

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
DRAFT
BRITISH JUDO ASSOCIATION (BJA)
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**HELD ON TUESDAY 09TH JUNE 2026 AT Sports & Recreation Alliance, 5th Floor, Holborn
Tower, 137-144 High Holborn, London, WC1V 6PL**

PRESENT:	Gerry Gualtieri, Chair	(GG)
	Neil Fletcher	(NF)
	Russell Brown	(RB)
	Ben Quilter	(BQ)
	Alex Slade	(ASL)
	Marc Preston	(MP)
	Nicki Tang	(NT)
	Wai Cheung	(WC)
	Delia Wright	(DW)
	Jonathan Jones	(JJ)
APOLOGIES:	Garth Illingworth	
	Chris O'Donavan	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Andrew Scoular	(AS)
	Lucy Cleary, Executive Officer	(LC)
	Kevin Ferguson, UK Sport	(KF)

No	ITEM	ACTION
78.64	WELCOME & APOLOGIES	
	Meeting started 10:00am	
	NF started the meeting	
	Apologies were given from Garth Illingworth and Chris O'Donavan	
	GG joined the meeting at 10:20am	
78.65	DECLARATION OF ANY INTERESTS/CONFLICTS	
	NF noted that communication from the Trust had reduced and requested an update on the current position.	

78.66	ANY MATTERS FOR ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	AS introduced Jonathan Jones as the new Welsh Judo Representative. He advised that the appointment had gone through the nominations process, had been accepted, and now required Board ratification. Decision The Board ratified the appointment of Jonathan Jones as the Welsh Judo Representative An introduction was held around the table to welcome Jonathan and provide him with the opportunity to meet the Board members.	
78.67	MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH APRIL 2026	
	The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 28 April 2026 were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to one amendment: - Removal of the duplicate entry for Shaun Davies, whose name appeared in both the Present and Apologies sections. Action LC to amend the minutes and remove Shaun Davies' name from the Present section. Proposer: RB Seconder: NF	LC
78.68	ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS (NOT INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA)	
	AS went through the actions from the previous minutes and provided updates as follows: - Previous meetings with BJC and AJA are to be arranged with Bernard Richmond. - SE funding: still awaiting information from SE regarding the next funding cycle, which is due to start next April. No documentation has been received to date. Discussion took place around whether this would be a rollover period or a shorter funding period. It was noted that something is expected to be released in July. - GG to speak with KR. - AS confirmed that KR's exit interview is scheduled for Wednesday 10 June. - Awaiting sign-off from Squires Patton Boggs on policies and M&R.	

	• Athlete contracts have been reviewed, with additional points to be added around athlete behaviour. This remains ongoing. • Six-month reviews have been completed, with the final version expected in November, which will include the agreed changes. • The ongoing BJC agreement will be discussed at the upcoming meeting. • Chair recruitment as MP will be stepping down at the end of the year, support and assistance where needed. • AS to catch up with Rowena regarding the operation of the Vice Chair and Vice President roles. The standing actions from the previous meeting remain in place. GG and AS advised they are meeting with the Chair of Sports Resolutions to follow up with feedback on the process at 14:00 and will need to leave the meeting at 13:30.	
78.69	RISK REGISTER	
	AS noted, that there had not been much change since the previous update. The key areas highlighted were the disciplinary matters, which were covered within the CEO report in relation to safeguarding, and the ongoing process for the replacement of KR. AS also noted, that KR had thanked everyone and wished to pass on her thanks to the Board.	

