



**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 11th SEPTEMBER 2019**

Present:

Jeremy Dhondy (Chairman) (JD)
Ian Payn (Vice Chairman) (IP)
Jerry Cope (Treasurer) (JC)
Anthony Golding (AG)

Rob Lawy (RL)
Ron Millet (RM)
Sam Kelly (Minutes) (SK)

1. Apologies for Absence

Gordon Rainsford (Chief Executive) (GR)
Gillian Fawcett (GF)
Heather Dhondy (HD)
Graham Smith (GS)

2. Minutes of the Wednesday 12th June 2019

a. Accuracy

No matters of accuracy

b. Matters arising

JD mentioned that there had been no progress of item four from the previous minutes, which mentioned approaching Gumtree, Amazon and EBay. JD will ask GR to provide an update at the next meeting.

RM also questioned on page two, under item four, the reference to a sub-committee. JD advised this would be discussed later in the meeting.

On page three, item five, there was a note that IP was to bring a revision of the Committee Code policy to the next meeting. IP presented the revised document at the meeting which was discussed and accepted with minor changes. The amends will be sent to the admin team at Aylesbury to complete and post on the website.

3. Finance Report

a. Treasurer's Report for July 2019

JC had circulated a report prior to the meeting, he highlighted some aspects of his report.

JC confirmed that the finances were fairly quiet at present. Universal Membership continues to do better than expected, this could be due to an increase of focus or a tightening up of rules regarding half price sessions. There has been no discernible pattern found so far. The Warehouse continues to be up and down in terms of sales each month, but more importantly margins are consistently lower than budgeted.

It was noted that a report provided by GS was very useful and helpful. JD will ask for an update of progress from GS at the next meeting.

JC confirmed there was nothing exceptional in the rest of the budget.

There was discussion around the possible causes for the increase in Universal Membership income. It was decided that further analysis may be required in this area.

The board expressed interest in the full detail of the Universal Membership figures and would like further details to be provided at the next meeting. JD suggested Gordon add the provision of a replacement report to the IT schedule.

b. 2018/19 Financial Statements

JC confirmed that the 2018/19 Financial Statements, that had previously been seen by the Board in May, were now finalised.

AG asked if one minor change could be made on page two, if the word competition could be changed to competitive. JC agreed that the change would be made.

No other amendments were required. The Board approved the 2018/19 financial statements for presentation to the AGM.

c. Reserves Policy

JC advised that the reserves policy is looked at every year. He advised that there is nothing exceptional in plan for any forecast expenditure. There will be funds set aside for improving the website and the IT software will need updating in 3-5 years.

There were some questions over the layout of the figures and the formula used for the detail. JC advised that there may be a simpler way of presenting the information and he will look at this for next year.

The existing policy and the amount of reserves were approved by the board.

d. Four Year Plan

JC laid out the financial plan for the next four years.

This plan is dependent on three main assumptions which are intended to be balanced:

Universal Membership – predicted to hold steady although may do better in the light of current trends

Warehouse – also predicted to hold broadly steady although some current trends suggest this might be optimistic

Diaries – the take up will be 50% of the current numbers – but there could be a lower take up

JD confirmed that there will be a wide ranging campaign to make members aware of the changes to the diary preferences via the website, emails and the magazine.

JC confirmed that diaries would also be modestly over ordered for those members that miss the deadline. JC confirmed that the major saving for the diaries was in the postage, rather than the printing of the diaries.

JC noted that another key feature of the four-year plan is the planned reduction of funding given to EBED, any changes will not come into effect until the next financial year.

JC noted that the four-year plan will, assuming no unforeseen shocks, not need an increase of 2p on Universal Membership fees as previously predicted and discussed at the County Chairs' meeting, thanks to economies being found, notably the dairy. Rather, there will be a proposed increase of 1p on Universal Membership from the next financial year. Although it was noted that over recent times increases overall were below inflation, because of the year in which UM fees had been frozen.

RM asked about a suggested motion that was presented from the Northern Counties Working Group. JC advised that the Northern Counties Working Group have been considered and their suggestions have been taken into account, but for instance we could only seek to target EBED if we were actually paying for that work.

The four-year plan received broad support from the board and it will be presented to the Board in October and to the AGM in November, along with a proposal of a pricing increase in line with the rate of inflation.

4. Chief Executive's Report (including IT Report) (GR)

The report from GR was not discussed due to GR not being present, however JD confirmed that GR is willing to accept questions via email in relation to the report.

It was noted that a new incentive for newly joining clubs was discussed at the last officers' meeting. The incentive would give newly affiliated clubs a four-month introductory period, with no charges for UMS and no annual fees. This idea was widely accepted by the board, although it was agreed that it should not be given to an unlimited number of clubs. RM proposed a cap on the number of clubs receiving this incentive to be set at 20. It was also agreed that during the introductory period, Jonathan Lillycrop would be in contact with the clubs to check they had a smooth transition.

