



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED
AT EBU OFFICES, BROADFIELDS, BICESTER ROAD, AYLESBURY, BUCKS, HP19 8AZ
ON TUESDAY 17TH JUNE 2014**

Present:

Jeremy Dhondy (Chairman) (JD)
Ian Payn (Vice Chairman) (IP)
Andrew Petrie (Treasurer) (AP)
Jerry Cope (JC)
Heather Dhondy (HD)
Darren Evetts (DE)
Anthony Golding (AG)
Robert Lawy (RL)
Ron Millet (RM)
Malcolm Oliver (MO)
Barry Capal (General Manager) (BC)

Peter Stockdale (Minuting the meeting) (PS)

1. Apologies for absence
None

2. Minutes of the meeting of 19th March 2014

2.1 Accuracy

The minutes were approved as accurate.

2.2 Matters arising

Update on VAT claim (2.2)

AP reported that permission to appeal had been granted and that the necessary paperwork had been submitted. He had made enquiries regarding the potential timescale for the appeal, and was advised that if ruled upon by two tribunal judges it may be heard by the end of the year. If the case was heard by a high court judge then it may take up to two years.

JD had been contacted by the Polish Bridge Union with an invitation to join their bid to the EU(Erasmus+) for funding for sporting activities. The accompanying document from the EU cited bridge as an approved 'sport'. This information had been passed to David Ewart.

AP advised that if the process dragged on then we would need to put in a protective claim.

All Party Parliamentary Group (2.2)

RM reported that a match between the British and Polish parliaments was unlikely, though JD reported the Polish team was still interested. JD said he would mention it to Ruth Henig when they met.

Donation (3.2)

BC reported that he and Simon Barb (SB) had met with a potential donor. The donor had seemed enthusiastic and SB was going to follow up with him.

USEBIO software (4)

BC gave the background, and an update, on the issues relating to the use of USEBIO 1.1 for the grading of teams games as part of NGS.

Magazine update (10.4)

JD reported that magazine editor, Elena Jeronimidis, had undertaken the necessary changes and the October magazine would be the smaller size. This could represent a saving of around £20,000 per year, assuming the postal rates were not changed. The shareholders, advertisers and contributors had all been informed. JD advised that the smaller size would necessitate some content being moved to the online magazine although the new magazine would have more pages, and some of the options, and the implications, were discussed.

Bridge Overseas (5)

AP reported that he had received an email from Simon Kelly at Bridge Overseas which referenced the minutes of the previous meeting. The issue would be discussed as agenda item 11.

3. Financial Matters

3.1 Treasurer's report

AP referred to the figures and report circulated prior to the meeting. He highlighted the surplus, relative to the budget figure, of around £70K, and also pointed to the unbudgeted donation to EBED of £45K. AP advised that the budget had been very prudent, as appropriate for a member organisation.

3.2 Draft Annual Accounts

AP had circulated the draft accounts prior to the meeting. He advised that they would need to be formally accepted at the September meeting. He was asked about the entry 'other creditors' and stated that he believed these to be outstanding prizes, vouchers, unpaid invoices and Bridge for All rebates. He undertook to check and advise. He added that the Bridge for All rebate was being phased out, and outstanding rebates would progressively be written off. **Action AP**

3.3 Reserves

AP reported that the Cash Reserves were significantly in excess of that required by our Reserves policy and the Auditor had commented in a similar vein. AP suggested that some cash be released for investment in our 5 year strategic plan. There was agreement that this should be considered as part of the 'strategy meeting' the following day.

3.4 Competition finances

AP had circulated a summary of the financial performance of EBU competitions, for consideration prior to the strategy meeting. He was asked to clarify what was included in the expenditure relating to competitions, and he advised that the figure included salaries assigned to 'competitions' and a share of the general overheads of the union. He had pointed out to Gordon Rainsford that should all the EBU Overheads be allocated to the various business activities then Competitions would almost certainly make a deficit rather than a surplus.

4. General Manager's Report

BC had circulated his report prior to the meeting.

BC advised the replacement of Enterprise would take place later in the year and he would present a recommendation to the board at the September meeting. He warned that this was a key system that would be difficult, costly and time consuming to replace but we had no choice as to replacing it, only a choice as to what we replaced it with.

BC reported that in addition to the twenty eight clubs which had affiliated since January 2013 a further eleven had expressed interest. He anticipated around half of these would go on to affiliate.

5. EBED

JC reported that the charity would have the second meeting of its trustees on 1st July. He stated things were progressing, and whilst developments were slow he felt this was in part intentional to ensure the charity could 'walk before it tried to run' and also ensure it did so in the right direction.

6. Selection Committee Disciplinary Procedures

JD reported that when it had been necessary to hold a disciplinary hearing for a junior player who had acted inappropriately whilst returning from an international event it became clear that there was no official disciplinary process in place, so a temporary system had been developed. He added that the absence of a 'neat' policy had felt unsatisfactory, however for the incident in question the outcome of the hearing, and the process used, had been adequate.

