

**CAMANACHD ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING
TIME: 6PM - CONFERENCE CALL - TEAMS
MINUTES OF MEETING 29 MARCH 2023**

Attending	Apologies	Conflict of Interests Declared
1. Steven MacKenzie (SM) President		Beaully, Aberdeen University
2. Daniel Palombo (DP) Treasurer		Inverness
3. Burton Morrison (BM) Competitions		GMA
4. Lyndsay Bradley (LB) Equality		Ardnamurchan, WCA
5. Roddy McCuish (RM) Culture & Heritage		Macaulay Association
6. Kirsty Deans (KD) Youth		Badenoch Ladies
7. John MacRitchie (JMR) Officials		Lovat Shinty Club
8. John MacKenzie (JMK) Chieftain		Newtonmore, Shinty Memories
9. Richard Gall (RG) Vice Chieftain		Fort William
10. Sarah Birrell (SB) sportscotland	Apologies	
11. Derek O’Riordan, sportscotland		
12. Derek Keir (DK) CEO		Staff
13. Karen Williamson (KW) WCA Vice President		WCA, Glengarry
14. Jacqui Dunlop, Minutes		

1. Welcome

a) Apologies

SM welcomed everyone to the meeting. Derek O’Riordan was welcomed to the meeting as the new Partnership Manager, replacing Sarah Birrell.

b) Conflicts of Interest

SM noted that the Board should have completed the annual conflict of interest forms. DK confirmed that the link had been sent out. SM asked those Directors who had yet to complete it to do so for the next Board meeting. (*Action Directors / Chief / Vice-Chief*)

c) Code of Conduct

DK noted that everyone attending the Board was bound by the Camanachd Association Code of Conduct. This included maintaining confidentiality on issues discussed at Board meetings and also conducting themselves in a manner that would not bring the Association into disrepute when attending shinty events on behalf of the Camanachd Association.

d) Bereavements

The President and Board noted their condolences for the following bereavements:

Iain Cameron (Ballachulish, Glasgow Mid Argyll, Glasgow Celtic Society, Camanachd Association)
Dougall Morrison (Fort William)
Jimmy Gray (GAA, Na Fianna)

e) Minutes of Previous Meeting

SM asked for the minutes to be adopted and seconded if there were no further amendments. They were proposed by BM and seconded by LB.

SM asked if there were redacted minutes. DK noted they had been shared separately and asked the Directors to check the redactions ahead of the publication on the website. (*Action Directors/DK*)

Actions Carried Forward

- a) Circulate Code of Conduct – SM noted this was complete. (*Complete*)
- b) Redact and put minutes on line - SM noted this was complete. (*Complete*)
- c) Support Pack – this was still in transition, but all the contact details of the teachers who were on Shinty for Schools programme have been collected and when the pack is ready it will be distributed. (*Action KD*)
- d) Helmets for Goal Judges – JMR discussed the issue with Donald Stewart from the CRA and they agreed the option was there if a goal-judge wanted to wear a helmet but there was no requirement for this at the moment. (*Complete*)
- e) SAGE Cloud – DK said he would cover the issue as part of the Finance report. (*Complete*)
- f) Anti-Doping Montage – KD reported that that it will be issued during Clean Sport week which is week commencing 4 April. (*Action KD*)
- g) UHI Teacher Session – SM noted that the teacher training session had gone ahead and asked DK for an update. DK noted that it was a great example of partnership working with coaching being delivered to 60 soon to graduate teachers. DK noted LB had helped on the day and asked if she would like to comment. LB reported that the session had gone well although the weather had been challenging. The students were a little bit wary at first but they soon relaxed and really started enjoying the coaching. LB noted that she had been a long time advocate for this initiative and offered to continue to lead on this. (*Complete*)
SM noted that it was a model the CA would like to roll out elsewhere and asked LB if she could formulate a plan with RR to roll this out elsewhere. (*Action LB*)
- h) Formation of Equality Committee – SM asked LB to continue as the next action was also for her. LB reported that an article had been written to go out on the website looking for volunteers to join the Committee. Of particular interest would be members who had experience of one of the protected characteristics. (*Action LB*)

