

Introduction from the Chair – Annual Report – 2019

To the Members of Basketball Wales:

Basketball Wales relies upon the efforts of your volunteer Directors and, on your behalf, I sincerely thank each and every one of them for their ongoing contributions. In addition, several Basketball Wales Directors have been voluntarily assisting the British Basketball Federation (BBF) with their communications (Rhian Mackenzie), performance (Cameron Seeley and Simon Fisher) and financial management. Also, during the year, Stef Collins stepped down as a director of the BBF while Gavin Williams and I were added to their Board. The support for the BBF is necessary as a result of their ongoing lack of funds and consequent lack of staff. We also sincerely thank Stef for representing BW on the BBF Board and congratulate her for leading the GB women's team to great success and the opportunity to compete at the 2020 Olympic Games.

On the subject of performance, we congratulate Isobel Bunyan for being selected for the Great Britain U16 women's team and performing with distinction at the recently completed FIBA Europe tournament. Isobel is only the second Welsh women to achieve this distinction, following Emily Stradling's selection last year. Meanwhile, the recent Small Countries U16 tournaments again saw the two Welsh teams performing with great credit. The U16 Boys finished 3rd (following last year's 2nd placing) with a big win over 2018 winners Andorra, a second win (84-72) over Scotland) and a one-point loss to tournament winners Luxembourg. The U16 Girls' team were unlucky with the tournament schedule; although finishing out of the places, their group phase losses to Scotland (3rd) and the tournament winner Cyprus (51-52) deserved at least a place in the semi-finals. We gratefully thank and congratulate the coaches and their support staff for their contributions to these teams, and all the other Welsh representative teams and/or squads that compete on behalf of Basketball Wales.

Sound financial management, combined with a conservative use of the funding from Sport Wales and a wariness regarding the BBF's lack of funding, are reflected in the accounts. As mentioned last year, the three home countries are likely be levied with a significant affiliation fee, based on their individual memberships, in the very near future. We are now in a position to meet such a levy, hopefully without recourse to the membership, at least for the 2019-20 season.

The support of Sport Wales' Ian Blackburn during the year and especially his assistance with the administration and continuation of funding (£17,575) is very much appreciated. Ian has recently handed over his liaison role with Basketball Wales to Richard Lawrence and we look forward to working with him from now on. The Sport Wales grant for £20,000 enabled several small development grants / projects and assisted the appointment of part-time administrator, Helen Pearce. Helen has proved to be a welcome addition and has provided support for many of the directors and the Board.

The appointments to the Board of Rhian Mackenzie (Director Communications), Simon Fisher (Director Coach Development) and Gavin Lewis (Director Secondary Schools) were confirmed in addition to the resignation from long serving Director, Lucy Witt. Lucy will be missed for her experience and knowledge, especially with performance basketball and with British women's teams, and we thank her sincerely for her lengthy service to Welsh and British basketball. We were not successful in our recruiting efforts for a Commercial Director or a Club Development Director and also need to recruit additional women as directors in order to satisfy Sport Wales' demand for "*gender parity of at least 40% women or men on a Board*". To assist with that objective it is noted that my initial two year term has expired and that this may be a suitable time to replace me with a woman as your Independent Chair.

Keith Mair
Independent Chair
Basketball Wales
31 August 2019