

Notes of a meeting held at Westminster City Hall, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008  
with representatives from London and South East.

Attendees

R. Callicott.	President, Volleyball England
T. Ojasoo.	CEO, Volleyball England
L. Wainwright.	CEO in waiting, Volleyball England
C. Orton.	Chair, London V.A.
Richard Barker.	City of Westminster
Sam Bell.	City of Westminster
Darryl Collins.	London V.A.
Freda Bussey	Chair S.E.V.A.
Rachel Kane.	Surrey V.A.
Peter Parsons.	Berkshire V.A.
Brendan Osborne.	Chair, Eastern Volleyball Federation and Essex V.A.
Ken Edwards.	Essex V.A.
Ian Ruddock.	Kent V.A.
Jim Baker.	Kent V.A.
Sebastien Flesch.	Secretary, Hertfordshire V.A.

Opening remarks by R. Callicott.

He explained what was happening in relation to London 2012 and the build up in terms of events planned or thought about and how these could and would relate to London and the South East. The events and potential events mentioned for Volleyball, Beach Volleyball and Sitting Volleyball included in 2008:

European Championships 1<sup>st</sup> round GB Men and Women – Sheffield  
Euro League GB Men – June - 3 locations  
FIVB U21 Beach Volleyball World Championships – Brighton September  
CEV Masters – Blackpool - September

In years 2009 to 2011 it was sought to build upon these.

Examination was taking place of a World Beach Tour event (or Satellite / Challenger) in London. LOCOG test events in 2011. Beach Volleyball on Horseguards Parade; Volleyball at Earls Court. LOCOG had set a time frame and this precluded the staging of a pool of the European Senior Men's Championships in 2011 in concert with the French Volleyball Federation as the test event.

This raised the issue of the virtual total absence of suitable venues – both indoors and out. Without adequate venue provision events could not be viably staged. The facilities legacy from 2012 was limited for Volleyball and non-existent for Beach Volleyball, save a few thousand tons of sand.

**Issues raised**

The workforce – the basic message was one of too few people doing too much individually.

- More people needed to deliver
- How to get more coaches - Coaching courses can and are being organised.
- Issue of remuneration of volunteers – should they become paid coaches, paid referees, etc.
- Lack of referees courses, with some exceptions.
- Review of Referees and possibly setting up of Regional Referee Associations and looking to other sports.
- How do we involve volunteer organisations?
- Use of National Skills Academy

#### Participation - Young

- Questioning efficacy of school links with clubs (PESSCL)
- The gap between school and club needs to be addressed as a priority
- Though 30% of schools claim to include volleyball, the conversion rate to clubs is low - 3%.
- More investment (cash and resources) going into schools. Utilise BSF as an opportunity.
- Recognise opportunities within the National Curriculum.
- Volleyball not highly in demand in schools as it cannot compete with the investment of major sports but utilise the 5 hour offer
- Utilise the London Youth Games as a vehicle
- What is the most effective delivery system for our sport – does it involve CSP's

#### Participation – Not so young

- How can we increase participation – utilise parks, beaches, etc.
- Involvement of families in volleyball
- Role of veterans, how do we retain people in the sport
- Problem or challenge or opportunity of overseas born players know in England
- Volleyball in F.E. / H.E (BUSA) to be tapped

#### Profile and product

- Culture of Volleyball could be described as virtually non-existent
- Raise profile within 'British' people
- How relevant and important is volleyball?
- Sport not visual enough
- Volleyball in competition for TV time with other sports - How are we different from them?
- Past experience of TV exposure and whether it was beneficial should be borne in mind.
- Marketing of club matches needs to improve – the product is not good enough
- Review competitions framework including NVL and leagues
- Local authorities may be interested in smaller scale localised events
- Need for 'noise' at events

#### Facilities

- Problem of building new facilities in London due to very high land values
- Cost of hiring facilities detrimental to participation
- Existing facilities not suitable for 'small' international events
- Existing facilities sometimes not suitable for development and participation

#### London 2012

- Use 2012 as a catalyst for boosting popularity and involvement beforehand
- Legacy of London 2012 should be to get more people playing
- Consensus view that increased participation more important than performance at 2012
- Capacity of volunteer involvement at the right level could be an issue

#### Governance matters

- Role of sitting volleyball within VE
- Communication of decisions/ policies/ minutes to key regional personnel

Thanks to all that attended and contributed. Many of the issues are intractable but efforts will continue as they have in the past to improve the situation given the total resources of volunteers and staff.