



SCOTTISH WHEELCHAIR CURLING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Meeting 7th August 2024 Online

Present

Alison Hopkins (Chair)
Michael Breen (Vice Chair)
Rosemary Lenton (Treasurer),
Harry Brodie (Competitions Convener)
Cheryl Lappin (PPM)

Club Reps

Carlyne McCluskey (Stranraer), Martin Sutherland (Stirling), Paul Webster (Hamilton), David Hogg (Lothian), Gordon Alexander (BCPerf)

1. Apologies

Rhiannon Butterfield (Scottish Curling) Ross Hatten (Kinross), Mo Simpson (Highland), Gavin McLeod (SDS), Keith Gray (BCPPF),

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes approved – Rosemary Lenton
Seconded – Michael Breen

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Chairman's Report

Thank you all for attending this morning's meeting.

Since our last meeting I have had joint meetings with Cheryl and Rhiannon about how we can promote and grow wheelchair curling.

A fundraising subcommittee has also been set up and I would like to thank Michael and David for their hard work and support to get this off the ground. To date we have received funding from National Lottery to assist our grassroots curlers with the cost

of competing in our 3 main tournaments – more details of this will be provided in our fundraising update.

The dates of the competitions and venues have been put on social media and I have emailed foreign teams with the details of the British to see if we can get some interest from overseas.

Going forward further grant applications will be submitted for projects to promote our sport and get new members for clubs. Ideally supporting clubs to put on Try Curling events at their local rink with the SWCA paying for the ice hire and refreshments for those participating.

5. Financial Report

The current balance is £24,001.28

This includes the ring-fenced Awards for All Grant (Lottery) of £4,800

Only expenditure £26.49 for business cards.

Rosemary will contact club secretaries regarding the Friendship Trophy – cost is £10 to cover lunch and ice – One application received already from Preston.

6. Competitions Conveners Report

Next competition is Friendship Competition 21st September at Kinross one session before lunch and one after – format triples and pairs 10am for first session after lunch 2.30

Entry forms for the competitions still to go out once grant discussed later in meeting.

Pairs comp at Edinburgh will start at 10.30 – 2 sessions morning and afternoon – sessions to finish by 4.55

Rosemary congratulated Harry on being selected to umpire at Paralympics.

7. Sub Committee Updates

Competitons – no update – no meeting has been held as yet

Fund Raising – Report by Michael – David, Alison and myself have been looking at fundraising since last meeting; everything from small companies right up to multi nationals and Trusts – so far we have received £4,800 from Awards for All – National Lottery and this will be used to bring entry fees for tournaments back to pre-pandemic cost of £200, also it will be used to set up a fund to assist with travel/accommodation costs for those attending - £60 per person, one claim per person per season and you must live minimum 45 miles from home to rink before you can apply.

We are trying our best to get people back to the competitions and by reducing the cost will see if this will make a difference.

Going forward we will be looking at applying for funding to allow us to work with Scottish Curling to promote wheelchair curling at local rinks and supporting clubs if they wish to put on an event. This will hopefully get new members into clubs which is needed.

David provided details on the breakdown of how the Grassroots Support funds would be spent. Reducing the entry fees to £50 per person will cost approx. £2720 – remainder of grant would allow 35 players to get a grant of £60. We still have an outstanding grant application for the same thing and if this is successful would allow larger grants to be provided.

Cheryl asked what the process would be for applying for the grant – there will be an application form to complete and once received and verified the funds will be sent to players bank accounts – it is still to be decided if forms will be available online or handed out at competitions. It was agreed that funded players will not be eligible to apply for the £60 – there are currently 9 players with a NPA, they will however get the benefit of the entry fee being reduced.

Alison mentioned that if we get more than 35 players applying for grant and we don't get the additional grant we would be looking to use funds from SWCA to pay any shortfall which was agreed.

Alison mentioned that David has been writing to all varieties of companies, Drinks, food, mobility, wheelchair, curling companies for sponsorship but this has not been successful; we may get some kit from Foxglide, if we are successful this could be used as prizes at Friendship. Michael has been in contact with Arnold Clark and it may be that we can get floor curling at their mobility event next year to promote curling.

8. National Coach Report/British Curling

Performance Squad have been back training since mid July at NCA

21 curlers in Performance Squad – 9 have NPA rest are self funded

Pathway had 5 on PPF squad – one athlete has had to withdraw from squad as he would not be classifiable – will continue to curl recreationally and will try to get coaching qualifications – This PPF programme will end in October and the athletes will either progress to national squad or go back to club network.

Next PPF programme will start in October for 3-6 months.

Female only curling event will be held on 3rd October @ NCA

Group of coaches are going to Inter Spinal unit games in September at Stoke Mandeville.

Working to promote Winter Sport Discovery Games post Paralympic Paris Games – 26-27th October at the Flower bowl – Preston – trying to get athletes who are perhaps retiring from their sport or would like a summer and winter sport.

