

## MINUTES – SEMLA General Committee Meeting

*7pm Monday 8 May 2017*

**In attendance:** Trevor Rogers (TR), Miles Whittle (MW), Ben Jessup (BJ), Nik Roberts (NR), Simon Peach (SP), Rob Gooch (RG), Paddy Atkinson (PA), Mike Barclay (MB), Mark Coups (MC), Steph Migchelsen (SM), Harry Collins (HC), Peter Mundy (PM), Peter Rawsthorne (PR), John Maynard (JM), Tracey Woodall (TW), Peter Compton (PC), Brucie Morris (BM), Dom Hewitt (DH), Jason Perrin (JP).

### **1) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies received from: Gabbi Simmonds, Ray Wood.

### **2) Acceptance of minutes**

There were no objections to the minutes, and they were passed by the meeting.

### **3) Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **4) President's Report**

TR invited MC to share a background to the ELA's decision to withdraw from hosting the Men's World Championships in Manchester and to answer questions from the meeting.

MC provided background information on the decision and reiterated that it was an enormously emotive decision, for those making the decision and those affected by it. As such, the decision was not taken lightly.

The scale of the event had been known since the bid process, with planning ongoing since 2013. Risk is recognised as part and parcel of the delivery of large-scale events, and the organisation had to mitigate against these. It was a significant task to deliver an event for 45-50 nations plus an FIL festival alongside this.

There were not multiple venues available due to the scale of the event, but there had been challenges logistically with both the venue and accommodation. Due to the price point for accommodation within the UK, the sum to secure the rooms was significant and higher than the ELA's annual budget.

With a change in the government's strategy for sport, there is also less support for NGBs and event delivery, with the quality of event expected by competing nations also commented upon.

Funding for the event had three main sources, namely partners (corporate or government), ticket sales and participants, and as planning for the event developed, it became clear that the ELA wasn't going to be able to break even from the event.

2017 gave some good, clear indications, with accommodation options on site, but five nations made the decision to arrange their own accommodation as per their rights under FIL rules.

Towards the end of January the ELA began to realise concern, and through meetings with partners regarding delivery, began to realise that the event had the scope to leave the ELA with a significant deficit. FIL subsequently agreed that the price point for competing nations would be particularly high and accepted withdrawal.

The ELA did not want to provide something sub-standard or leave the sport with a significant deficit.

PM queried the ELA's financial exposure from the event. MC explained that the expedience of the decision was in part to limit exposure, with £200k costs already spent over past 3/4 years. With a renegotiation on Sport England's grant, the ELA will see a small reduction on the 4-year grant awarded. This won't affect broad delivery, but will see a small reduction in talent programme funding.

JM asked what the financial costs might end up as and MC reiterated that it would be speculative to comment at this stage. He continued to reiterate that people are broadly disappointed but understanding, recognising that this was a prudent decision.

PM asked what the overall financial risk might have been, and it was explained that the size of the event (£4.2m) was twice the size of the ELA's turnover, so up to a £1m loss potentially if had gone ahead with the event.

TW queried the overall hit to talent funding, and it was estimated that this would be 25% over 4 years. With a £440,000 total over 4 years, it was anticipated as £25,000-£30,000 per year.

MB asked how far the ELA had ensured effective contingency planning throughout the process. MC commented that this was something that he had been reflecting upon over the past months. The 2017 Women's World Cup helped enormously in revisiting financial projections and an external agency had been employed towards the back-end of 2014, start of 2015 to analyse the level of risk. There was likely a significant amount of learning to be done by the ELA and FIL, with increasingly more complex events, even compared to 7/8 years ago.

HC enquired as to whether England might have lost the opportunity to host and it was comment that the international community likely has a decision to make about what we want from international events. Is it a matter of being a flagship event with only the best of the best taking part or a festival-esque event. FIL will be likely be leading a debate on this topic moving forwards.

RG commented on a comparison to the Ice Hockey World Championships recently held in Ireland, with a top tier and then more participation opportunities. MC responded sharing how FIL have done a great job in spreading the sport around world, and as such there are very few organisations who can host the scale of events that are now expected.

PM asked whether lacrosse in this country is moving forwards, particularly noting the reduction in funding from Sport England. MC reiterated that it was, but that with the introduction of the Sport Code of Good Governance, organisations are increasingly required to be prudent and fiscally resilient. There is always reputational damage in that you bid for something and couldn't carry it through, but it was explained that the ELA provided sound reasoning and were transparent with partners throughout the decision process.

JM queried if the relationship with Manchester had been damaged by the decision, with investment across recent years. MC shared that they were bitterly disappointed absolutely, but were involved throughout the process and were aware of the increasing financial risk.

PA asked about the degree of work done in securing financial support from corporates for 2018? Graham Brady MP had been advocating for the ELA and the event and sponsors are wanting to wait to see if TV coverage is secured, with few sponsors willing to share six-figure packages, but a significant amount of work was done to secure corporate sponsors.

