THE ASA BOARD

Minutes subject to approval at the next ASA Board Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 7 May 2011 held at the SportPark, Loughborough

Present:
- Mr J Crowther  Chairman
- Mr K Belton  East Region
- Mrs K Grimshaw  London Region
- Mrs A Clark  East Midlands Region
- Mr R Prior  South East Region
- Mr R Margetts  South West Region
- Mr R Gordon  North East Region
- Mr S Rothwell  North West Region
- Mr D Fletcher  Independent Member
- Mr C Bostock  Independent Member
- Mr A Reed  Independent Member

Also in attendance (non-voting):
- Mr D Neate  ASA President
- Mr D Sparkes  CEO
- Mrs A Adams-King  Director of English Programmes
- Miss J M Nickerson  Chief Operating Officer
- Mr A Gray  Director of Regulator & Legal Affairs

Absence apologies received from:
- Mr M Taylor  Independent Member
- Mr R Hedger  Mr R G Prior substituting
- Mr I Mackenzie  Mr K Belton substituting
- Mr P Wells  West Midlands Region

Min No  Welcome
33  The Chairman welcomed all the members of the Board and ASA staff to the meeting, which had been arranged to discuss the Grow Agenda.

34  Objective
The objective of the meeting was to provide the Board with information to help their knowledge and understanding of the Grow Agenda and to be content that everything that reasonably could be done to meet the targets was in fact being done.

35  Background
The CEO addressed the Board and provided background information on Grow.
35.1 Historically as an organisation the ASA has been more comfortable working with talent but times and thoughts change and it is not an option to look at Grow but a necessity. The Government recognise that sport is an avenue that not only wins medals but also promotes and encourages a healthy nation.
35.2 The ASA has always had a good reputation and provided strong leadership and one of its core values is swimming as an activity and a sport. This has resulted in our being able to influence areas such as school swimming, new build pools and pool operators with whom we have a relationship.

35.3 Additional benefits to getting the Grow Agenda right are that we could influence swimming for a number of years to come, which is important for the sport and for our clubs. If we can show that public pools get the nation more active this may also influence the number of public pools.

35.4 Grow is very different to talent development and the circumstances are difficult and not without challenge. This is because we are trying to bring about behavioural change to a nation and this has not been done before. However, we need to focus and put all our efforts into this because if it is not achieved will be measured on our approach to this could harm our reputation.

35.5 This Grow agenda is critical to what the ASA is about and it is important we get it right as it will confirm our position as a market leader and provide a beacon that everyone to follow.

36 Presentation by the Director of English Programmes

36.1 The DoEP made a presentation (appendix 1)

36.2 Summary

- Our challenge is to achieve participation figures
- Our key customers are those who Swim for Fun and Swimfit
- Our key products will be Swimfit, Pay to Play and Aquafit/ Aquarobics
- Our key activities are pool programming, customer experience and marketing
- The ASA Board needs to understand, support and challenge
- Our key focus will be retaining existing weekly swimmers
- Converting more swimmers to swim 30 minutes a week ie those who already swim 2/3 times per month and those swimming for 20 minutes a week.

37 Questions and Feedback

There was an opportunity for the Board to ask questions and debate issues throughout the presentation and the following points/recommendations were noted

37.1 Collection of Data – members were advised that Interns are being used to look at the data collected and to analysis then provide to an insight group.

37.2 What are our Products – this was clarified to the members in the presentation

37.3 Influence - It was confirmed that we are trying to influence pool operators into programming of their pools and to encourage them to have the right core products to meet their customer’s expectations.

37.4 What could be an aquatic youth club – any programme that encouraged Young people between 11 – 18 into a structured recreational swimming programme. The CEO gave an example of a project that had been very successful in Plymouth where it had included youngsters who were or have had problems in some way or been in trouble.

37.5 Resources to support AO’s – It was confirmed that the AO’s do have Toolkits to meet pools needs and to encourage them to take on the products. In addition there is support for the AO’s from a National Officer should it be required. Examples of their support resources were shown.

