



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED
AT YOUNG CHELSEA BRIDGE CLUB, GOLDHAWK ROAD, LONDON, W12 8HA
ON WEDNESDAY 26th OCTOBER 2016**

Present: Jeremy Dhondy (Chairman) (JD)
Ian Payn (Vice Chairman) (IP)
Jerry Cope (Treasurer) (JC)
Heather Dhondy (HD)
Darren Evetts (DE)
Anthony Golding (AG)
Robert Lawy (RL)
Ron Millet (RM)
Graham Smith (GS)
Barry Capal (General Manager) (BC)
Peter Stockdale (Minuting the meeting) (PS)

1. Apologies for Absence

None. GS joined the meeting during item 4.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 14th September 2016

2.1 Accuracy

An amendment to item 5, relating to the length of Michael Clark's absence, was noted.

2.2 Matters arising

3.2/2.2 – The matter of 'Congress Hosts' had not been raised at the Tournament Committee meeting, but IP had discussed it at length with Gordon Rainsford (GR). No changes had been made at present, but GR was aware of the issues and that a specific job specification and list of responsibilities should be provided to each host. This would be produced in due course, and Peter Jordan – and, in time, his replacement – would also be made aware.

3.2/11 – BC advised that no unaffiliated clubs had participated in the EBED Sim Pairs, but one club had been identified which had played in other events without a surcharge being levied. They would be informed of the intention to charge them in future. EBED will be encouraging unaffiliated clubs to play in its next sim.

5 – BC reported that conversations with the NBO about their interest in EBUScore and USEBIO were progressing.

6 & 11 – RM reported that the YCBA consider their contribution to the 'membership recruitment scheme' to be in addition to that given by the EBU. It was agreed that the donation from the EBU would be capped at the previously agreed level, and the YCBA would contribute the extra towards the cost of a Regional Development Officer. If the scheme was seen as being successful then the additional funds from the EBL would be released to the YCBA – and it was noted that the success of scheme would be apparent before the initial funds given by the EBU had been exhausted. DE noted

that Yorkshire's work was a pilot for possible future Regional Development Officers, an initiative proposed by the County Working Groups.

It was agreed that it would be suggested that the EBL should offset the grant against future monies owed. JD would speak to the EBL treasurer about this.

3. Vice Presidents

It was confirmed that Bill Pencharz had resigned as a Vice President of the EBU with immediate effect earlier in the month.

4. AGM Matters

4.1 Draft agenda

Amendments to the proposed agenda were noted.

4.2 Special Resolutions at AGM – Standing Committee Reform

4.2.1 Articles of Association - updates

The proposed amendments to the Articles of Association were circulated prior to the meeting. These were agreed and it was confirmed that only those pages on which changes were proposed would be printed to be made available at the AGM. It was recognised that the proposed minor update to the bylaws should also be highlighted.

If the proposed reform of the Standing Committees were to go through at the AGM then a Tournament Committee would be reformed as a sub-committee of the Board by IP & GR soon after that meeting. It was also agreed that, in discussion with the Chairs of the remaining Standing Committees, some changes may be made to their Terms of Reference.

4.3 Chairman's Annual Report 2016-17

Suggested alterations to this report were noted.

4.3 Treasurer's Annual Report 2016-17

Suggested alterations to this report were noted.

5. Standing Committees

This had been addressed in the above item.

6. General Manager's report

BC had circulated his report prior to the meeting. He gave an update on current staffing matters. BC advised that Julia Thomas, the current Tournament Assistant, would be leaving in mid-December as she was moving away from the area. An advert had been posted for her replacement. BC had arranged for Julia's predecessor – Gill Pain – to provide temporary cover if required.

Note: Subsequent to the meeting an appointment was made

BC reported that testing of Workbooks was continuing, and an assessment of progress would be made when Michael Clark returned from holiday in late November. It was thought that the switch to Workbooks would probably be made in January.

The Board were appraised of the issues relating to disqualifications from the 2015-16 NICKO competition, and the checks made prior to the start of the 2016-17 competition to ensure all teams met the regulations. BC also reported on a club which was submitting sessions using pseudonyms for some members – the Club Liaison Officer would be contacting them regarding this.

BC believed that the clubs which had applied for grants in April had now all received the products they wished to purchase, and he noted that the scheme had stayed within budget. It was agreed that this scheme would be made available again in the 2017-18 financial year, with the budget and criteria dependent on the financial position at that time – BC noted that some clubs had already expressed pre-emptive interest. BC would write an article for English Bridge and the website describing and promoting the scheme.

It was agreed that the prize vouchers previously given to winners at EBU congresses would cease to be accepted from 1st May. PS would circulate this news via the appropriate channels.

Bridge+more had been trialled at the Autumn Congress, and the feedback had been mostly positive. It was noted that there was a number of issues which would need to be resolved if this product were to be used more extensively, and it would be necessary to trial it using EBU methods (possibly at an event in the spring). BC would ask the manufacturer to provide more information on costs and leasing agreements.