SP queried what the ELA had known about the Israeli bid. It was explained how there is an understanding that the model is very similar but that there is no knowledge about base costs. The meeting heard that the US was also interested, but there was similar concern about the financial risk of delivering a similar event as well.

TR enquired as to the reasoning for FIL's change in the rule regarding accommodation. MC sees it more as a clarification not necessarily a change in the rules. The motivation for it is likely to get as many countries taking part as possible, but FIL will not be taking on any financial risk. It's been important to understand that the objective is ultimately to facilitate as many nations taking part as possible.

## **5) Treasurer's Report**

MW shared verbal report of Treasurer's activity, with lots of expenses throughout the month. Will be sharing expenses from across 2016/17 season, and revised budget for 2017/18 with the ELA later this week, requesting £10,000 budget for next season.

## **6) Secretary's Report**

BJ reported that he had attended Centurions' most recent meeting.

## **7) Youth Development Committee's Report**

TW shared a report from Ray Wood in his absence, commenting how good it was to see Portsmouth Pythons and Foxes down at SEMLA 6s. Continued to explain how U12, U14 & U18 teams are being fielded against the international school team, with 3 June & 24 June the dates for junior opportunities with Summer League.

There is also a youth tournament coming up in Frankfurt during October half term, and the ELA website is about to open bookings for the Boys Talent Assessment on Sunday 18 June, with the England v Hampstead All Stars match following this.

## **8) University Liaison Report**

There was no update for the meeting from Russell Farrer. BM reported 14 men's teams for inaugural BUCS 8s, with Bristol. Feedback focused on the date being close to exams, but there is undoubtedly an opportunity for SEMLA to market club opportunities at the event in future.

### **9) South Manager's Report**

It was reported that the South team won the Plate at the Nick Kehoe Trophy, coming fifth overall, with the team congratulated for this performance, particularly noting that a number of usual South players were away at the Alec Hebresky tournament.

### **10) Disciplinary & Complaints Panel's Report**

JM reported that there is one upcoming hearing on the week commencing 15 May. It was also reported that JM will coordinate HC, PA, Nick Ravenhall & Amit Biswas to discuss player eligibility proposal as representatives from Premiership teams, with update to follow.

### **11) Referees Secretary's Report**

SP reported that there were eight SEMLA referees at the recent BUCS 8s, with 12 referees officiating the three Flags Finals fixtures. Rob Collinge is also coordinating officials for Bluesfest.

### **12) Fixture Secretary's Report**

An end of season round-up was shared with champions and those relegated from each division detailed alongside the respective Flags winners and a verbal report of the fixtures statistics, noting 290 games in total in particular.

Jon Cooper is stepping down as SEMLA Fixtures Secretary with Brucie Morris and Anthony Thornton interested in taking up the post. BM also shared an outline of the potential for a restructure of the SEMLA leagues, and an overview of the discussions on social media around a 6/7 team Premiership, with a 10-team Championship spread across the East and West sitting below this. More information to follow.

### **13) Development Officer Report**

NR reported how the ELA staff restructure is ongoing, and that he is sorting the process for borrowing starter packs ahead of the coming season.

BJ read a brief written report from Gabbi Simmonds, detailing that Abbie Mitchell-MacKinnon has left English Lacrosse as the World Cup Legacy Officer and Festival Organiser. Anyone who has any questions on the legacy programme or World Cup Festival should get in touch with me on this email. Luke Wylie is still our CLDO for Surrey as well as his role for Guildford Lacrosse Club.

### **14) NLC Liaison Report**

PR updated how NLC met last week, looking at last year's aims & objectives, Men's Competitive Review, Women's Competitive Review and how the sport can strive to develop a national approach. There was also discussion about the ELA's online calendar and it was commented that SEMLA need to be proactive in submitting and be checking the online calendar when sorting fixtures to avoid clashes like the Winter Classic last year.

7 April was discussed as the date for SEMLA Flags Final, with age standards discussed for juniors and officials minimum ages also agreed as 14 for juniors and 16 for seniors. The minimum age for senior lacrosse has also been confirmed as 16, with no more junior dispensation allowed.

The meeting queried the rationale for this decision and it was explained that insurance was the main reason but the meeting commented how it did not make sense how this invalidated insurance. TR stated that he would write to MC, expressing that the reasoning shared is not sufficient and that SEMLA would like clarification.

It was also explained that National Lacrosse Day will now be National Lacrosse Weekend in September and that there has been discussion about reintroducing the Home Internationals for men.

### **15) Any Other Business**

NR reported how Bath 8s is now at 22 men's teams entered, with 33 teams as the maximum capacity.

**Please note that the date and time of the next meeting is the SEMLA AGM on Monday 19 June at 7pm.**