



**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 30th OCTOBER 2019**

Present:

Jeremy Dhondy (Chairman) (JD)	Gillian Fawcett (GF)
Ian Payn (Vice Chairman) (IP)	Rob Lawy (RL)
Jerry Cope (Treasurer) (JC)	Ron Millet (RM)
Gordon Rainsford (Chief Executive) (GR)	Graham Smith (GS)
Heather Dhondy (HD)	Sam Kelly (Minutes) (SK)

1. Apologies for Absence

Anthony Golding (AG)

2. Minutes of the Wednesday 11th September 2019

2.1. Accuracy

The following minor amends were noted:

The review of the relationship between EBU and EBED should be six monthly and/or yearly, not just yearly.

RL noted that GS was also involved in drafting ideas for the EBED meeting

JD noted that point 11 should be EBL WBF, not BGB Matters

GF noted that also in point 11, the announcement was with regards to the European Mixed event, not the World Mixed event.

2.2. Matters arising

RM questioned the progress of Gumtree, Amazon and Ebay as options for Warehouse sales. GR confirmed that we will not be using Ebay or Gumtree as they are not appropriate for the EBU sales. He also confirmed that the Amazon sales were improving slowly. JD advised that we may re-consider the options of Ebay and Gumtree in future following the Amazon sales.

RM also questioned the trends of Universal Membership. JC confirmed that Michael Clark had not found any visible statistically valid sub-trends. RM will check with Michael Clark if there are any other trends.

3. AGM Matters

3.1. Draft Agenda

GS questioned if it would be valuable to invite the Counties for a pre-meeting lunch and discussion, similar to the Chairman's meeting in June. Following a discussion, it was decided that GR will check with the Counties to see if there is interest. If there is interest, then GR will pursue finalising the details.

IP questioned the order of point 10, JD confirmed that the order would be the election of Chair and then the election of Vice-Chair.

RM advised that he would be presenting his report verbally. Tim Anderson will be present to answer any questions.

3.2. Byelaw Changes for AGM (GR)

GR confirmed that there would have to be minor changes made to other policy documents to fall in line with the new changes to the Byelaws. GR advised that some clubs had asked if they would be required to remove members following the Byelaw changes, he confirmed that clubs would not be obliged to remove members as long as this did not violate their own constitution which may need amending for some clubs. GR confirmed that feedback from clubs indicated they are satisfied with the proposed changes. GR also advised that the L&E meeting had raised some concerns with the clarity of some wording to do with sanctions available to committees, and this will also be addressed at the same time.

RM questioned why there was still variety with regards to the different terms used throughout the document, e.g. "The Company", "The EBU" or "The Board". The board decided that this should be clarified for this and other documents. There was discussion around the best term to use.

It was agreed that the Byelaws document would be amended by GR and that this would then be sent to AG to check, with approval to be sought at the next board meeting and ratified at the AGM in 2020.

3.3. Chairman's Annual Report 2018-19

JD requested any feedback for his report to be sent via email by next Wednesday 6th November.

4. Chief Executive's Report (GR)

GR circulated his report prior to the meeting and briefly highlighted certain points.

He confirmed that the EBU now has a full complement of staff with the addition of Charles Bucknell (Tournaments Administrator, Licensing and Selection Committee Secretary) and Jonathan Lillycrop (Club Liaison Officer).

GR talked about the progress with competitions. A recent meeting was held with staff in Aylesbury, to discuss the Summer Meeting 2020, a draft plan has been written and will be sent to the Tournament Panel for approval.

The Memorandum of Understanding with Bridge Overseas concludes in 2021, GR has invited other organisations to contact the EBU if interested. Arena Travel is the only one to have expressed interest so far and GR has had a preliminary meeting with them. More details will follow in due course.

GR also talked about the NGS, with some clubs requesting further exemptions for certain sessions. GR has therefore proposed a new code for mentor games, which allows Master Points, but also allows clubs to opt all players out of NGS rankings for the session. JC proposed a trial for a year, the board agreed.

GR also gave an update on the website. He confirmed that while a lot of necessary preliminary work has been completed, there are some items that are not quite ready. RM asked about timescales, GR

advised that these were still to be finalised. GR also cautioned that there would need to be a planning stage, once the background work has been complete. JD suggested that the planning & consultation stage could start before the background work was completed, this was agreed as a good idea.

The affiliation promotion, of four months' free affiliation for new clubs, is due to be rolled out in January, starting with U3A. GR noted that Somerset were also keen. There are some IT issues but GR confirmed that there is a temporary manual workaround in place if IT changes are not able to be completed by then.

Funbridge will have a new 2 x 12-board game promotion each weekend in November.

The Laws & Ethics committee are looking at members who have exempted themselves from NGS in contravention of the regulations.

