**APPG on Boxing**

**‘Women in Boxing’**

**10.30am – 11.30am**

**Wednesday, 3rd November 2021**

**Virtual Meeting**

**In attendance:**

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| **Name** | **Organisation** |
| Christina Rees MP | Member, APPG on Boxing (Host) |
| Murray Stewart | Stewart Public Affairs Ltd |
| Camila Consolmagno | Stewart Public Affairs Ltd |
| Natasha Jonas | Speaker |
| Hilary Lissenden | Speaker |
| Dr Kathy Adcock | Speaker, In Your Corner |
| Holly Hefferon | Speaker, England Boxing |
| Sameenah Toussaint | Speaker, England Boxing |
| Paul Senior |  |
| Robert Smith | British Boxing Board of Control |
| Shelly Carter | Boxing Futures |
| Baroness Grey-Thompson | Member, APPG on Boxing |
| Katie Wambui Kings | Fight for Peace |
| Adrian de Leon | Fight for Peace |
| Owen Davies | Welsh Boxing |
| Matt Holt | GB Boxing |
| Lee Murgatroyd | Point Communications Ltd |
| Kim Johnson MP | Member, APPG on Boxing |
| Valerian Spicer | Boxing Futures |

**Agenda:**

1. **Introduction from Murray Stewart (MS)**

* MS introduced himself, welcomed everybody into the session, and presented Christina Rees MP (CR) as the host for the event in Chris Evans MP’s absence.
* CR outlined the agenda for the event and introduced the first speaker, Natasha Jonas (NJ).

1. **Introductory remarks by the panel**

* NJ started the conversation by telling the Group a little bit about her story and experience as one of the trailblazers for women in boxing in the UK.
* CR thanked NJ for her insight and went on to introduce Hilary Lissenden (HL), who began by admitting that her insight as a woman in boxing would be different to the other speakers and she was not a boxer herself but rather part of the coaching, refereeing, and administration of boxing. She then presented some PowerPoint slides along with her speech, which focused on the argument that there needs to be more funding and social support towards engaging, developing and retaining women in all aspects of boxing. She argued that the continuous stride towards diversity and inclusion is extremely important in such a male-dominated sport to build the confidence of women to join and, therefore, increase their desire to stay.
* CR then introduced Dr Kathy Adcock (KA). KA started the conversation by contextualising her views to that of a LGBTQ+ woman and made the argument that boxing clubs can often not feel like welcoming spaces for a woman to walk into but can crucially feel like an unsafe space for women that identify as LGBTQ+. Her overarching viewpoint was that boxing clubs and boxing spaces in general should investigate addressing diversity and inclusion in respect to both gender and sexuality, because LGBTQ+ women often feel like they must deal with twice the barriers to get into the sport. She finished off by listing some suggestions for people in the sport to think about to achieve these aims.
* CR and KA briefly spoke about the similarity of gender disparity within boxing and squash. CR then went on to introduce Holly Hefferon (HH). Holly spoke a little bit about how she entered the world of boxing, and then went on to list some things that she has experienced that could be addressed to improve girls’ experiences in boxing and encourage them to stay in the sport.
* CR introduced Sameenah Toussaint (ST) to the conversation. ST gave the Group an idea of what her background was in boxing and proceeded to list her own experiences and address some things that she believes would significantly improve girls’ experiences in the sport.

1. **Q&A session**

* After thanking ST for her useful insight, CR passed the mic onto MS who took questions from attendees.
* The questions covered girls’ protective clothing / kit during matches and their frequent inefficiency, the perception of boxing as violence instead of boxing as a sport and how to overcome that, boxing in prisons, how to retain female participation in boxing both locally and nationally, white collar boxing and how it can double as a safe space for LGBTQ+ and female boxers, and how MPs can be active players in changing policy around the sport in order to make it a more female-friendly space.

1. **AOB**

* CR closed the session by thanking all present for participating.