**ENGLAND ICE HOCKEY**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (JANUARY 2025)**

1. **Introduction** 
   1. England Ice Hockey (EIH) is the recognised governing body for the sport of ice hockey in England. Its responsibilities are set out within its Memorandum and Articles of Association which are published on the EIH web site (here).
   2. This is the first governance statement prepared by EIH and it provides EIH’s members, stakeholders, supporters, contractors and sponsors with a statement on the governance performance of EIH, for the last 12 months to January 2025 (the reporting period).
   3. This year has seen a significant and positive shift in the governance arrangements of EIH, following some recent appointments to the board and staff team. These developments are detailed within this report.
   4. A further updated Governance Statement will be published later in 2025 with the AGM papers and then the Governance Statement will be issued annually thereafter, as part of the Annual Report presented to each AGM.
   5. This statement:
      1. summarises the actions taken between January 2024 and January 2025 to strengthen the governance within EIH;
      2. sets out the current governance arrangements; and
      3. identifies further governance improvements, which are planned for the next 12 months.
   6. EIH is in receipt of funds from Sport England and is therefore required to comply with the requirements of the UK Code for Sports Governance (the Code). This statement is made in accordance with the Code. The requirements of the Code set out a framework for good governance and EIH.
   7. EIH is fully committed to the principles of good governance and expects to have achieved compliance with the UK Code for Sports Governance (Tier Two) by March 2025. EIH is working towards achieving compliance with Tier Three of the Code by July 2026. These requirements can be found here.
2. **The Strategy**
   1. The board of EIH (the Board) is responsible for approving the strategy of EIH. A new strategy for EIH was developed and approved in 2024. Given the significant changes to the board and the staff team, it is planned to review the strategy (2025-2029) in early 2025, to consult on it with the members, clubs and key stakeholders and approve this in the first half of 2025.
3. **Memorandum and Articles of Association** 
   1. The Memorandum and Articles of Association of EIH are published on the EIH website. They are also available on the Companies’ House web site. These provide the framework of the roles and responsibilities of the AGM, the Board and Committees of EIH and also set out the powers for making decisions.
   2. The Memorandum & Articles (the Articles) were reviewed in 2024 and some changes to the Articles were approved at the last AGM.
   3. Further changes will need to be presented for consideration and approval by the AGM in 2025. These proposed changes will be required to align EIH with good governance practice and will be required to achieve Tier Three compliance of the Code.
4. **The Governance Policy**
   1. The Board approved a Governance Policy in December October 2024. This is a new policy for EIH. It adds some detail to the operation of the Board that is not usually included within the Memorandum & Articles of Association. The Governance Policy sets out how the Board operates, its powers, the role of individuals and committees of the Board, the code of conduct for directors and how the Board will review its performance. It also sets out the powers the board delegates to the CEO and the Committees of the Board and how the Board manages these delegations. The Governance Policy can be found on the website of EIH here.
5. **The Responsibilities of the Board**
   1. The Board is collectively responsible for the long term success of EIH. Nick Cross is the chair of the Board (the Chair) and is responsible for the leadership of the Board.
   2. The Board is the ultimate decision making body and exercises all of the powers of the organisation other than those specifically allocated to members as defined within its Articles of Association, or delegated by the Board in line its policies. The Board operates within the framework of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Governance Policy.
6. **Board membership and composition**
   1. The Board of EIH must consist of not less than seven and not more than eleven members. Members have the right to elect up to five people to the Board (Nominated Directors). At least 25% of the Board members must be independent, and their recruitment shall be made through open advertisement. The appointment of these Independent Directors (INED) shall be competency based. The Board must seek to recruit directors with appropriate diversity, independence, skills, experience and knowledge to take effective decisions that will further the Objects of EIH.
   2. In managing its board recruitment the Board shall seek to make appointments on merit and in line with the skills, qualifications and diversity required by the Board as defined in a skills and diversity matrix. The short biographies of the board members can be found here.
   3. The composition of the Board during 2024/25 is detailed in the table below. The biographies of the Directors is published on the website and can be found here.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Role** | **Date of Appointment** | **In 1st or 2nd term** |
| **CROSS,** Nick | Chair, Independent Director | June 2024 | 1st |
| **ANDREWS,** Faye | Appointed Director |  |  |
| **FLYNN,** Alex | Independent non-executive director | March 2024 | 1st |
| **HOUGH,** Duncan | Senior Independent Director, | July 2023 | 1st |
| **MOUTREY,** Alan | Appointed Director | August 2023 | 1st |
| **PETERS,** Martin | Appointed Director | July 2023 | 1st |
| **RAUBAL,** Cornelia | Appointed Director | July 2023 | 1st |
| **SMITH,** Daniel | Appointed Director | March 2021 | 1st |
| **SQUIRES,** Nancy | Independent non-executive director | December 2024 | 1st |
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| **Directors who resigned during the year** |  | **Date of resignation** |  |
| **ASHRAFF,** Mohammed |  | July 2024 |  |