5. EBED Progress

RM presented his report on the progress of EBED. This was broadly accepted with the exception of the recommendation of the creation of a sub-committee.

A constructive discussion was had around the future of the relationship between EBED and the EBU. It was agreed that targets must be set by the EBU for EBED to reach in order for funding to continue. Targets will start by April 2020 if possible, with six monthly and/or yearly reviews to take place to discuss their progress.

RL volunteered to draft some targets. The board accepted RL's offer and he will bring a draft of ideas, with the help of RM, GF and GS, to the next meeting in October.

The board also approved GF as the new trustee of EBED. She will replace JD, who has now stepped down

6. Bye-Law Changes – Update (AG)

a. Club model constitution update re. disciplinary procedures

AG highlighted the changes made on page two of the enclosed document. He also pointed out additional changes to point 6.6 on page 11 of the EBU Model Club Constitution. The appeal process

for disciplinary matters was agreed to be: club appeals to be heard at the county level and county level appeals to be heard by the Laws and Ethics Committee. It was noted that if counties ask for advice or help with appeals hearing, they should be directed to the L&E secretary who would be able to assist with advice on the process.

It was agreed that point 6.6 should be removed, but that any changes would be made following the AGM in November.

b. Refusal of EBU Membership

AG outlined the minor changes to the bye-laws of refusal of EBU membership. He confirmed that the document was similar to that discussed in the last meeting, with the addition of the phrase "subject to the boards right to refuse or expel".

There was a discussion around the expectations of clubs in acting on the EBU suspension. JD advised that the current process is to write to all the clubs that the person has membership at, and advise of the suspension or ban. During this time the NGS results continue in the background to avoid affecting any other player's results e.g. their partner's. Master points are not awarded if the player's membership has been suspended. It was decided that it would be up to individual clubs if they would allow these members to play in club sessions during their ban. GR was asked to check the process for ensuring that a member who is suspended becomes flagged so that entries to events and awards of master points etc. are not possible.

RM also noted that during the review of this document, it has highlighted the fact that several different terms are used when referring to the EBU Board. AG confirmed that for this document all references would be changed to "the board". However, there was wide agreement from the board that other documents would need reviewing in due course to ensure consistency.

The changes were approved and will be sent to the admin team in Aylesbury to be added to the AGM agenda.

7. Volunteer Policy (RL)

RL provided a draft of a volunteer policy and asked the board for their opinion and steer on the matter. It was discussed who should be considered a volunteer for the EBU, it was decided that club and county volunteers would not be included, but that the clubs and counties could use the EBU Volunteer Code as a template if they wished. RL would make some minor changes to the policy and pass it to Aylesbury by the time of the next Board meeting for formatting, tidying up and adding in appropriate links to EBU policy documents.

8. Membership Update

RM advised that he gives broad support for the EBU Assured campaign. RM confirmed that Tim Anderson (TA) is looking at the project from a club's perspective but it may be better from current or potential members' perspective as well. He also suggested that the project wait until the website has been updated before progressing with any new directory to avoid having to create a new website. The board was in agreement with this idea.

JD confirmed that the website design will be completed by an external contractor following the update of the current system. However, there will be consultation with end users on the look and functionality of the new site.

There was some discussion around how the membership project would take shape and if there should be one tier, or more than one tier available to clubs. JD advised he will suggest to GR for TA to go ahead with item two of his proposal and solicit feedback from clubs, along with help from JL. It was also agreed that the launch of the new club directory would wait until the website has been updated to improve the search facility for clubs.

9. County Working Group – Progress Report (GS)

This item was deferred until the next meeting as GS was not present.

10. Award Nominations

a. Dimmie Fleming Award Nominations

Nominations for the Dimmie Fleming awards were decided.

b. Silver Award Nominations for 2019

The nominations for the Silver awards were decided

c. Tony Priday Award 2019

The Tony Priday Award winner was decided

d. Diamond Awards

The nominations for the Diamond awards were decided

11. EBL and WBF Matters

There was very little to report. JD advised that an announcement is due to take place during the World Championships in China as to the timing and possibly location of the European Mixed event.

12. Calendar of Meetings for 2020: Approval

JD asked that everyone check their schedules and advise him of any issues with the calendar of meetings for the next calendar year.

13. AOB

RL asked that references to 'chairman' be amended to 'chair'. JD suggested this could be discussed when the new chair(man) was in place.

RL asked when the draft targets for EBED were due. It was requested that they were presented a few days before the next meeting.

AG gave his apologies for not attending the next meeting.

Next Meeting: 30th October 2019