



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED
AT EBU OFFICES, BROADFIELDS, BICESTER ROAD, AYLESBURY, HP19 8AZ
ON TUESDAY 16TH JUNE 2015**

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)
Barry Capal (General Manager) (BC)

Peter Stockdale (Minuting the meeting) (PS)

1. Apologies for Absence

None

2. Minutes of the meeting of 11th March 2015

2.1 Accuracy

The minutes were approved as accurate.

2.2 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not otherwise appearing on the agenda.

2.3 Review of action points

2.2 / 4.5 – JD reported that he had written again to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport – on this occasion to the new Secretary of State, John Whittingdale to inform him of the meeting the EBU had held with the previous minister Sajid Javid– and had yet to receive a reply.

3.2 – BC reported that only around thirty clubs had not taken up the offer of free playing cards. The offer had also generated business for the shop as some clubs ordered extra items, including some which had not used the shop before.

3.4 – AP advised that he believed this issue had been addressed in email correspondence with the board members shortly after the previous meeting.

4 – BC reported that there was no VAT advantage if EBED were to collect the subscriptions.

9 – BC confirmed that the County Officials were covered under the EBU’s insurance policy.

12 – JD reported that the agenda for the County Chairmen’s Meeting had been prepared.

3. Financial Matters

3.1 Treasurer’s Report with Draft Management Accounts

3.2 Draft Annual Accounts for the Year ending 31st March 2015

AP had circulated the end of year draft management accounts prior to the meeting. He advised that it was unlikely that the draft accounts would be finalised before the end of July. These would likely show a higher profit than anticipated, though he emphasised that as there was no tax or dividend implications then there was no repercussions based on when any surplus was accumulated.

The board noted that the financial position of the EBU was now much stronger than before the introduction of Universal Membership. The restoration of financial health, and subsequent accumulation of reserves to invest in ensuring the future of the game, had been the right policy, and successfully achieved. How the money could be invested would be considered during the strategy discussion the following day.

4. General Manager’s Report

BC reported that work on the new membership database with Workbooks had started well, but it was unlikely that the system would be fully operational by October. Whilst this was an initial aim when work began there was no business imperative to meet this target, and the work would therefore be completed ‘properly’ in preference to ‘quickly’.

BC and RM had discussed the security of bank accounts held by companies, relative to those held by individuals. BC reported that the allowance which was protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme was the same for both individuals and companies - £85,000 per bank licence – and that individuals and companies had the same rights in this respect. It was noted, however, that prudent banking practices would always be considered as standard. Moves had already been made to spread money to comply with keeping under this limit.

BC reported that the solar panels installed at the Aylesbury offices were proving to be particularly beneficial, making a return of around 15%.

The number of affiliated clubs had risen by eleven during the year. There had been a small decline in the number of members on the system, but BC believed this was due to clubs heeding requests to ‘tidy’ their database and remove players who were no longer active bridge players, or were deceased.

BC had circulated a report from Simon Barb on the activities of English Bridge Education and Development. The difficulty which EBED was experiencing in gaining help from the counties in their efforts to promote and develop youth bridge was noted. BC also gave an update on activities at South Bucks Bridge Centre.

JD requested that BC ask Michael Clark to add to the IT Schedule the activities for the adoption of Jeff Smith’s software. **Action: BC**

BC reported that work was being done to find a suitable intern, however the intern company had not yet identified someone to meet the requirements. He also said that work was progressing on the auto-enrolment scheme, and this would be in place well before the legal deadline for implementation (August 2016). He added that the existing plan, used by around two-thirds of the staff, could be converted.

5. EBED Matters including BfA matters

5.1 EBU Funding of EBED

A document, written by RL in conjunction with JC, had been circulated prior to the meeting, addressing the EBU's funding of EBED. RL summarised the report, noting that the funding could be considered in two tranches – general funding and specific funding. He emphasised a belief that the issues should not be approached in a piecemeal fashion, and there should instead be a coherent strategy.

Due to issues of the timing of the meeting this document had been accepted in principle by the trustees of EBED.

The EBU board accepted the document as a working basis for an agreement to be developed. It recognised that it should be written to include some metrics by which the success of EBED could be measured, and give the opportunity for the situation to be reviewed. These measures of success would be produced in consultation with EBED, and developed once an operational plan had been put forward. In the short term this would initially focus on activities relating to EBUTA and the new EBUTA manager, Jonathan Taylor, would be asked to produce a short operational plan as soon as he was sufficiently settled in the job to do this effectively. It was hoped this may be available for the September meeting, though it was recognised this may be too soon. He would also be invited to meet with RL to discuss the operational plan.

Board members were asked to submit to RL any ideas on how the success of EBED could be measured. RL would collate these ideas and present them for discussion at a future meeting. **Action: ALL & RL**

5.2 EBED Discounts to EBU members

AP had circulated a report prior to the meeting outlining how the issue of discounts on EBED goods and services for EBU members may be handled. The issue had arisen as AP had received professional advice suggesting that the giving of discounts to EBU members by EBED was not appropriate as it did not fit the charity's mandate of acting in the public benefit. It was also acknowledged that such an action did not aid the attempts to establish EBED and the EBU as separate organisations.

AP recommended, and the Board accepted, that the EBU's funding to EBED should be re-configured to include the payment of any reductions in courses and materials made to EBU members. This would be financially neutral to both organisations and the net cash payment from EBED to EBU would remain at £23.2K for 2014/15.

