



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED
AT ENGLISH BRIDGE UNION, BROADFIELDS, BICESTER ROAD, AYLESBURY, HP19 8AZ
ON WEDNESDAY 14TH SEPTEMBER 2016**

Present: Jeremy Dhondy (Chairman) (JD)
Jerry Cope (Treasurer) (JC)
Anthony Golding (AG)
Robert Lawy (RL)
Graham Smith (GS)
Barry Capal (General Manager) (BC)
Peter Stockdale (Minuting the meeting) (PS)

1. Apologies for Absence

Ian Payn (Vice Chairman) (IP)
Heather Dhondy (HD)
Ron Millet (RM)
Darren Evetts (DE)

2. New Director

Graham Smith had been formally appointed to the Board last month, and was welcomed by JD on behalf of the Directors.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 28th/29th June 2016

3.1 Accuracy

The minutes were approved as accurate.

3.2 Matters arising

2.2/2.2/4.3 – the matter of ‘Congress Host’, and the role of Bridge Overseas in handling issues which arise at venues, was to be discussed at the Tournament Committee meeting scheduled for the end of September. Any developments would be reported to the Board following that meeting.

2.2/3.2 – BC reported that the replacement tables had been received by the EBU Shop. The faulty tables had been sold at a discount with purchasers being aware of their deficiencies.

3. BC reported that the copyright agreement between the EBU and EBED had been signed. The Board gave thanks to Bev Purvis for her work on this matter.

11. It was not known whether any unaffiliated clubs had participated in the EBED Sim Pairs. BC would find out, though it was thought that it was perhaps arranged at too short notice for any clubs to take up the opportunity. **Action: BC**

Financial matters, 2 – JD had spoken to David Ewart regarding the impact of ‘Brexit’ on the VAT appeal. Whilst the full ramifications were unclear it was believed that it would not have an effect.

4. Financial matters

4.1 Treasurer's report for August 2016

JC had circulated his report prior to the meeting. He highlighted that the figures were broadly tracking the budget, with the exception of the revenue from Competitions which was lower than forecasted – he also noted that the budget had already included an anticipated reduction from previous years. Whilst the figures for the Summer Meeting were far from being finalised, early indications were that the event would make a loss on a fully allocated basis, although the competition would still make a positive. BC gave some of the feedback on the Summer Meeting which had been received, however any further discussion was deferred until after the forthcoming Tournament Committee meeting at which the subject would be addressed in detail.

JC also noted the small saving as a result of the delayed introduction of Workbooks, and also a probable small underspend on international events.

4.2 Approval of 2015/16 Company Accounts

JC had circulated the accounts prior to the meeting, noting that the figures were mostly as expected. The Board approved that the accounts be recommended to the Shareholders at the AGM.

4.3 EBU Reserves Policy

The Board noted that the Reserves Policy had been met in the previous financial year.

4.4 2017/18 Prices

JC had circulated his recommendations for 2017/18 prices prior to the meeting. He explained that as the criteria within the Reserves Policy were being met he needed a basis on which to set prices. He therefore sought approval for his suggested approach which was that the pricing structure generate a small surplus in the next four years – the time period of four years being used as it was an 'international cycle'. This would allow for the replenishment of the reserves should they be needed for investment in suitable projects, or to cover unforeseen expenditure. The Board agreed with this principle.

JC advised that the new membership system being installed would allow for the charging of prices which include fractions of a penny. He would therefore give notice at the AGM that future increases may not be in whole numbers, so as to allow for greater accuracy in pricing, and remove the need to 'round up' to whole numbers.

It was noted that the increase in the cost of Direct Membership should be greater for those living overseas so as to cover more of the international postage charges associated with delivery of the magazine. An increase of £3 compared to £1 for UK Direct Members was therefore agreed. Following this amendment the Board agreed that the price changes proposed by JC be put to the Shareholders at the AGM.

5. General Manager's report

BC had circulated his report prior to the meeting. He added that the testing of Workbooks was going well, and whilst there were still matters to be addressed it was hoped that a 'go live date' could be finalised by 7th October, after which point IT Manager, Michael Clark (MC) would be on leave for the

remainder of the month and for most of November. The current schedule was that it would 'go live' in mid-November when MC had returned, with some staff training having taken place at the start of the month.

BC reported that John Pain was to retire this week after fifteen years with the EBU. The Board gave its thanks to John for his work. BC also gave an updated on other staff matters.

BC reported that most of the clubs which had applied for a grant in March had received the product they wished to buy. The Board agreed that a similar scheme would be offered next year, subject to the funds being available in the budget. This would be announced to clubs in the new year once the details of the scheme were available.