- i) Recirculate e-mail regarding indoor sixes – SM noted this action had been completed. *(Complete)*
- j) Include mandatory helmet wear/U25 for AGM – SM noted that the helmet actions was to be carried forward. *(Action DK)*
- k) Abstentions at AGM – SM asked DK to update. DK noted this had not been actioned as yet but the development team would canvas the clubs in the coming months as to why they abstained at AGM. *(Action DK)*
- l) 2024 MacTavish Cup venue – SM asked BM for an update. BM updated the Board that a letter had gone out to clubs asking for interested clubs to express an interest in hosting the final. *(Complete)*
- m) Meeting with John Finlayson – SM noted that John Finlayson had been busy with council business so they were looking to arrange a meeting in late April or early May. *(Action DK/SM)*
- n) Board review of Targets and KPIs – SM noted that these topics had been added to the agenda and they would cover it off there. *(Complete)*
- o) BBC Alba update – SM asked DK for an update on his meeting with BBC Alba. DK explained that BBC Alba had confirmed they'd cover the same number of games and he'd even secured a slight uplift in the match fees. BM asked if they'd requested any televised games be played on Sundays. DK explained that he'd explained the difficulties Sunday games presented as an amateur sport and how it was viewed by many within the shinty community. The BBC Alba team had been very understanding of this and had not even mentioned the need for Sunday games this season. DK said he would keep the Board updated with the discussions. *(Action DK)*
- p) Sportscotland loan – DK said he'd agreed with Sarah Birrel for the loan to be repaid. *(Complete)*
- q) Shinty Hurling International – SM noted that BM would lead on the International committee and asked DK if there had been any further updates. DK noted that the proposal was for a senior game in Belfast during October but was waiting for formal confirmation from the GAA. *(Action DK)*
- r) Referee strips – SM asked JMR is there was any update. JMR confirmed these had been received. *(Complete)*
- s) Child protection training link – SM noted that the Board had agreed to complete an online child protection course at the previous meeting although he admitted he had only registered for the course and hadn't completed it himself. He asked for everyone who hadn't completed the training to do so by the May Board meeting.
- t) Meeting with Argyll and Bute Council re Development post – SM asked DK for an update. DK noted that he had met with Live Argyll but it had proved impossible for Live Argyll to split the Development post into two shared posts with their Active Schools co-ordinators. The post would therefore be advertised as a Development Officer to see what interest there was. RM asked if he could be on the interview panel and if it could be a face to face interview in Oban. DK advised we will explore face to face interviews where practical *(Action DK)*
- u) Risk Register – SM noted this was linked in with the targets and KPIs and would be covered off later in the meeting. *(Complete)*
- v) Forbes Dunlop invitation to meet Camanachd Association – CA to meet with Forbes Dunlop in Inverness at a date and time to be agreed by DOR *(Action DOR)*

2 Matters Arising

- a) Board Governance

SM reported that he had approached Alan Clark, who was a previous sportscotland Partnership Manager, who would be delighted to join the Board. SM asked if there were no objections he would join the Board in May as Club and Volunteer Director. There were no objections.

b) Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport – Board E Learning

It was noted that procedures for dealing with Child Protection had been raised recently at a sponsors meeting and it was important that Directors were up to date with all developments regarding Safeguarding.

John Mackenzie asked if he also should do the training, as he was the independent Chairman of the Disciplinary and Sports Panel and it was agreed that it would be beneficial.

DK noted that the Camanachd Association has robust policies which are reviewed regularly, we are going through the sportscotland KPMG Audit and it had recently been confirmed by Children 1st that the organisation is still 100% compliant with the Child Wellbeing Standards. DK had also had a conversation with John Lunn, sportscotland, who had noted that he was comfortable with the organisation governance in relation to its size.

KD confirmed that Children 1st had done its annual review of the Child Wellbeing Standards and the Camanachd Association were given a green rating and were 100% compliant. Thanks were expressed to KD and the staff team on the work which had gone into this.