78.70	UKS – KEVIN FERGUSON	
	KF provided the following update: Karen Roberts has been appointed to a new role within UKSI, which was recognised as part of their wider success. UK Sport and UKSI will be working more closely together and are appointing new roles to help deliver their performance objectives to support their new strategy. There are still some vacancies to fill. For Judo, key areas of focus are building a larger, more targeted team around talent development, as well as looking at workforce and recruitment support. KF highlighted the importance of recognising and supporting NGBs, with the aim of having a dedicated team in place to provide support and improve efficiencies. It was also noted that any money spent on recruitment would go back into the system There are more staff who will be coming in to provide additional support for athletes, taking a more holistic approach to their needs There is a large transformation underway, looking at how to create a clearer pathway for athletes and how different resources can be used more effectively. New resources are also being explored, with ongoing feedback from athletes helping to shape the approach. KF noted that we should start to see a more skilled system and stronger network, along with more investment coming into the system to support athletes and help deliver medals. KF also noted that some people have been asking what the strategy is for Brisbane. The key message will be around encouraging sports to focus on engagement and commercial opportunities, which remain important areas for UKS. The International Relations Opportunities Fund will continue to run annually, aligning with the six-monthly reviews, priorities, and partnerships. The funding opportunities will be built around these priorities and are expected to open at the end of the month KF noted that the International Relations vacancy is due to close next week. The Sport Organisational Health vacancy is expected to open next week.	

	GG raised a question around athlete transition and how athletes can be supported beyond their sporting careers. GG noted that where athletes have qualifications, such as a degree, but do not have links into the commercial sector, there could be an opportunity to connect them with businesses. GG suggested that UKS could potentially help bring businesses and athletes together, creating opportunities for athletes to use their skills and qualifications in different sectors. GG noted that not all athletes want to become coaches or work within UKS, and this could provide another pathway and opportunity for them after sport. KF noted that the BOA and BPA have an important role in securing opportunities for athletes in this area, in a way that UKS cannot. KF questioned how athletes can be kept connected to the system if they are not directed through these routes. GG noted that this is something to consider further in conjunction with the BOA.	
78.71	Development Deep Dive – Judo Scotland	
	MP provided a deep dive update on Judo Scotland. • Membership remains steady at around 9,100. • There is an increasing risk around Three Step Safe, with the development and performance programmes still in a settling period. • The Board has been reviewing its strategy, staffing, and governance. Live sessions have been held, with the conclusion that there is not a significant need for change, pillars are aligned • A facilities working group has been established. Education is seen as a key priority, with opportunities being developed for athletes to complete courses alongside their training. • Judo Scotland continues to perform well in growing membership and achieving corporate excellence. • Scottish athlete performance was discussed, with MP expressing the view that athletes are currently underachieving. However, the Board felt that bringing Judo Scotland back under its own control had been a success. • £45,000 of funding from Sport Scotland which is being invested in full-time club staff to support development work. • Licence membership renewals continue to be a challenge, with encouraging members to renew remaining an ongoing issue. • A total of 22 members of Scottish completion workforce has been nominated for the Commonwealth Games.	

	• A team of 16 judokas has been selected for the Commonwealth Games, with this amount having been accepted by CWG. • Graham Randal has been appointed as Head Coach for the Commonwealth Games. • Judo Scotland has parted ways with Alberto and wished him well for the future. With the team short-staffed, Michael Horley has joined to provide additional support. • Rather than recruiting a Head of Performance, Judo Scotland is looking to appoint a Director of Judo, with the role focusing more on off-the-mat leadership. • Judith and a colleague from Gymnastics secured an additional £81,540 of funding. This funding will be used for development work and organisational support, rather than staff salaries. • MP confirmed that they will be stepping down. A new Chair is expected to be in place before the summer, with the vacancy due to go live shortly. • BJA, BJC and Judo Scotland are continuing work on a Memorandum of Understanding. A meeting has taken place with Bernard Richmond and the team, and all parties are keen to move the work forward and produce a formal written agreement. Discussion took place around non-compliance with Three Step Safe MP advised that Judo Scotland had received a number of complaints from clubs regarding those not complying with the Three Step Safe requirements and concerns over paying when others were not. Judo Scotland has engaged with the clubs and attempted to negotiate, but some remain unwilling to comply. It was noted that this reinforces the importance of progressing the BJC agreement. As a result, 46 individuals are no longer eligible to be members of Judo Scotland, as they are not members of an affiliated club due to the non-compliance issue. It was noted that BJC, BJA and AJA are all aware of the situation and are aligned in their approach. ASI asked whether any work was being undertaken to remind members of the value of their membership. It was confirmed that the 46 individuals cannot remain members of Judo Scotland while they are not affiliated to a club. GG commented on the Chair recruitment and acknowledged that finding the right candidate would be a challenge. GG suggested that, where possible, it would be beneficial for both the Chair and CEO to have a	
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	background in Judo, as this would provide a strong understanding of the sport and its needs. AS asked if MP could share the strategy document with him, as he would be happy to provide input and feedback.	
78.72	Audit & Risk	
	AS advised that the audit had been completed, with a more detailed update to follow after the audit findings meeting. Initial feedback indicated that it had been a fairly clean audit. The audit findings meeting will take place in July with the Audit and Risk Committee, before being presented to the Board in August. ASi noted that, over the last two or three audits, the findings had been minimal and straightforward to address. He added that, provided the current recommendations remain at a similar level, it would represent another positive audit outcome. NF advised that he had written an Internal Control and Audit Trigger paper, setting out which areas and trigger levels should be escalated to the Board. He offered to share this. Action NF to share the Internal Control and Audit Trigger paper. AS also noted, that UK Sport carries out periodic external audits. The next audit needs to take place before next year, and a request has been made for it to be scheduled at the end of November.	NF
78.73	CHAIRS REPORT	
	Report was taken as read, with the following highlights noted: GG highlighted the three new Board recruits: • Llyr Jones • Chris O'Donnovan • Jonathan Jones And advised that the next priority would be recruiting a replacement for Alex upon his departure in August, where Alex will be involved in the recruitment process.	