37.6 Website - One Click Info – It was suggested that the correct words need to be on the website for when people seek information and that there should be an option for
anyone visiting the website to access where and when they can swim with one click. It was felt this was an excellent suggestion and the COO to look into this immediately.

37.7 **Behavioural change** – It was agreed this is a major challenge facing us and there is some uncertainty as to whether we have all the right products but we do have a number of major products and the key to this is programming of the pools to get the balance right between the competing demands.

37.8 **Workforce development** – The COO confirmed negotiations for total training solutions are ongoing and Parkwood have currently signed up for this across their sites. Numbers of candidates and courses are being tracked monthly and a full presentation on course delivery will be made at the June Board meeting.

37.9 **Customer Experience** - Work is ongoing to try and change the culture in the pool to enhance the experience for the customer.

37.10 **National marketing** – There are national marketing strategies for growth and health to raise awareness of the benefits of swimming. BigSplash is being launched on the 12th May in the House of Commons. This will be the push to get customers to the pool. A Board member mentioned about the current Nivea advert on tv and it was agreed that we should see if they would work with the ASA promotionally

37.11 **Local marketing** – targeted offers delivered by the regions in collaboration with the pools.

**Focus for next 6-12 months is to:**

- Maintain energy and effort by all teams
- Focus on our highest potential market areas
- Ensure delivery plans are in place for existing pools and identify new pools
- Review and evolve products

37.12 **Active People** - 16th June is next publication date for active people figures. It has been identified that aquarobic type activities are currently not included in swimming totals and this is being pursued with Sport England. A Board member asked about the question in the survey relating to the amount of time spent swimming and this information will be requested from SE to see there is any benefit in this being changed

37.13 **How do we ourselves ensure we remain the leaders in the eyes of Sport England?**

- Strategic approach to change the customer experience
- Working hard with Regions to come up with series of interventions clearly linked to driving up Grow.
- Collection of data through CRM and other work will look carefully at this as we go forward and a business model will be created.

37.14 **Pilot Scheme** – members were advised of the Cascade marketing scheme being undertaken in the London Region to increase participation. If successful this could be carried out in the remaining Regions.

38 **Chairman’s summary**

38.1 It was clear that we still have significant challenges ahead. Members were asked if they agreed that the programme outlined by the DoEP met the Objective outlined above and this was agreed.

38.2 We need to ensure that the data records successes and failures so that Regions are aware of what does and what does not work. It is likely that the growth in participation will take longer than the current programme milestones require but we must be confident that the ASA has a robust programme showing the impact of the interventions.

38.3 There is a difficult period ahead and the Board need to speak as one voice to show
that we are committed to delivering the Grow Agenda.

38.4 We need to reassure Sport England of our commitment and we need to continue to engage with them. We have a positive attitude and there will be a necessary to develop new skills within the delivery workforce.

38.5 Board members were given an opportunity to provide any further thoughts and these were noted as follows:

38.5.1 It is believed that this situation can be turned around but we are looking at a medium to long-term programme. The workforce may need further support and this should be monitored. A report on Grow was requested for each meeting.

38.5.2 The Board reiterated their support and hoped that this demonstrated that they are interested and supportive of actions.

38.5.3 It was agreed that a crib note be produced for use at National and Regional level so that consistent messages are given by all involved.

39 The Chairman on behalf of board thanked the DoEP for all her hard work and that of her team and reiterated their commitment to support to the team in their endeavours to succeed.

40 **Declarations of Interest**
None declared.

41 **Decisions made by email**
Equality Policy - The Board endorsed the decision made by email to approve the Equality Policy and confirmed Simon Rothwell as the Board’s “Equality Champion”.

42 **Dates for next year**
These had been sent by email and were agreed.

43 **Date of Next Meeting**
24/25 June, SportPark, Loughborough