5. Financial Matters

5.1. Treasurer's Report & September Management Accounts

JC confirmed that the trends with Universal Membership continue to be positive. The Bridge Warehouse is below budget. However, overall the net effect should be about equal and the year should finish on or close to budget.

RL asked if the plans for the Bridge Warehouse included sales to non-bridge players, GS followed up that the tables were advertised as children's play tables on Amazon, as well as bridge tables. It was suggested that the top 50 clubs be contacted in relation to sales for the Bridge Warehouse.

GS also suggested that regular meetings take place in Aylesbury with Tim Anderson (Membership Development Officer), Jonathan Lillycrop (Club Liaison Officer) and Sam Kelly (Communications Officer) in order to work more closely.

5.2. Schedule for 2020/21 Budget Preparation

JC had circulated a report prior to the meeting, he confirmed that it was less definitive than usual due to the change of Chairman. The board had no questions about the report.

5.3. Fees/Subs for 2020/21

JC had circulated a report prior to the meeting, he confirmed that there should be no surprises in the report and that this will be presented to the AGM. The board approved the report.

6. EBED – Approach for 2020/21 (RL & RM)

The approach for the next financial year was discussed. JD confirmed that there would be a meeting held in early December with EBED.

There was a discussion at the previous meeting after which RL volunteered to write a report drafting ideas. This report was produced with the help of RM, GS and Bev Purvis.

Draft proposals for a list of ideas were discussed and there was a debate over what should be on the list when taken to the meeting with EBED.

One requirement suggested was requesting more teacher educators, with an increase in quality and geographical coverage. RL also suggested that teachers should have a self-support and self-policing system.

GF proposed that one of the measures should be looking for an increase in the membership at EBU clubs. There was broad agreement for this proposal, with the addition of teaching in EBU clubs with the aim of students becoming long term club members. The aim should be to get students playing in EBU clubs and then moving on to playing competitively in sessions at the EBU club. RM suggested that this should be something that the Club Liaison Officer is involved in, working closely with EBED. It was also suggested that as part of the proposal there should be a “Ways of Working” section, which includes service level agreements for answering phone calls and emails.

There was discussion around how to proceed. The draft proposal was agreed, with some minor amends suggested, including removing references to specific numbers.

Following a discussion, JD then proposed that the conversation focused on the next steps. It was proposed that JC will take the ideas as discussed and turn them into a letter addressed to EBED, adding a narrative as to the aim of any future relationship, along with any “agreed targets”. Following the draft of the letter, it will be sent to IP and then the rest of the board for approval.

There was also a brief discussion of staffing shared between the EBU and EBED. It was agreed that with the exception of the Accounts Manager, all other staff should only work for either the EBU or EBED, not both.

GS volunteered to attend one of the teaching courses to learn about their content and delivery. The board agreed that this was a good idea.

JD noted that the EBED teachers’ database has no quality control and is out of date. GF noted that EBED are working on this but it will take time.

RM questioned Tournament Director training being run by EBED and suggested it would be better run by the EBU as this is one area that makes a profit. GR stated that this had been tried previously and it works better as run by EBED, but noted that all the TDs running the courses are EBU TDs and present matters as endorsed by the EBU.

It was agreed that JC would draft a letter for IP to send to the Chair of EBED setting out the EBU's position on 20/21, prior to the proposed early December meeting.

7. Volunteer Policy (RL)

RL presented an updated version of the Volunteer policy that had been discussed at the previous board meeting. The amended version was approved by the board. GR will add the document to the website.

8. EBU Warehouse

GS started by confirming that the Bridge Warehouse was returning to the busy quarter. He also noted that emails were being sent to EBU affiliated clubs every two months, to alternate with English Bridge magazine.

The tables from China have arrived and been well received so far. It was also noted that the tables are of good quality and are boxed with the EBU logo prominent.

JC suggested looking at entering the cruise ship business, supplying tables and other items. RM also suggested putting together a “new starter” pack which would include for example, table, table cover and bidding boxes.

9. County Working Group (GS)

This item has been covered previously in the meeting.

10. EBL/WBF Matters

The WBF are planning a World Online Championship and have asked the EBU to encourage players to take part in the event. GR will follow updates and act accordingly, however advised that there would likely be a minimal take up since the Master Points on offer are unlikely to be viewed as desirable.

11. Any Other Business

GR questioned if this meeting next year would need to be moved earlier as it is currently too close to the AGM. The board decided to leave the meeting dates as is, and any approvals for the AGM would be made at an earlier meeting in September 2020.

JD noted that it was HD's last meeting as a board member, the board thanked her for all her hard work.

IP extended the thanks to JD, as it was also his last meeting as a board member and Chairman. The board thanked him for all his hard work over the last six years.

Next Meeting: 22nd January 2020

