SPORT+ RECREATION ALLIANCE

THE VOLUNTARY CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

BRITISH ATHLETES COMMISSION

Voluntary Code Case Study – British Athletes Commission

Understanding and engaging with the sporting landscape

The British Athletes Commission (BAC) signed up to the Code in 2013 to give the organisation focus and structure after a period of change. In 2012 the BAC was awarded funding for the 2013-17 Rio Cycle, requiring the fulfilment of a number of governance conditions. The Code became invaluable as a source of guidance and good practice.

Principle 7 was particularly important:

It was important the new board members understood the position and role of the BAC in the sporting landscape. Externally, the BAC needed to re-establish its position in the sporting landscape.

Key Considerations

Understanding key relationships with other bodies

Following their 2013 re-launch, the BAC worked to understand the plans and objectives of key stakeholders in the sector, to find the best way to collaborate for mutual benefit.

Establishing strategic relationships and working with other organisations

Mutually beneficial relationships between the BAC and organisations like the English Institute of Sport and Sport Resolutions UK are important for effective representation of athletes. The BAC has board representation in both organisations to help fulfil this role.

Ensuring systems are in place to effectively manage members' queries and expectations

As a small organisation, the BAC increased its effectiveness by establishing Memoranda of Association with range of providers who could provide support services to their members. This gave members access to a wide range of professional assistance in a variety of fields.

Identifying and nurturing commercial partnerships to ensure sustainable development

In order to diversify its income stream and set the foundations for sustainable development, the BAC has begun to build commercial relationships with sponsors. This includes the Athletes Direct programme (www.athletesdirect.org) which raises the profile of the BAC whilst also benefitting their members.

The Code isn't theoretical or abstract; it's practical and pragmatic, and through focussing on it, as demonstrated with Principle 7, the BAC has been able to build strong foundations but also establish a meaningful and recognised presence in the (high performance) sports sector which is critical for the majority of their members.