1. **Board recruitment and resignations**
   1. During 2024, Mohammed Ashraff resigned as Chair and Nick Cross was appointed as Chair.
   2. Alex Flynn (Finance) and Nancy Squires (Legal) were appointed as Independent Directors during the year
   3. There are currently two vacancies on the board and recruitment for these two INEDs is progressing.
2. **The CEO**
   1. EIH appointed Henry Staelens to the role of CEO (Part time) of EIH in November 2024. Henry combines this with his role as CEO of Ice Hockey UK. This has resulted in significantly improved working relationships between EIH and IHUK and the creation of some efficiencies.
   2. Grant King was appointed as the Development Director in another role which works across both organisations. The biographies of the staff team can been seen on the web site here.
3. **Board Meetings 2024**
   1. The Board met on x occasions during 2024. The focus of these meetings was in the following areas:
      1. Preparation for the AGM and changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association
      2. Improving the management and reporting of EIH finances
      3. Compliance with the Code of Sports Governance
      4. Changes to the structure of the board and board recruitment
      5. Development and approval of the Strategy
      6. Development and approval of the Governance Policy
      7. Development and approval of other new board policies
4. **Committees of the Board**
   1. During the year, the board established four new committees of the Board (the Committees), with delegated powers from the Board to carry out some Board business.
   * Finance & Audit Committee:
   * HR & Remunerations Committee
   * Governance & Risk Committee
   * Nominations Committee
   1. Each Committee has terms of Reference which were approved by the Board and is accountable to the Board. This is further detailed within the Governance Policy.
5. **Remuneration**
   1. In the reporting period, in line with the policy of EIH, no remuneration was paid to any individual in their role as a non-executive director.
6. **Equality Diversity and Inclusion** 
   1. EIH has a policy commitment to create a diverse board. Currently the gender balance of the board is two thirds male and one third female. There are opportunities in 2025 to improve the gender balance with two directors to be appointed.
   2. EIH is also committed to improving the wider diversity of the board and within its employees and volunteers, players and coaches. As part of its four year strategy, EIH will develop an action plan to encourage more women, people with disabilities and people from black and ethnic minorities to become more actively involved in all aspects of ice hockey.
   3. EIH is committed to the principles of equality and diversity and to creating an inclusive culture within EIH. EIH has made this commitment, which is published on the EIH website:

***Equality Diversity and Inclusion - Our commitment***

*“We are committed to promoting equal opportunities for the participation of everyone in the sport of Ice Hockey. It is our intention to foster a culture in which diversity and inclusion is valued and everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Anyone that wants to participate in the sport of Ice Hockey, whether as a player, coach, official, team manager, member of staff, spectator, parent or carer of a junior player or in any capacity whatsoever (‘Participants’) will receive equal treatment regardless of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation* ***(‘****Protected Characteristics’). We are also committed to providing equitable treatment to all those we deal with as an organisation, including customers and suppliers.*

*We will take all reasonable steps to:*

* *promote awareness and provide training to staff, officers, volunteers and team managers (as appropriate) on all aspects of equality and diversity;*
* *apply the principles of equality to all Participants;*
* *establish programmes and processes that ensure a diversity of candidates for paid and volunteer positions;*
* *implement all internal policies and procedures on a fair and impartial basis;*
* *create an inclusive working environment for employed staff, officers and volunteers that is sensitive to the needs of people of differing cultures, religions and beliefs;*
* *Set measurable equality, diversity and inclusion targets for the organisation, and review regularly*
* *make reasonable adjustments to enable Participants with disabilities to function effectively and to their full potential;*
* *ensure that all work and other environments (whether involving paid staff or volunteers) are free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying; and*
* *monitor how this policy is working in practice.*

1. **Environmental and Social Impact**
   1. EIH is committed to building a long-term, sustainable organisation. It is aware of the impact the organisation has on society, the environment, its stakeholders and the economy and will seek to manage this through its environmental and social governance policy (ESG).
   2. As part of its strategy, EIH will have an active focus on corporate sustainability initiatives. This will include taking steps to reduce carbon emissions, improving employee health and safety standards, increasing the reach and social impact of the sport and putting in place more robust risk management strategies. By taking proactive ESG measures, EIH will be better equipped to successfully navigate any future challenges and disruptions that may arise including regulatory and legal interventions, thus positioning itself for long-term resilience, growth and sustainability.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement Plan**
   1. The Board is very aware of the need to develop a plan which sets out how it will improve its engagement with its key stakeholders including but not limited to; clubs, players, coaches and referees, its partners including IHUK and Scottish Ice Hockey, the Elite Ice Hockey League, its funding partners and sponsors.
3. **Risk policy, risk register and risk management**
   1. The Board has established a risk management policy and will keep this under review. It has begun the process of seeking to embed risk management procedures throughout the organization. The board now regularly reviews the risk register.
4. **The Annual General Meeting**
   1. The Annual General Meeting was held on xx 2024 and the following business was conducted:
      1. The annual report was approved
      2. The revised Memorandum and Articles were adopted
      3. New Directors were appointed
      4. The draft annual accounts were presented
   2. The Board is aware that improvements need to be made in the reporting papers to the next AGM in 2025 and is taking steps to improve the presentation of the Annual Report and to present the approved and audited year and accounts.
   3. As year-end is 31 March each year, it is planned that in future the AGM will need to be held a little later each year to allow for the audit to be completed. The date of the AGM in 2025 will be communicated shortly. It is proposed to hold the AGM online in mid-week to allow for maximum attendance and engagement.
5. **Governance priorities for 2025**
   1. Significant progress was made in improving the governance arrangements and practices within EIH during this last year. There is significantly more work to complete and an action plan is in place for 2025/26. The priorities include to:
      1. Recruit two new Independent non-executive directors (by March 2025).
      2. Approve a revised strategy for EIH (by June 2025);
      3. Review other policies in line with policy review schedule including but not limited to: Further review the Articles, DOPS, Safeguarding Children and Young People, financial policies, HR policies(by December 2025).
      4. Review the roles and responsibilities of volunteers and committees within EIH, to improve effectiveness and decision making
      5. Monitor the Board improvement action plan and achieve improved effectiveness (by December 2025).
6. **Next Governance Statement**
   1. The next Governance Statement will be produced by EIH and part of the AGM papers in 2025.