It was noted that during the discussion with the sponsor that issues such as local jobs and housing in communities where shinty is played is a common interest and the Camanachd Association will help to promote opportunities through its social media channels.

It was noted that Ballachulish had recently held an EGM and have agreed to keep going. BM noted that it was hugely appreciated that DK had attended the meeting on a Sunday and he was thanked for that. It was suggested that as they sometimes struggle for adult players that other clubs in the area could be approached to lend players and DK confirmed that the staff were exploring this option along with other initiatives including working with the Active Schools teams in the area.

b) Minimum Pitch Dimensions

DK explained that following incidents at a football pitch where life changing injuries were sustained, it was found that the club did not have a compliant distance around the pitch so the injury was not insured. This was the foundation of why the Camanachd Association had taken time to consult with Clubs on the dimension of pitches and run off areas.

Newtonmore and Lovat are two of the clubs which are not compliant with the current bye-laws. JRM and JMK both noted a conflict of interest and ahead of leaving the meeting provided some context on their Clubs views, ahead of a wider discussion.

JRM noted that the club is restricted in the run-off area, as there is a fence and it would not be practical to move it by one foot. There is a pinch point in one of the corners

which is up against a field which the Club doesn't own. He explained that the Club have never had an issue with injuries and they are compliant with having a wooden fence. Other clubs, he noted, have concrete and metal posts which are not compliant. The current run off area at Lovat is 5 feet.

JMK explained at Newtonmore the issue is the concrete steps leading the changing room. They have been there 30 years and there have been no issues. A solution may be to not allow the use of the front door of the pavilion, and use the side doors.

JMK and JRM both left the meeting. RG noted that in the Bye-Laws the size of the run off is 6 feet and 2 metres which are different sizes and it was agreed that there should be one size.

DK noted that whilst risks potential may be low due to the size of shinty pitches, there had been an incident in our sport so it is important to review and work with clubs to find the safest path forward. Additionally, whilst risk likelihood may be low extreme situations can cause serious injuries and consideration needs to be given to ensure player and spectator safety. Lovat don't have scope to make the run-off area bigger, and an alternative may be to make the pitch narrower. It was noted that the insurers have given a period of grace up as we understand it to the AGM so there is insurance in place currently although this hasn't been tested through a claim. He explained that it was important that the rules were consistent with what the insurers will insure.

RM noted that some pitches are not owned by the Clubs but by local authorities and if Clubs asked them to move fences it would not be done and there may be a danger of clubs losing facilities.

DOR explained that in Rugby the run offs are consistent in every venue, 5 metres, but the width of the field is variable. It was noted that there is more potential of a rugby player coming off the field of play than would happen in shinty.

SM noted that as the insurers have agreed a period of grace up to the AGM, the AGM will need to consider the run-off size and fence issues because a variety of fences are not compliant and some grounds have no fences. A new byelaw will have to be formulated for approval at the AGM.

SM noted that some of the measurements received from the Clubs may not be accurate and it was important to understand the problem fully before the byelaw changes can be considered. His own preference would be to leave pitch sizes as they were but to amend the bye-laws if possible to accommodate existing pitches.

There was general agreement that the pitch size should not be changed. It was agreed that accurate measurements need to be taken at all clubs, as the smallest run off area currently known was 5 feet, and then consideration would be given on the required run-off for the byelaw.

DK noted that this would be a big piece of work for the staff team to visit every club to get accurate measurements and noted that it was possible that Active Schools colleagues could be asked to support this independently. (*Action DK*)

RG asked that for the clubs which are non-compliant on the material used for the

fences, such as metal and concrete, are they currently insured. DK confirmed that the insurance company had agreed to honour claims this year up to the AGM albeit this will only be put to the test should something occur.

BM agreed that before asking Clubs to make alterations the full picture of pitches should be known, especially where there were no fences. He noted particular concern where spectators were on the touchlines and players were taking shys alongside them which was dangerous, although there was nothing in the byelaws which stipulated how far back spectators have to be.