	GG provided an update on the current disciplinary processes, noting that one case remains ongoing and is expected to conclude by the end of the summer. GG encouraged members of British Judo to avoid engaging with speculation or commentary surrounding the matter. He offered to draft a communication for staff and athletes, reminding them not to acknowledge or engage with social platforms while the process is ongoing. Once the process has concluded, GG advised that a review will be carried out to consider any lessons learned, including whether anything could have been handled differently or whether any structural changes are needed. AS added that he would meet with the athletes to remind them of their responsibilities and expected standards of behaviour Action: • GG and AS to arrange a suitable time to catch up with the athletes to discuss responsibilities and expected standards of behaviour • Mongolia and China grand slams coming up shortly, with qualifications being end of June Home Nations Updates – all reports taken as read with the key highlights below Judo England – Report taken as read, highlights below: AS provided an update on the England restructure. • An areas meeting had taken place, with members generally supportive of the proposals. The main concern raised was the length of time the transition would take. • The structure will move from eight areas to five regions. An elected England Chair will lead the group, supported by the five regional Chairs. • Finance will be managed centrally by British Judo, with funding allocated through development plans. The Board will oversee progress against these plans. • Sport England funding will also be managed through the new structure, with the regions continuing to play a role in its delivery. AS added that, under the current constitutions, if an area is dissolved, its remaining funds would transfer to British Judo, with the intention that they would continue to be used for the benefit of that area.	GG/AS
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	AS highlighted that the main focus now is on the strategy and ensuring the areas are using their funding in a way that supports the overall strategy and priorities. Welsh Judo Association: The report was taken as read, with the following highlights noted: • Governance improvement plans are progressing well and are now aligned with the framework supporting Wales to improve development across governing bodies. • The governance and strategy review is progressing, with further work underway. • Good progress is being made with the Inclusion Framework, with developments taking place across the organisation to meet the EJU requirements. • Participation development continues to progress well. • Women and girls' membership remain a strong area for Welsh Judo, with continued investment and support being provided in this area. • The Finding Your Feet course has been delivered, with positive feedback received. Three Step Safe • Recruitment for the Head of Performance and Pathway role is underway, with two suitable candidates identified for shortlisting. This process is expected to conclude shortly. • Safeguarding provision has transitioned to a new provider following concerns raised through Welsh Sport. Andrew Bowley from the BJA has been briefed on the changes, and confidence was expressed that the new arrangements are in place and moving in the right direction. • The organisation is managing a period of change proactively. A Content Creator has been recruited to support communications, media activity and engagement around the Commonwealth Games. • Work is also underway to develop a communications strategy as part of the wider framework. • Natalie Powell and Darren McKeown are supporting the Commonwealth Games team. JJ advised that he would welcome the opportunity to catch up with people individually to maximise the impact he can have within the sport. He added that, if there were any areas where he could provide support or help strengthen relationships, he would be happy to get involved.	
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	AS asked JJ if he could support with finance matters alongside the existing team already in place. Northern Ireland Judo Federation Update: Report taken as read, highlights below: GG provided an update following the Council meeting, noting that there had been some confusion around the status of funding. At the previous meeting, it was understood that all funding had been received, however, it was highlighted that some funding was still outstanding. Russell clarified that funding is received quarterly throughout the year. All required work had been completed, and UK Sport were satisfied with the progress. When the funding was released, three quarters were paid, with the final quarter initially held back due to concerns around programme delivery. As there was no funding available to complete the programmes, the situation was explained to UK Sport, who were satisfied with the position. The final quarter funding has now been released, meaning everything is up to date. • A letter was received last Wednesday confirming that funding had been approved and that claims could continue as normal. • Work is ongoing around the skills matrix for the Board. Following the stepping down of Directors, rather than replacing like-for-like, a number of applications were received, with two new Directors identified to fill the skills gaps. There are also two Chair positions available, with a decision expected on Saturday. • Future funding arrangements will move to a five-year cycle rather than an annual cycle. • Despite the delays in receiving funding, the performance programme continues to deliver results, including medal success. • Female membership had previously been an area of concern but has improved significantly and is now progressing well. AS asked the Home Nations for an update on their selection numbers for the Commonwealth Games. • Scotland: 14 athletes selected, with 1 appeal ongoing. • Russell: 2 athletes selected. • England: 14 athletes selected, doubled up • Wales: 8 athletes selected. Break 11:40	
78.74	INTERNATIONAL REPORTS	
	AS provided an update on the Grand Prix event, which is particularly important for VI athletes as it is the final event before the Paralympics and	