He circulated a proposed policy which addressed two potential scenarios: 1) the conduct affected the players standing within the EBU as a whole; 2) the conduct affected the players standing only within the context of 'international' play.

It was agreed that the distinction between conduct which could be adjudicated upon by the Selection Committee, and that which required escalation to the L&E to be heard by an EBU Disciplinary Panel, could be broadly defined as whether the action, and its repercussion, were internal, or external, to the international set-up. It was felt the proposed policy circulated with JD suitably dealt with that distinction.

It was agreed that in instances when the player would receive a ban from international trials and/or competitions they would have the right to appeal to an EBU Panel assembled from the panel list. It was also acknowledged that when a player's conduct had damaged their reputation to the point where the Selection Committee would not consider selecting them, but they had not been formally banned, then the player would be notified of this prior to their entry in trial events.

The board agreed to the introduction of the policy, and JD was satisfied that as a result no changes to the by-laws would be necessary. He undertook to report the discussion to the Chairman of Selectors.

Action JD

7. Award Nominations

JD and HD left the meeting while this item was discussed.

IP took the chair.

7.1 Diamond Award

7.2 Sapphire Award

The two awards were discussed, but it was agreed that the criteria were unclear. A decision was put on hold pending a discussion at a later date when a clarification had occurred. RM was asked to progress this.

Action RM

7.3 Young Player of the Year

The two nominees put forward by the Selection Committee were discussed, and the board felt that as both were worthy, and Young Pair of the Year was unlikely to be awarded, both should be recognised.

7.4 Young Pair of the Year

As per the Selection Committee recommendation the board agreed that no pair would be recognised this year.

JD retook the chair.

8. Counties Working Group

DE had circulated a report prior to the meeting.

He advised that the National Group had not yet met, but would do so in the near future. He raised a number of points that he thought could be discussed, given the primary topics of conversation at the regional meetings, and invited the board to keep them in mind for future discussion.

9. Split Clubs Policy

Following the discussion at the previous meeting, JC had drafted a policy to deal with those clubs which may wish to split and affiliate only part of their activities. The board recommended one change in wording, but otherwise all were happy that the document be put on the website as an agreed policy.

10. EBL/WBF Matters including Champions Cup

JD reported that at the EBU assembly during the European Championships there would be a vote for the positions of President and executives. As JD was not attending, Seniors team NPC, Simon Cochemé, would attend the meeting, and be able to cast a proxy vote.

HD had circulated a report prior to the meeting regarding the hosting of the Champions Cup. She advised that Gordon Rainsford, and Simon Kelly of Bridge Overseas, had visited the potential venue, Horwood House, near Milton Keynes, and believed that it would be very suitable. She added that the room rates were within budget.

It was agreed that before approaching possible sponsors it should be decided how much the EBU were willing to contribute so that HD knew how much she would need to source. A general consensus was reached, and it was acknowledged that once sponsorship money had been arranged the EBU would be liable for making up any shortfall based on unforeseen costs and/or an error in the budgeting. It was also recognised, however, that the EBU would see the benefit from any unforeseen savings and/or 'favourable errors' in the budgeting.

The board agreed the budget to be suitable for the basis of an approach to potential sponsors and HD would therefore make some enquiries.

Alongside an 'individual sponsor' of the event it was also mentioned that 'commercial sponsors' could be sought, perhaps for a contribution towards a specific aspect of the event, for example the

drinks reception, or the event bags. BC also suggested that as the event would be in Buckinghamshire that it may appropriate to approach the County Council for a contribution.

11. Bridge Overseas MOU

AP reported that following the previous meeting he had spoken with Simon Kelly (SK), Sales Director for Bridge Overseas (BO), as requested by the board. Prior to the meeting he had circulated a letter from SK, along with a Memorandum of Understanding between the EBU and BO. AG advised that the MOU was actually a contract, despite the title that had been given.

The Board were in agreement that the letter from SK was very positive, addressed many of the concerns and allayed many of the fears which existed. It was recognised that the problems which had arisen were more indicative of the current 'hotel marketplace', rather than any failings on the part of BO. It was also acknowledged that BO and EBU were 'on the same side' in dealing with the hotels. There was a feeling, however, that it was unfair that the EBU was criticised for any problems which arose, but it was noted that this was probably unavoidable. A comment was also made that some members were looking at any previous venues through 'rose-tinted glasses', and the current arrangements were certainly superior.

The figures regarding the financial savings made since the start of the arrangement with BO were referenced, and the board agreed that the savings were another significant benefit.

The board were happy to agree to the suggestion that Gordon Rainsford work directly with SK, with the remit to act as he felt appropriate, with only significant issues being referred to the board for comment.

The board confirmed that they valued highly the relationship with BO, and were very happy to continue working with them.

12. Any Other Business

This item was addressed at the strategy meeting the following day.