5.3 EBU Membership for BfA Students

A report had been provided in advance of the meeting by AP and Simon Barb outlining the scheme for the registration of Bridge for All Students as members of the EBU.

It was agreed that it was important for the EBU to have a membership scheme for bridge students. Consideration should be given to ways to incentivise both teacher registering the student, and the student 'self-registering', but the scheme should be easy to administer and not open to possible 'fraud'.

BC would discuss the matter with the new EBUTA manager, who may solicit input from the EBUTA teachers to establish what would encourage them to register their pupils. **Action: BC**

It was also reported that the Bridge for All books would undergo a small reprint, prior to a moderate rewrite and update ready for launch in 2017.

6. Bridge as a Sport update

IP reported that the date for the Judicial Review had been set for 22nd – 23rd September. He had provided a witness statement, and JD's was currently in draft form. It was understood that the English Chess Federation would also add a witness statement, but was reluctant to be fully involved. An expert witness had also been employed – the board approved this decision.

Update: Subsequent to the meeting a decision was made not to proceed with the expert, on legal advice.

BC reported that the media monitoring service placed a value on the coverage in the press at the time of the first hearing at in excess of £200K. This did not include the television and radio coverage, and the media coverage at the time when the date of the Judicial Review was announced, so the figure would be much higher. He also added his belief that the majority of the members supported the actions of the board in pursuing the case.

As the Judicial Review may have an impact on the outcome of the VAT tribunal it was thought that this may be delayed until after September. JD had made an enquiry on this matter, but had not yet received a reply. AP advised that if the VAT tribunal ruling was unfavourable then the next step, should it be taken, would be to appeal to the European Union on the grounds that the application of VAT is intended to be uniform across all EU countries.

IP advised that if the Judicial Review were successful the judge would only state that Sport England should reconsider their decision – they could not tell them to reverse their stance. It was recognised, however, that it would be very difficult for Sport England to argue against doing so, particularly as it would be reported in the press as a 'done deal'.

7. National Recruitment Drive

RM had circulated a report prior to the meeting which addressed the current membership levels, and possible ways to increase participation. It was agreed that the topic warranted more detailed discussion as part of the strategy meeting scheduled for the following day, so the topic was not covered as part of this meeting.

8. Standing Committee update

The issue of the future of the Standing Committees had been discussed at the Shareholders Meeting, and the response of the shareholders was reported to the board.

It was agreed that the issue would be discussed again after the County Chairmen's Meeting. After that meeting BC and AG would also look at the Articles of Association. It was agreed that whatever

decision was made it would be appropriate to put forward a single proposal for consideration at the AGM, rather than a separate proposal for each Standing Committee.

9. Award Nominations

9.1 Diamond Award

It was agreed that as the Diamond Award had been well received – by the recipients and the membership in general – the award would continue and presentations would be made in early 2016. Possible recipients were discussed. A nomination had been made by the Selection Committee, which was approved, and the board agreed on an additional recipient.

9.2 Young Player of the Year

The Selection Committee had not yet submitted a recommendation as they wished to first consult with the squad leaders.

9.3 Young Pair of the Year

The Selection Committee had made a recommendation, and this was approved by the board.

9.4 Tony Priday Award

The board approved the design of the trophy which had been developed by RM.

Possible recipients of the award were discussed. A decision was deferred until a subsequent meeting, at which time short biographies on the possible candidates would be available.

Other awards

JD commented that recipients of the Gold, Silver and Dimmie Fleming Awards should be considered at the next meeting.

RM advised that changes to the way membership numbers were calculated and reported meant that 'membership-based' awards could now be considered. Whether these would be given would be discussed at a future meeting.

10. County Working Group

DE had circulated information prior to the meeting. He reported that a 'best practice' document had been produced, and this would be recommended to the County Chairmen at their meeting in July.

DE reported a number of suggestions which had been made at the meeting relating to recruitment, media coverage, and county-EBU relations. He added that the Northern Improvers Pairs – a joint event between some counties in the north of the country – had been successful. He would report this at the County Chairmen's Meeting, and it may encourage other counties to run similar events.

DE reported that the idea of a 'Regional Support Officer' – someone to collate and advise on 'best practice' – had been discussed.

DE advised that a group had been tasked with developing a document outlining the benefits of EBU membership for both individuals and clubs. The initial draft would need some refinement, so DE would welcome from the board any contributions on possible content.

11. Scoring updates/issues

BC reported that the adoption of Jeff Smith's scoring software , to be called EBUScore, was progressing well. Issues such as price and support will be discussed at a meeting in late July - this would also include non-affiliated clubs and overseas organisations wishing to use the software. The clubs would be notified in late August/September of the new arrangements, but it would be emphasised that no club would be under any obligation to switch their scoring software, and other software would still be accepted for results submissions.

12. Delegation of authority regarding constitutions

The board ratified the changes made to their constitution by Surrey CBA. The board approved the motion by AG that the Board's power to ratify changes to a county's constitution be delegated to any one board member. AG would normally be that member.

13. EBL/WBF Matters

13.1 Guernsey

JD reported on the matter of Guernsey's possible application to be considered an NBO by the EBL.

14. Any other business

Champions Cup:

HD confirmed that arrangements were proceeding satisfactorily. A site visit involving the President of the EBL plus two board members and Gordon Rainsford had been conducted in early May and the venue was satisfactory. It was confirmed that there would be no vugraph but three tables would be broadcast on Bridge Base Online. Space would not permit any additional activity to take place during the Championship. Spectators would be welcome to watch in the open room.