



Meeting of the Marketing & Commercial Sub Group on Tuesday 6 February 2018
At SportPark Loughborough

Circulation: M&C Sub Group, Working Group Lead, Hub Team

Members Present	Titles
Ian Wall [IW]	Independent Director for Marketing and Commercial
Simon Griffiths [SG]	PR and Communications Director
Stewart Dunne [SD]	Chief Operating Officer
Michael Hallam [MH]	Marketing and Communications Coordinator

Minutes prepared by: Michael Hallam

Apologies for absence:

Janet Inman [JI] – Chief Operating Officer

1030 M&C/17-18/01

Welcome and apologies

1.1 Opening of the meeting

IW opened the meeting by welcoming everybody and offered JI's apologies.

M&C/17-18/02

Matters arising from last meeting

2.1 Website update

Plans for a new website are on hold until the way to incorporate this with a new customer relationship manager (CRM) system are established. It was agreed that it would save time and money to build a new website which incorporates the three key elements of: the CRM, website, and competition management system.

SD informed the group he is currently in discussion with two other sports about a potential shared project to develop a new website and management packages for all three National Governing Bodies.

MH produced an SEO report from Fluid, which runs the current Volleyball England website. There are some updates to the website which can be made within the retainer fee that can be made to improve the SEO performance of the



site. These include adding H1 tag to the homepage and creating an Error 404 page.

Action: MH to instruct Fluid to make the changes.

2.2 Key products progress

The group reviewed the commercial articulations written for the Inter Regionals and National Volleyball League. It was discussed the types of companies Volleyball England would be keen to work with and who would be good to pitch to.

It was discussed whether the Volleyball England stance of not partnering with any alcohol brands should be revisited. This would be a board decision.

A business articulation for the National Cup Finals still needs to be produced. The 50th Anniversary match between Scotland and England is still being organised so has been dropped from the key products list. The three key VE products the group will now focus on commercialising are: National Cup Finals, Inter Regionals and National Volleyball League.

IW is to put together a business articulation for the National Cup Finals and send to MH to look at from an editorial perspective. SD will then begin initial approaches regarding these three key products.

A commerciality content series to engage the volleyball audience was discussed. MH to work on producing more content for the series.

Action: IW to write National Cup Finals business articulation.

Action: SD to make initial approaches to companies.

Action: MH to initiate commerciality communications plan.

2.3 Individual Membership Proposal

IW outlined his proposal to create a membership package that every player would need to join to be able to play volleyball in England. The idea was to offer membership perks at a proposed cost of £10 per player, which could raise vital revenue to put back into the sport.



Concerns were raised that a paid-for, compulsory membership package would be difficult to police and would alienate the membership. While the aim would be for the package to offer excellent value for money, that Volleyball England needs to build the relationship with its core market more and show its value to its customers.

IW is to discuss the idea with the Regional Chairs to gauge whether the idea is worth exploring further.

Action: IW to discuss the idea with Regional Chairs and report back.

2.4 Innovation Day Proposal

The group discussed organising an innovation day, which will see new formats of the game trialed. The aim would be to test concepts which could make volleyball more appealing to spectators. Ideas for innovations included a shot clock, timed matches, and an escalating scoring system where consecutive points are worth more.

SD explained that the budget for an innovation day would be extremely limited. It was decided it would be possible to run an event over one day and keep costs to almost nothing.

The format for a proposed tournament would be for a men's and women's competition, each with a four-team pool. The teams would play each of their three group games in a new format. The top two teams from the pool would play a final, with the top seed having the choice of which new format to play.

Action: SD to talk to Competitions Coordinator Jonathan Moore and Laurence Shenker about finding a suitable date to host the event at the National Volleyball Centre.

M&C/17-18/03

Sponsorship

3.1 Use agencies or approach potential sponsors directly?

IW raised the question of whether the best way to attract sponsors for VE events would be to contact companies directly or use agencies which would have a



network of contacts. IW has been approached by an agency and thought this could be a way to achieve commercialisation of VE products more quickly.