	has a significant impact on ranking points. The intention is to send all athletes who are eligible. The estimated contribution required is around £20k, alongside an underwrite. The previous event generated a small surplus. It was proposed that £20k is allocated from the 2028/29 budget, subject to UK Sport support. The Audit and Risk Committee will also review the proposal to ensure appropriate oversight. Decision: The Board agreed to proceed for the VIP Grand Prix to be allocated from the 28/29 Budget	
78.75	CHIEF EXECUTIVE UPDATE	
	Meeting commenced 11:50am Report taken as read with the key highlights: <u>Recruitment Update</u> AS noted that Alex Slade has now completed his eight-year term. The next Board meeting will take place in London at Howdens. The meeting will start slightly later, with an opportunity for the Board to have a drink together beforehand to thank Alex for his contribution. The afternoon session will run from 2.00pm to 5.00pm. Decision: The Board agreed to proceed with the arrangements of the revised Board Meeting on Tuesday 18 August Performance and coaching recruitment - the advert for the coaching role did not receive a strong response, so the focus shifted to an Olympic Development Coach position. Stewart McWatt, a former athlete, has accepted the role and will work with the juniors, helping to develop the programme over the next few years. Max Stewart has also joined the programme and will provide support to Winston at the centre for an additional two days per week. Stewart will start in July, with Max already having commenced. The Head of Sport Science and Sport Medicine vacancy is still ongoing. A total of 33 applications were received, which have been shortlisted down to seven candidates, with three now progressing to the final stage. Development Director vacancy, with three key areas being looked at.	

	The vacancy provides an opportunity to review the structure of the role. The previous role covered a significant number of areas, with safeguarding being one of the biggest elements. It was noted that across the wider sporting community there is a move towards dedicated sports integrity units. A review will take place to look at where we are currently, what support is needed, and how this could impact the organisation going forward. There is also a desire to bring all Home Nations into this work and develop a joined-up approach. Decision: All board are happy to proceed with integrity unit A significant investment and reflects the level of risk associated with this area. When the Home Nations are included, this figure increases further. The spend covers three main areas: • Staffing • Training • Legal support This also includes programmes such as My Voice, My Concern, alongside wider training and development work. Consultation with the safeguarding team will take place before any changes are introduced. DW asked how many people would be proposed within the unit. AS advised that the structure would include a Head of Unit, an administrator and a triage role, supported by a pool of zero-hour contracted investigators to carry out investigations when required. AS noted that the next step is to look at how the Home Nations fit into this structure and how the model could work across UKAD and the wider Three Step Safe framework. It was noted that, if all four nations were to come together, there could be scope for an additional person within the team. It was noted that the BJA safeguarding is currently funded by England. AS advised, that, if all Home Nations were to come together and contribute, there would be some rationalisation and consistency in supporting each other. Decision:	
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- **The Board agreed to amend the Development Director recruitment process, including updating the candidate pack, job description and structure before advertising the role.**