7. Financial matters

7.1 Treasurer's report & August Management Accounts

JC had circulated his report prior to the meeting. He highlighted the overspending on internationals relative to budget. JC advised that he had asked the Chair of the Committee to bring spending back into line with budget. It was noted that recent changes in the exchange rate would have an impact on the budget for next year as many entry fees for international competitions, and EBL affiliation fees, were paid in Euros. It was noted that it would therefore be necessary to decide at a future meeting whether the budget would be increased, or whether it would be necessary to reduce expenditure to keep the budget at a similar level. Later in the meeting it was raised that the fall in revenue from competitions may necessitate a reduction in the internationals budget as part of a rebalancing of all budgets. It was also noted that exchange rate changes would impact on members of those teams which were partly self-funded.

JC advised that the shop was currently down on budget. BC reported that some aspects of the shop's activities had been examined, and one change which was to be implemented immediately was to offer free shipping on orders of over £100, thus matching the arrangement offered by a competitor. Other possible changes had also been considered and may be implemented in future. GS would consult with BC and the shop staff on these.

JC noted that the time at which licence fees would be paid was hard to predict, and therefore comparison with equivalent periods in other years was not often a true reflection of performance.

JC warned that revenue from competitions may become a significant cause for concern. The figures from the Summer Meeting were showing a provisional loss of around £4K, though this would be partly offset by a profit of around £1K from the Really Easy Congress held at the same venue that

week. The loss could be attributed to lower entries than expected, and a small 'mis-estimation' of costs. This was, JC advised, just a continuation of existing trends, however, and not specific only to this event.

The Board discussed that whereas in the past competitions were self-sufficient, and also made a small contribution to general funds – sometimes identified as supporting international activities – existing trends indicated that this may no longer be the case based on current entry fees and expenditure. It was agreed that in principle the general membership should not subsidise the competition players. It would therefore be necessary in future to assess the entry fees and expenditure, and also consider the impact that a fall in profit from this area would have on other areas, so that all budgets balanced and the four year strategic financial plan was met.

It was noted that two types of competitions which were proving successful were 'Really Easy' events (and novice events held at county level) and the Overseas Congresses. The Board briefly discussed what could be ascertained from this, and whether any changes could be made to other congresses. The possibility of adding 'side events' was raised, though it was noted that the overall benefit gained from providing the bridge and golf event at the Summer Meeting had not compensated for the effort of organising it – and this would likely be the case for other events at that, or other, congresses. In summary, however, it was recognised that it was not for the Board to say how the congresses should be run – that responsibility lay with the Tournament Committee and GR – and IP confirmed that they were continually assessing the format, location, costs, etc of all congresses and trying to improve them wherever possible.

The stability in UM figures was noted, and it was recognised that all organisations should be seeking to grow in order to survive.

7.2 Schedule for 2017/18 budget preparation

JC advised that the schedule would be the same as for previous years, and would be started by the Aylesbury staff.

8. Competitions Feedback – Summer Meeting

This had been addressed in previous items.

9. EBED report

RL reported on various aspects of EBED's activity: the accelerated learning scheme was progressing towards its launch in September 2017; the refreshed Bridge for All books were selling well; successful regional bridge camps had been held in the summer of 2016, and the annual Junior Teach-In would likely switch to a regional event in 2017; an Education Advisory Group had been established.

The advert in the Daily Telegraph had been successful with over 500 people contacting Sue Maxwell (SM) at EBED to find out details of their nearest lessons. SM would soon be contacting the teachers to find out how many pupils had joined their classes, so the 'success rate' would therefore be known. It had also been useful in developing relationships with clubs and teachers.

The way that the success of EBED in generating teachers and students would be established was discussed. It was noted that the number of BFA students registered with the EBU could be used as an indicator, however it was known that not all teachers register their students. Although the number of BFA members was remaining constant the sales of BFA books were significantly up on budget – thereby indicating a possible increase that was not yet reflected in the figures. It was hoped that in

future EBED could produce some Key Performance Indicators to help the Trustees and EBU Board assess its performance.

There had been a good response to its survey relating to bridge and health & wellbeing, and it was hoped that an article would be produced for a future issue of English Bridge to report on the results.

10. County Working Group

DE gave a summary of the recent activities of the County Working Groups, including some positive developments from the Northern group – including YCBA's membership recruitment work. It was noted, however, that some CWGs were not operating as intended, and the future of the scheme was discussed. It was agreed that the matter would be discussed further at the County Chairman's meeting in July. The County Chairmen would be contacted in advance of the meeting to allow for consideration of certain discussion points relating to the roles of the counties, and how counties engage with the EBU.

11. EBL/WBF matters

JD reported that Guernsey had been granted permission to enter the EBL's European Small Federation Games at the start of November, but the EBL would not let them join as an NBO.

JD reported that the outstanding case against the Polish pair accused of 'cheating' was still unresolved.

12. Any other business

The Board were advised that due to resignations the terms of office of the current Board members contravened the articles as they were all even numbers (4, 2 and 2 rather than 3, 3 and 2) – which could result in the Board all stepping down at the same time. JD advised that it was too late to correct this for 2016, but it would be amended in 2017 by making one appointment a two year term.