (e.g., experience at the event, direct debit, paired registration).

To support the Boards thinking around what each pillar will mean, the Board requested a clearer understanding of the key work under the existing pillars and is there a variation per regions/ associations.

Action: The CEO to highlight the current four pillars, and outline:

- What the focuses of each pillar are
- What has been achieved under each pillar
- What areas have not been successful
- What future work could it under each pillar

The Chair proposed a full session dedicated to this topic.

8. Matters of Significance

Code of Governance

- The CEO to lead work where adherence to the code has yet not been signed off.
- Board support may be required and the CEO will approach the Board as required.
- AH queried need for annual updates; The CEO noted a committee will be required to review the people policy alongside other key policies per statutory requirements. These will be spread throughout the year.

Complaint Update

- Chair provided an update; initial findings will be fully independent. The investigation was due to conclude within the next couple of weeks.

GP left at 14:55 and returned at 15:39.

9. Welfare & Safeguarding

- No cases to report.
- Board specific training to be delivered by CPSU and ACT is scheduled for 2 March.
- Document for approval: *Orienteering Ireland & British Orienteering MoU* — approved pending final draft.

10. Standing Items

- **Rules Group:** No update.

- **Performance Pathway Steering Group:** Covered in reserves project spending in action points.
- **Trail O:** New Chair of Selectors for Trail O appointed.
- **Coaching:** New Instructor Qualification for clubs to launch in spring.

11. International Matters

- Noted IOC request to the IOF regarding youth athletes from Belarus and Russia competing internationally. No action required from the Board at this stage. There will be a need to review any updated guidance from the IOF for international events in the UK if the IOF make changes. However, British Orienteering can make separate decisions for all other events.
- No further updates.

Any Other Business

BOF only membership costs

PT raised the question that should British Orienteering only members pay a higher membership fee compared to those members who take out BOF and club memberships. There is currently only a small number of these members and considerations will be made when looking at the fee's for 2027.

No further business was raised.

The meeting closed at 16:00