European Championships for Uniformed Services. The event has been discussed with Gerry and the Audit and Risk Committee. If the expected income is achieved, the event is expected to be under £30k, approximately £25k.

The event will be hosted at the BJA facility in Walsall. A number of costs have been negotiated down, including reducing the requirement from 12 officials to 5 and reducing the number of doctors required from 4 to 2.

Lisa Allan has been put forward for election. Mr Viser will be attending the Commonwealth Games, and in the meantime a submission is being prepared through International Relations to support Lisa's re-election for two major events — the Japan Grand Slam and Paris Grand Slam — as well as the European Congress and World Championships.

The European Congress proposal was reviewed, but following further work on the costs, it was felt that it was not financially viable. Initial estimates were £30k-£40k, however the actual cost was closer to £100k, with expected income of around £50k.

Decision:

- **The Board agreed NOT to submit a bid for the European Congress.**

Disciplinary Update

AS provided and update on the ongoing disciplinary matters.

The Charlie Young disciplinary hearing is expected to take place at the end of June/start of July.

AS noted that, going forward, the legal budget should be reviewed to ensure appropriate contingency is in place for any potential future requirements.

- Lifetime membership of Dawn Byrne were approved

Decision:

- **All Board members ratified Lifetime Membership of Dawn Byrne**
- ASi commented on the strategy map, noting that in some areas it is difficult to tell what should be viewed as a positive or a challenge. He suggested making the headings clearer, so it is easier to distinguish between strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.

[illegible]

	GG added that the transition has been delayed as Brian has unfortunately been unable to attend recent meetings, but everything is ready to move forward once those discussions take place. Action GG – to update the Board on Brian Davies position at next Board meeting. NF advised that the below members have been given their 6th Dan • Gordon Cameron • Mark James McCraw • Robert Sharp • William Redman Peter Powell has been given his 6th Dan on compassionate Grounds, Decision • The Board reviewed and approved the PGC report on the recommendations for the awards for the 6th Dan grades. MP raised a query regarding the junior selection policy. Judo Scotland has athletes in the junior programme who meet the selection criteria and Judo Scotland would like to self-fund their participation into the programme. MP asked whether the Board would support this approach. GG asked how athletes qualify for selection, noting that there are primary and secondary selection levels. Where there are insufficient athletes in a category, selection can move to the secondary criteria to provide development opportunities and gain junior competition experience. MP advised that he was not aware whether the athletes had qualified through the primary or secondary criteria. AS explained that this is a British Judo selection policy and that selection is based on the published criteria. He added that there are other opportunities for athletes to gain experience, such as European Opens. NF commented that if athletes meet the published criteria and are willing to self-fund, it would be helpful to understand why they could not be considered. MP noted that the GB Cadet policy appears to be different from the junior policy and asked whether the two could be more closely aligned.	GG
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	GG advised that more information is needed before the Board could discuss the matter further, including the names of the athletes and how they met the selection criteria. He noted that the purpose of having multiple selection levels is to allow flexibility where appropriate, but if the policy itself needs reviewing, that is a matter for the Board. It was agreed that MP would gather further information, including details of the athletes Judo Scotland wishes to self-fund, and share this for consideration. It was also noted that the matter should first be considered by the Performance Advisory Group before being brought to the Board if required. ACTION • MP to provided GG and AS all relevant athlete information There was no other business. GG closed the meeting by thanking attendees. The meeting closed at 12:50	MP
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