RG asked who determined the size of the run-off was it the Camanachd Association or the insurance company and DK confirmed that it was up to the Association to amend the byelaws but when they were changed we would need to send them to insurers in order for the insurance to be in place.

The Board agreed with the proposal that a report was to be carried out on every pitch, including the size of run-off, materials of fences, if there were fences, and that the byelaws would be changed at the AGM, but that the pitch sizes would not be affected.

3. Director Reports

a) Finance -

DP noted that a report had been submitted and the Finance Meeting was held on 3 March 2023. The budget at 3 March has been updated and is now forecasting a loss of [REDACTED]. There has been two months of activity, with £[REDACTED] of income having been received and expenditure of just under £[REDACTED] with the current bank balance reported as [REDACTED]

The accounts for 2022 have yet to be submitted to the Accountant, as some figures are being worked on and it is hoped to get the information over to them in April. There will be a claw-back from sportscotland for the Girls and Women post of £[REDACTED], as they are clawing back underspends from governing bodies. DK noted that the post-holder didn't take up the position until January, which resulted in only a quarter of the year staffing being paid. The position is included over the next 3 years, and will also be part of the next strategic cycle, with DK noting to sportscotland that the Association wish to develop the post.

DOR confirmed that the sportscotland panel have met and the investment was approved for the Camanachd Association. He explained that there is usually some flexibility on underspend however the Government have requested a claw back and sportscotland are required to pass this onto governing bodies. DP noted that the [REDACTED] will go against the 2022 figures and reduce the surplus for the year.

DP, Deborah MacPherson had a demonstration of the software Sage Cloud software. DP is comfortable that it can do everything which is required and some training will be required for DM. The subscription costs are £26 per month, plus VAT which is a considerable saving compared to the £1,000 a year for the current system.

DP proposed that the Camanachd Association move to SAGE Cloud and this was unanimously agreed. He noted that work will now start to migrate over to the new system. With the new system being on the Cloud it will made access easier for DK and DP.

DK reported that he, BM and SM had met with [REDACTED] to discuss sponsorship for the period

2024-26 and had a positive meeting. He also noted that there is a good relationship with [REDACTED] and that this may be one of the longest [REDACTED] in Scotland with a partnership [REDACTED]. DK reported that he will update the Board through the Finance Committee on future developments.

b) Competition

BM noted with four Saturday's into the season the getting the games played has had limited success with one game off for every two games played as the weather has not been kind. On the cup side all the draws have been made and the MacTavish quarter final draw has also been done.

KW updated that for the WCA, it is week 3 or 4 and some fixtures have been hit by the weather. There are no major issues and the first round draw for the Challenge Cup has been done.

c) Equality Portfolio

LB confirmed that a report had been submitted and the forming of the Equality Group had previously been highlighted.

d) Officiating Report

JMR confirmed that a report had been submitted. A referees meeting had been held on 28 February with 22 people in attendance. There had been a good presentation by the SFA Technical Director which those in attendance had found interesting, and there was also an offer of places at an SFA training event in either Dingwall or Edinburgh and some referees have taken up this offer. Two new referees have been recruited in the south, but the sport is still struggling for referees, so work is ongoing and Directors are encouraged to help identify potential recruits for officials and match assessors. New referee strips are now in stock and weekly feedback for referees is restarting.

Work is ongoing with body cams, prior to covid a head cam was trialed which worked better and this will go to the referees to see if it something they want to use.

e) Heritage, Culture and Comms

RM reported that a paper had been submitted although he had been able to attend the meeting. DK updated that work is ongoing with the replacement of the Camanachd Cup and UHI are supporting with the use of specialist equipment to create a digital image and model for the new cup. Silversmiths are being contacted to get indicative costs for material and an update will be given. It was agreed that should a decision be required before the next meeting that this would be done via email due to time considerations.