Current PPF squad interested in taking part in our competitions and Sheila is keen on squad players to take part in the competitions as well.

Cheryl confirmed that the World Championships are definitely being held in Scotland. David asked if there would be viewing facilities for W/Chair users at the venue – Harry is sure that this will be looked at. Would be good for people to have information on any accessible hotels in the area if they were wanting to come and watch – will speak to Rhiannon about whether this is something that is being looked at. It is hopeful that going forward there may be a legacy that we can get a wheelchair presence there.

9. Club/BC Representatives Updates

No reports as curling season not yet started.

Paul asked if there was flexibility for increasing number of teams for competitions if there is a big uptake for places. Harry doesn't think there would be a problem at Dumfries for the Scottish up to a maximum of 12 teams – can ask Hamilton if they would have capacity for more ice, perhaps one sheet, and if it is at all possible will not turn anyone away. Need to look at when applications must be returned to give rinks most notice should we need more ice – entry forms should be returned circa 6 weeks before the date of the competition.

There will have to be a disclaimer at the bottom of entry forms that entry into the competition will be confirmed after closing date – if we cannot get more ice then entries would have to be on a first come first served basis – still to be decided. Our Gmail account is now working and entries in future should come into this mailbox which will give us an idea of entrants and whether an oversubscription is likely.

While we would love it to be an issue for this season Cheryl does not see that we will have a problem of oversubscription.

10. SDS Report

No report

11. Scottish Curling Report

It has been a very busy summer, not only with various Try Floor Curling sessions with the express rink, but also with planning for the future. Below are an outline of a few areas that have been moving forwards.

Inclusive Try Curling Sessions

The biggest upcoming 'event' is the series of **Inclusive Try Curling sessions** which are running during September / October. These are running as follows, and it would be great if everyone could share the graphics with any contacts they know. As you will see, all sessions are open to wheelchair users, with 2 areas being specific for wheelchair users.

Aviemore

Sunday 8th September 2024 @ Aviemore Ice Rink

Sessions available 10am – 10.45am / 11am – 11.45am / 12noon – 12.45pm

Open to all disabilities

Dumfries

Sunday 15th September 2024 @ Dumfries Ice Bowl

Session time 4pm – 5.30pm

Wheelchair specific session

Stirling

Wednesday 18th September 2024 @ The Peak

Session time 12.30pm – 2.30pm

Wheelchair specific session

Auchenharvie

Tuesday 8th October 2024 @ Auchenharvie Leisure Centre

Sessions available 2pm – 3pm

Open to all disabilities

Guide to Inclusive Curling Document

I have designed a document called 'Guide to Inclusive Curling' which will be sent out to all rinks / clubs / contacts at the start of the season. This document has various areas of guidance within it, from how to coach wheelchair curlers, to coaching curlers with a visual impairment. Hopefully this document, along with other work that is being done, are all steps to assist with ensuring that curling becomes as inclusive as possible! Following this document, in the not to distant future, for those who feel that practical sessions with regards to the information, a workshop will be made available.

Wheelchair Curling Data

Myself / Alison have been working to collect data from each wheelchair curling club. If you are a club that hasn't submitted this information yet – please do so ASAP. This

information will be used to then signpost people from the Inclusive Curling sessions, and also advertised as much as possible to ensure anyone looking to get into curling, knows where to start!

Spinal Unit

Having been at the Glasgow Spinal unit several times now, we are starting to really build a relationship with the patients (and staff) who are there, and also seeing them once they have been discharged. Not only have we had some of the patients sign up for the Inclusive Try Curling sessions in September / October, with more hopeful sign ups, we also had a patient on ice in July. This relationship – pathway etc I feel will continually grow, with my presence at the Spinal Unit on a regular basis.

Scottish Curling / British Curling

Lots has been going on between SC and BC to ensure that we are helping one another, and providing that pathway for all athletes, whether new to the sport, or moving up the ladder. With this being the first year with us both in post, it will be a great starting point to getting things right, and hopefully seeing that change!

12. AOCB

David asked if SWCA would consider contributing towards the Stirling International – they made a significant loss last year and in previous years the SWCA have made a contribution- Cheryl asked how much has been given in the past and David thinks it was £500 – Alison asked if we would be able to promote SWCA at the event – we don't have any pop up banners but will arrange to get some ordered. We agree that in principal if the organisers of Stirling International were to approach us we would help out to the level of previous donation.

Cheryl asked to be included in the next meeting to look at funding for promoting curling – will get a date that suits.

David asked about prizes for next seasons competitions – perhaps looking at a prize with a logo or alcohol/chocolates rather than trophies. Think that promotional items rather than alcohol would be better. Would still have a medal as they are free from Scottish Curling = cost of prizes for competitions is c £180.

13. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 23rd October 10am via Teams