



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED
AT YOUNG CHELSEA BRIDGE CLUB, 54 GOLDHAWK ROAD, LONDON, W12 8HA
ON WEDNESDAY 27TH JANUARY 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)
Barry Capal (General Manager) (BC)
Peter Stockdale (Minuting the meeting) (PS)

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Minutes of the meeting of 28th October 2015

2.1 Accuracy

The minutes were approved as accurate.

2.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

3. General Manager's report

BC had circulated his report prior to the meeting. He advised that the work on the implementation of Workbooks was progressing. It had been delayed by issues with third party components which were unforeseen, but had now been suitably resolved. He anticipated that it would be in use from May/June. He emphasised that there was no necessity to have it operational by a specific date, so it would be used only when the process was complete and the system had been tested. He confirmed that as the financial activity used a different system there were no problems anticipated with stopping one system and then starting with another, and the two would not need to be run concurrently.

BC confirmed that work towards auto-enrolment was progressing. He also advised that a new telephone system for the EBU offices had been proposed by the current supplier. This could lead to considerable savings, and some technological improvements, and as BC had received positive reference it was likely that this would go ahead.

BC acknowledged that there was no EBED Manager's report as there was yet to be anyone appointed to the position. Interviews for this would be taking place on 10th February.

BC confirmed that Andrew Urbanski had left the position of Club Liaison Officer. An advert had been posted for his successor, and JD confirmed that the job description had been updated.

4. Financial Matters

4.1 Treasurer's Report & Management Accounts

JC had circulated the most recent figures, and his report, prior to the meeting. He highlighted that the revenue from the shop, noted as being low in the previous meeting, had improved.

He also advised that the improvement versus budget relative to the implementation of the new membership system was misleading as the slower progress on the implementation had meant that payments had been delayed. He was hoping that this would be reflected as an accrual on the annual accounts. It was agreed that the 'exceptional' spending which has taken place should be clearly shown in the accounts, and that where possible this should be included in the 2015/16 accounts so that only one year was significantly affected.

JC acknowledged the difficulty in analysing month-by-month accounts as they were dependent on when certain activities fell relative to the period in question – for example the production of English Bridge magazine. This was addressed further in item 4.4.

4.2 2016/17 Budget

JC advised that he intended including 'board initiatives' as a separate budget item for 2016/17, and these figures would be discussed at the March meeting.

He added that an initial set of budget figures for him to review may be available in the coming days.

4.3 Bridge Overseas Agreement

JC reported that the agreements with Bridge Overseas had expired, so he had worked with BOS to modify them slightly, and they had then been renewed. They were a five year agreement, with a rolling 12 month and 1 day commitment.

4.4 Reporting arrangements for 16/17

JC proposed a set of key performance indicators which could be used to monitor progress during the year. These would also be colour-coded to indicate whether they were satisfactory, needed monitoring, or were cause for concern. There was agreement that this was a good approach, and JC invited board members to suggest in due course other indicators which could be used.

5. Governance: Standing Committees

JD explained that although a small majority of voters at the AGM had been in favour of the resolution to abolish standing committees, the size of the majority was not sufficient for the change to be implemented. It was agreed that some of the concerns that were raised during the AGM would be addressed:

- JD would produce a more 'user-friendly' document explaining the proposed changes to the articles. AG would present this at the shareholders' meeting;

- how the chair of the sub-committee was chosen, and how long they serve would be addressed;

- a sub-committee would be established to help recruit the best people to the other sub-committees. They would 'recruit', but also perform 'quality checks' on those who put themselves

forward – something which is not the case with those standing for election to the standing committees, particularly as they are often uncontested elections;
all committees would be treated the same, with no distinction made between the three.

Action: JD & AG

The resolution would be re-submitted at the shareholders meeting in May. Prior to this it would be shown to the Chairs of the Standing Committees.

6. Sport England

IP reported that a decision on the leave to appeal was still being awaited, and there was no time scale on when this may be made. A date for the VAT hearing was also not known.