The retired Camanachd Cup will be part of the exhibition at the new Shinty Story in Inverness. It was reported that the Bught Park is on schedule, and on budget and tenders are expected by June for the [REDACTED] project. There will be 10 new changing rooms at the back of the Bught, along with a hospitality venue and Shinty exhibition, entitled the Shinty Story. Work is ongoing with partnership Highlands and Island Enterprise and the CA staff have sourced funding for a consultant who will do funding applications for the National Lottery Heritage Fund. A consultation will also be done with Shinty Clubs.

SM noted that the partnership working is really positive in these areas and thanked the sub-

group for their work.

f) Coaching and Volunteering

SM noted that a paper had been submitted and hoped that the new Coaching and Volunteering Director will be in place by the next meeting. DK highlighted that 17 courses have been delivered to members since the end of January up to the end of March, with the staff team doing an incredible job in supporting clubs, with 233 participants.

RM felt that it was important that these success stories were highlighted on social media ahead of them taking place rather than following them. If this was done Directors will be able to support. DK didn't disagree with this in principle and noted that a list of dates were issued in January to clubs, staff and board. He agreed to feed back to the staff team to connect with Directors with the over-arching event dates. (*Action DK*)

Thanks were expressed to the Development team and KD.

g) Youth/Child Protection/UKAD

KD confirmed that a report had been submitted. A child Wellbeing and Protection course was held last week with 20 clubs attending. The Children 1st accreditation has been completed and when the Board members who were yet to complete the training had completed it the Camanachd Association would be up to date for the season.

A UKAD Training evening was hosted and sparked questions and concerns regarding the timing of the testing. It was confirmed that it is early days of the testing process and the Camanachd Association are aligning with UKAD and a lot more education will happen before any testing commences. Information and training resources for clubs will be shared, and the website will be updated. She noted that the Scottish Curling website is a good example of what we will be working towards.

The Youth and Schools committee will be given a refresh, as a few people had come off it, and KD is just waiting on confirmation of the committee and will set up meetings.

KD reported that the School pack for the training at Badaguish had some issues around the quality of the videos and these will be redone as staff felt that it was important to get right.

4. Strategy and Targets

a) Strategic Plan – HLH and Gaelic Language Plan –

DK reported that the Camanachd Association are fairly down the line with a partnership agreement with High Life Highland and once this is completed they will be invited to the Board meeting to launch the partnership.

The Gaelic Language Plan is out for consultation in the Highlands and DK has feedback on this on behalf of the Camanachd Association and will meet the consultant. DK agreed to circulate the link to the Board. (*Action DK*)

b) Long Term Targets (2022-2026)

Papers had been submitted which showed the long term targets, annual targets which included targets agreed with sportscotland. There is also a separate Operational Plan which gives every action. SM noted that he is comfortable with this and asked Board members to read and feedback any comments and it showed the range of work which ongoing.

DK noted that the Operational Plan is not all the work undertaken, as the staff also deal with other initiatives/issues as they arise.

The longer term targets provide direction for our annual targets and it is essential as a staff and board we set high standards for safeguarding, health and safety and wellbeing to protect our sport. The plans are discussed at bi weekly team meetings, with annual plans being working documents are referenced by staff on an ongoing basis.

c) Annual Targets

SM referred to the Board papers (page 33) and the separate document that contained the operational plan. He asked the Board to review and feedback if they had any questions or concerns.

d) Risk Register/Management Policy –

The Risk Register was circulated and any director with any particular concerns were asked to feed back directly to DK.

DK highlighted the undernoted risks:

Risk 7 – Board unable to delivery an agreed strategy.

Risk 8 – Staff are unable to deliver Strategic Plan

He explained that lack of focus was not an issue for the organisation but the capacity to deliver due to demand pressures on the staff was a risk. There is a new staff member starting in the East and the West Region post is to be advertised by the end of the week, but those gaps pile pressure on the existing staff team. He noted that this was a call for everyone to appreciate each other and the importance of understanding the capacity that exists is used to deliver current operational and strategic plans. It is a small staff team, that has grown, but it is reliant on everyone going above and beyond. There is a positive culture within the organisation, but relies on finding the right balance to compliment the effort being invested across Board and staff.