It had been almost a year since Jeff Smith had donated EBUScore to the EBU, and BC reported that since the EBU had made it available it had been 'bought' by two other NBOs, by clubs in six other countries, and by sixteen unaffiliated clubs. It was noted that at present there was no charge for support, but BC believed that almost no support had been necessary so in his opinion there was no need to introduce a charge at the present time. BC had also spoken with a board member at another NBO about them possibly adapting part of EBUScore for use in their organisation. He had explained that the EBU would not be able to give a quote until their requirements were known – he would therefore report back to the Board once the NBO had given him more information.

BC reported that the Club Liaison Officer had noted in her audit that some clubs were not submitting all the sessions which should be submitted. This had prompted a clarification of the wording relating to novice sessions and this had been circulated to all clubs. Future submissions would be monitored and any clubs which continue to overlook the submission of relevant sessions would be contacted.

The advert which EBED had placed in the Daily Telegraph to encourage people to get in contact to find out the details of their nearest lessons had generated over 600 replies, and had also led to productive dialogue between EBED and some unaffiliated clubs.

6. EBED Report

RL reported that he attended the most recent EBED meeting – held on 1st September at which a new Trustee, David Waxman, had been appointed (although he had not been in attendance). Mr Waxman was to be asked to head an EBTA Advisory Group to look at how the organisation could move forward and how EBED could use EBTA to meet some of the objectives laid out by the EBU. John Pain was also going to be asked to look at EBED's archive of teaching material to identify what could be made available to EBTA members.

The refresh of the Bridge for All books had taken place, and RL reported that good progress was being made on the Fast Forward Bridge material.

It was noted that it would be important to include promotion of EBED during the membership recruitment work being done by the Yorkshire CBA. In RM's absence JD reported that this scheme had been approved by the YCBA and the costs would therefore be shared between the EBU and YCBA.

An update was given on progress with the survey relating to the health and wellbeing benefits of playing bridge. Some of the findings would hopefully be reported in the December issue of English Bridge, and if/when a paper was published in a suitable journal then EBED would seek media exposure.

7. Awards

7.1 Dimmie Fleming Awards

The Board confirmed that all those approved by the award's sub committee would receive a Dimmie Fleming Award.

7.2 Silver Award

The Board was pleased to receive an additional nominee via a county, and this nomination was approved.

8. Standing Committee reform

The Board was in agreement that their proposal to change all the Standing Committees to sub committees would not be put to a vote of Shareholders at the AGM. Although the majority of Shareholders would continue to approve the proposal, the consultation by Board members suggested that the size of the majority was unlikely to be sufficient. JD would therefore write to the counties to thank them for their contribution to the consultation process and to outline the Board's revised proposals:

- That the Tournament Committee be abolished, to be replaced by an advisory group which would function as a subcommittee of the Board.
- That a subcommittee of the Laws & Ethics Committee (L&EC) be established to handle disciplinary matters. This would include the Chairman of the L&EC, but also additional members who were not members of the L&EC. No change to the articles will be required.
- That there be more use of existing powers including amendments to the Selection Committee's Terms of Reference but no change to the articles.

These changes would ensure that the Shareholders could retain the ability to elect to Standing Committees which they believed to be of greatest importance, whilst also ensuring that the Board could make the amendments which it believed to be necessary to improve the EBU's governance. The Board fully supported these revised proposals.

AG would produce a document outlining the necessary changes to the Articles – it was believed that no changes to the bylaws were required. This would be finalised at the October meeting and then circulated to all Shareholders promptly thereafter. BC would ensure that the necessary steps were taken by the administrative staff in anticipation of any elections at the AGM. **Action: AG & BC**

9. Tournament Committee appointments approval

The Board formally approved the appointments of Joe Fawcett and Peter Clinch to the Tournament Committee.

10. County Working Group update

As DE could not be present it was deferred to the next meeting.

11. EBL/WBF matters

JD reported that the EBL had given a grant of €3K payable in May 2017 to be used towards membership development. This will be used to assist the YCBA membership recruitment work in place of money earmarked from EBU finances, reducing the direct contribution from EBU funds.

JD reported that three of the main 'cheating' cases had now been resolved, with punishments issued. The case of a Polish pair who withdrew from the 2015 World Championships amid accusations of cheating had yet to be resolved.

12. Calendar of meetings for 2017

The proposed dates had been circulated prior to the meeting. Those present at the meeting agreed a change to the proposed date for the June meeting and strategy day – this would be 28th/29th June.

13. Any other business

JD reminded those who would be contributing to the Annual Report that it would cover a period from April 2015 to August 2016 so that more recent history could be included.

The Terms of Office, and those who would be seeking re-election at the AGM, was circulated for the Board's information.