Bowls ACT – Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, 25 August 2026

1. ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES:

Present: David Pruss (President), Margaret Argue (V/P), Ruth Moore, Penny Auld, Andrew Carmody, Gayle Young, John Birch (joined shortly after opening, travelling), Peter Hammond, Paul Gilbert (EO), Kate Lyttle (Projects – part, item 6.1 only)

Apologies: None recorded; all Directors were in attendance.

Executive Overview

The August meeting continued the portfolio-based reporting structure introduced in July, with business arising presented by business unit. The meeting ran for close to three hours and covered a substantial volume of business.

Digital progress continued, with the BowlsLink communication regarding mandatory use at qualifying State Championship events now completed, and club queries becoming more sophisticated. The Project Manager noted the inconsistency of enforcing BowlsLink on clubs while not using live scoring at Bowls ACT's own events; the Board agreed live scoring should become the norm, beginning with the Invitational Singles.

Governance and compliance remained a significant focus. The Board formally endorsed the EO's SSO Categorisation compliance timeline, running to April 2027, in response to ACT Sport and Rec's feedback. The Child Safe Standards Self-Assessment remains outstanding; a working group (President, EO, Carmody, Birch) will progress it. The Constitution Review and Strategic Planning process continues slowly; correspondence with Bowls Australia on support remains unanswered. Directors carried a motion (moved Birch) that decisions made outside formal meetings be formally endorsed at the next meeting.

On finance, the FAR Committee has still not formally convened; a meeting is now committed before the next Board meeting. Director Argue reported that, following some urgent revisions, the Association is now tracking closer to break-even than previously predicted. Directors discussed incorporating green fees into event entry fees (capped at $10) and remitting them to host clubs, removing cash collection on the day. A new risk was raised: the process requiring bank details before prize payment is not being well received by players, while retention on a third-party accounting system may be creating a cyber-security exposure; referred to the FAR Committee.

On Match/Events, the Board received a wash-up of the Over 60s Singles and Champion of Champions Singles, noted a marker-availability issue, and confirmed pennant draws. The Presentation Night survey results have been published, closing that action. Directors discussed a dedicated Uniform Committee and agreed a Terms of Reference is needed first, and concluded Bowls ACT should adopt separate representative numbering by category.

The Junior Development Program continued, with the internal review of the Tuggeranong Junior Development Academy proposal complete and an invitation circulated to all 11 ACT clubs. Junior BPL preparations remain behind schedule, with no coach confirmed. In Accreditation, the Board agreed Bowls Australia course fees will be paid upfront and reimbursed by Bowls ACT on completion, to reduce drop-out risk.

The most substantial New Business item was Tuggeranong Vikings' complaint regarding additional SIA accreditation requirements imposed by Bowls ACT beyond Bowls Australia's framework. Directors debated at length whether local requirements are well calibrated and risk discouraging volunteers. No decision was reached; the President's circulated position is to receive written Board feedback before a response to clubs. The Board also considered an ambiguous Crookwell Bowling Club letter on selection criteria, and a Greenline sponsorship proposal, agreeing in principle to co-sponsorship as lead sponsor of the Invitational Singles.

Key Decisions and Endorsements

- Confirmed the minutes of the 4 August 2026 Board meeting as a true and accurate record.
- Agreed that live scoring should become standard practice at Bowls ACT-hosted events, commencing with the Invitational Singles this weekend, with the Match Committee to determine the operational process.
- Formally endorsed the Executive Officer's SSO Categorisation compliance action timeline (October 2026 – April 2027), to be reflected in the Board's forward calendar.
- Agreed, in principle, that Bowls Australia course fees will be paid upfront by the participant or club and reimbursed by Bowls ACT upon successful completion of the course.
- Carried a motion (moved Birch, seconded Pruss) that decisions and documents approved by the Board outside a formal meeting be formally endorsed at the Board's next meeting.
- Agreed in principle to Greenline's proposal for co-sponsorship and as lead sponsor of the Invitational Singles, subject to further negotiation of terms and confirmation of existing live-streaming arrangements.
- Agreed to progress establishment of a dedicated Uniform Committee, with a Terms of Reference to be drafted before nominations are called.
- Agreed that Bowls ACT should adopt separate representative numbering sequences for open, senior, junior and para representatives, consistent with the approach used by other states.
- Referred the Association's collection and retention of member bank account details for prize payments to the FAR Committee, with consideration of a stricter “no form, no pay” requirement.

Key Risks and Dependencies

- Continued non-convening of the Finance, Audit & Risk (FAR) Committee, delaying formal oversight of the deficit budget and insurance/reserves review.
- Cyber-security and privacy exposure arising from the Association's retention of member bank account details in third-party accounting portals for prize payments, without a consistently enforced consent/collection process.

- Unresolved tension between Bowls ACT's locally-imposed SIA accreditation requirements and Bowls Australia's own framework, evidenced by Tuggeranong Vikings' escalation to Bowls Australia and the National Officiating Advisory Group (NOAG); risk of discouraging volunteer officials if requirements are perceived as excessive, balanced against ACT Government Child Safe Standards expectations tied to funding.
- Outstanding completion of the ACT Child Safe Standards Scheme Self-Assessment and Review Tool 2024, now tied to a formal compliance timeline linked to government funding categorisation.
- Dependence on external parties (Bowls Australia, Chris Evans / Ian Evans) for progress on the Constitution Review and Strategic Plan facilitation, with correspondence still unanswered.
- Risk to Junior BPL program delivery from the unresolved coach/manager vacancy and compressed selection timeline following the event's relocation south of Geelong.
- Reputational risk from perceived inconsistency or lack of transparency in representative selection processes, highlighted by correspondence from Crookwell Bowling Club.
- Reliance on a small number of volunteers (EO, and ad hoc support from Kate Lyttle) for business continuity, prompting consideration of expanded access/training for part-time admin support.

9. NEXT MEETING:

Date: Tuesday, 29 September 2026, 5:30 pm

Location: Online / Teams

10. CLOSE:

There being no further business, the President thanked Directors for their input, contributions and feedback over the course of the meeting, and specifically acknowledged the Executive Officer's ongoing work for the Association. The meeting closed at approximately 8:40 pm.