RM asked if there was anything which the Association didn't need to do, although it was ambitious there was a risk of trying to do too much. DK commented that he asks that question all the time, but the operation plan is done in consultation with staff and staff identify their own priorities. In line with the needs of clubs and our strategic objectives our staff have ownership of their action plans and how they go about delivering our objectives in partnership with clubs. RM noted that things like the risk register and audit may become onerous although it was agreed that there are risks if they are not done should something occur.

BM noted that there were a lot of spinning plates and for events some of them don't fit into the calendar but they are squeezed in and staff deployed. Moving the first shinty event to the Friday, did give a weekend back to the staff who had already worked a number of weekends delivering CPD.

5. AOCB

a) Hugh Dan MacLennan – Retirement

SM noted that Hugh Dan MacLennan was retiring after this year's Camanachd Cup Final. Hugh Dan MacLennan and Gary Innes are hosting a farewell concert in Eden Court the night before the final and noted he'd already bought his tickets. There was a discussion on an appropriate way to commemorate this and DK agreed to progress. (Action DK)

b) Shinty and Mental Health

JMR noted that Eorpa on BBC Alba highlighted shinty and mental health and it was excellent. It was agreed to try and get this profiled on the website. (Action DK)

c) Camanachd Cup

RM noted that due to COVID and other considerations the Cup would not be held again in the South until 2026. It was noted that the natural rotation was lost during COVID and Fort William has already been picked for next year, another change was to allow Kingussie to go into the rotation, and going to Inverness to maximise the Shinty Story launch and the rotation would be picked up thereafter.

SM explained that Kingussie had been postponed for two years due to COVID but had been agreed 2 or 3 years before this. Oban had stepped forward to host the 2021 final which had been hugely appreciated by the Board. Fort William would host the 2024 final before returning to Inverness in 2025.

The aspiration was to continue the rotation but when opportunities come up to maximise interest in the sport then consideration will be given to these proposals as the byelaws allow the rotation to be altered at the discretion of the Board. In this instance the Board had agreed there would only be one opportunity to launch Shinty's Story and therefore returning to Inverness in 2025 was the best option.

d) Next Board Meeting

SM suggested that the next Board meeting on 31 May would be held face to face in Fort William. This was agreed although SM asked if DK could look into allowing those who couldn't attend in person to access the meeting via Teams or a telephone call. (Action DK)

Who	Action	When
Directors	Complete Conflicts of Interest Form	ASAP
Directors/DK	Check for sensitive area in minutes/DK redact and publish on website	ASAP
KD	Support pack for schools to be completed	Next Meeting
KD	Anti Doping Montage to be issued	w/c 4 April
LB	Plan for rolling out of UHI Teacher session to other areas	Next Meeting
LB	Form Equality Committee	Next Meeting
DK	Include mandatory helmet wear/U25 for AGM	Next Meeting
DK	Canvas Clubs as to why they abstained at AGM	Next Meeting
DK	Arrange Meeting with John Finlayson	Next Meeting
DK	BBC Alba update	Next Meeting
DK / BM	Shinty Hurling International Planning	Next Meeting
Directors	Attend online Board Safeguarding Training	ASAP
DK	Advert for Argyll & Bute Development Post - DK will explore face to face interviews where practical	Next Meeting

DK / DOR	Arrange invite for Forbes Dunlop to meet the CA Board	TBC
DK	Get accurate measurements for Clubs re run-off	TBC
DK	Feed back to the staff team to connect with Directors with the over-arching event dates.	Next Meeting
DK	Circulate link to Board for Gaelic Language Plan Consultation	ASAP
DK	Hugh Dan MacLennan Retirement	Next Meeting
DK	Highlight Eorpa programme on Shinty and Mental Health	Next Meeting
DK	Arrange face to face Board Meeting for May	ASAP
DOR	CA to meet with Forbes Dunlop in Inverness at a date and time to be agreed by DOR (<i>Action DOR</i>)	Summer