7. Disciplinary Panel 2016-17

John Pain, secretary for the Laws & Ethics Committee, had circulated a report prior to the meeting. In this he outlined the proposed disciplinary panel for 2016-17, and confirmed that all were willing to continue. The board approved the panel, giving their thanks for the panel's service.

The only disciplinary case to be brought before the panel in 2015-16 to date would be heard on Friday 29th January.

8. EBED/South Bucks Bridge Centre

BC gave an update on South Bucks Bridge Centre

9. Education Matters

RL had circulated a paper prior to the meeting which looked at the relationship between the EBU and EBED/EBUTA. He stated that looking at the relationship between the organisations was difficult until it was known what the EBU hoped EBED/EBUTA would achieve. It was emphasised that as EBED and the EBU were separate entities it is not possible for the EBU to dictate how EBED operates, though it was noted that both boards had approved a funding agreement which outlined that the EBU could specify funding for particular activities. In such instances it could be appropriate for certain parameters, and performance indicators, to be specified.

It was therefore agreed that the funding agreement should be applied, and mutually agreed 'metrics' should be developed. To that end, it would be suggested to the EBED trustees that RL be invited to attend their meetings to get more information on what EBED is hoping to achieve. This would provide a conduit between the two organisations. **Action: RL**

In addition it was noted that little progress would likely be made in this area until the new EBED managers were in place. Thereafter things may be clearer.

10. BGB Representative

The renewal of HD as board representative to Bridge Great Britain was approved.

11. Master Points and the SBU

JD gave the background to the concerns relating to the award by the SBU of Green Points that would result in Gold Points being credited by the EBU. After discussion it was agreed that Gold Points would

only be credited for Green Points won in events organised by the EBU. This would come in to effect from 1st August 2016. JD would write to the SBU and WBU to explain the decision. There would be no change to how the Green Points were handled, with EBU members receiving full credit for any awarded by the SBU (and WBU). **Action: JD**

12. Tournament Review

Gordon Rainsford (GR) had circulated a report prior to the meeting, giving an update on the Competitions Strategy which was put forward in June 2014. He outlined some of the changes which he had implemented, and noted that whilst there had been a decline in the entry for some congresses, others had maintained, or slightly increased, their attendances. None of the competitions were operating at a loss. He therefore proposed that no significant changes be made while the impact of some of the changes were further assessed, though he did outline a plan for potentially outsourcing the running of some events to a county, or regional group.

The board agreed to allow GR to continue his current approach, noting that attendances at congresses run by other NBOs were slowly falling, and this was indicative of the changing nature of bridge players, and external pressures on leisure time, rather than anything unique to EBU events.

JC expressed his intention to consider at a future meeting the extent to which competitions should make a profit to fund other EBU activities, or whether they should only be self-funding – the provision of competitions being an important part of the EBU's function in itself. It was noted that the outcome of the VAT case would have a significant impact on the costs relating to competitions, and no review should take place until the implications of the outcome of the case were known.

13. EBL/WBF Matters

JD reported that he had written to the WBF regarding perceived instances of 'cheating' which had been reported during the World Championships in Chennai. He had received a reply which had not provided a significant amount of information.

HD advised that she was part of the WBF 'High Level Players Commission' which was looking at video evidence of instances of perceived cheating which had been reported. She did not believe they were looking at instances reported at EBL events so had no involvement in the existing, established cases. The EBL had established their own panel, and David Bakhshi was believed to be the English representative. It was understood that there were no significant developments in the established, EBL cases.

JD and BC would be attending the biennial EBL administrative meeting the following weekend.

14. Any other business

RL asked for clarification of the situation regarding the commentary on Bridge Base Online for EBU events. HD replied that BBO organised the coverage, and that the commentators did so voluntarily with no input from the EBU. She did note, however, that disciplinary action had been taken against a few members who had made derogatory remarks during commentaries. So whilst it was not possible to control who does it, action could be taken if they acted inappropriately.

An update on the 'NGS exclusion' issues was given. It was reported that GR had written to clubs who had used the option, and the incidences of its use, and apparent misuse, had fallen. A disciplinary case would be heard on Friday involving a member who had allegedly intentionally, and knowingly, misused the option.