It was agreed that a partnership with an agency would only be feasible if the contract was on a commission basis, as VE could not afford to pay a retainer fee to an agency and risk losing money.

Action: IW to investigate further to see if working with an agency could be possible.

M&C/17-18/04 Schools marketing strategy

4.1 Primary, secondary and teacher training

IW explained that there is some funding available from NEVZA to invest in a project which helps develop volleyball in primary schools. IW said that providing volleyball in schools is something which is important to him and a way to grow the game. The key areas for him were continuing to give volleyball opportunities in secondary schools and encouraging children into clubs and training more teachers to coach volleyball to provide these opportunities. He posed the idea in the M&C Group meeting as he wondered whether it is something it could work with the core market group to implement and commercialise.

On discussion, it was agreed that while this would be an ideal scenario, it is too big a project for Volleyball England to take on at this time and the use of the NEVZA funding should stay with the Core Market Group. It is the hope of the group that the funding is spent on developing a product that might then become commercially viable in the future, if VE are in a position to scale it up. This message will be communicated to the Core Market Group.

M&C/16-17/05 Regalia sales and sale of old stock

5.1 Selling old stock

What to do with the inventory of equipment, kit and memorabilia that is currently being stored was discussed. The question was raised whether it could be sold to generate some revenue. SG said that even giving some of the stock away would create a saving on the cost of renting storage space. It was agreed that some of the stock would have value and be appealing to buyers.



Action: SD and MH to discuss the current stock and decide what could be sold or disposed of.

M&C/16-17/06

AOB

6.1 Pro League

IW told the group he had been approached about the possibility of creating a professional volleyball league in England with franchise teams. With the costs involved, it was unanimously agreed that while this is a worthy aspiration, volleyball in England needs much more development before a professional league becomes a possibility.

6.2 NEVZA Sponsorship

The question was asked if VE was to host the NEVZA U19 Championships, could this be another product which could be commercialised. SD explained that there is no restriction on selling sponsorship of the event.

6.3 Workshops

The idea of running workshops in different professional skills which volleyball clubs would find useful could be a useful service to the membership and generate revenue. Potential workshops could include marketing, communications, streaming matches, and club administration. It was decided that a streaming workshop would be a good session to trial at the Super 8s Finals.

Action: MH to speak to Alex Porter about the possibility of presenting a workshop on how to stream matches at the Super 8s Finals.

6.4 Data protection

SD informed the group that he had further training coming up about the new data protection laws. He has also arranged for Microtrading, the company responsible for VE's IT systems, to run a digital check on the data we store to ensure VE is compliant. It was agreed that GDPR is something we also need to inform the membership about. MH is to produce a story with legal director Clare Francis and with SD highlighting the importance of GDPR and action needed to the membership.



Action: MH to produce two features on GDPR, one working with SD.

6.5 VE Beach Tour

SD gave an update on the VE Beach Tour and explained that discussions are ongoing for the Beach Tour to be run by a promotions company for the 2018 season. The company are very keen to work with VE and members of the board and SD are in ongoing discussions about how a partnership would work.

M&C/17-18/06 Meeting finalisation

6.1 Review of action to be taken

Action	Responsible	Date
MH to instruct Fluid to make SEO changes to the website	MH	1/3/18
IW to write National Cup Finals business articulation	IW	Before 12/2/18
SD to make initial approaches to companies about sponsorship of key VE products	SD	12/2/18
MH to initiate commerciality communications plan	MH	12/2/18
IW to discuss potential membership proposal with regional chairs	IW	5/3/18
SD to discuss innovation day with Jonathan Moore	SD	16/2/18
IW to investigate whether it is worth working with an agency to find commercial partners	IW	23/2/18
SD and MH to discuss sale of old stock	MH	16/2/18
MH to speak to Alex Porter about hosting streaming workshop	MH	9/2/18
MH to produces two features, one with SD, on GDPR	MH + SD	30/3/18

6.2 Next meeting

To be confirmed. This could potentially include members of the Pool of Experts.

6.3 Meeting close

1400 IW closes the meeting.

Signed as a true record.....



Date.....10/02/18.....