



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED
held via Zoom, Thursday 15th September 2022 at 1pm

Present:

Ian Payn (IP) (Chair)	Rob Lawy (RL)
Cathryn Fox (CF) (Vice Chair)	Tony Russ (TR)
Kay Preddy (KP) (Treasurer)	Patrick Shields (PS)
Gordon Rainsford (Chief Executive) (GR)	Gayle Webb (GW)
Adrian Darnell (AD)	Sam Kelly (Minutes) (SK)

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence

2. Minutes and Approval from the meeting of 13th June 2022

a. Accuracy

There were no matters of accuracy.

b. Matters Arising

IP confirmed the purpose of the officers' meetings that are held shortly before the Board meeting is to determine the agenda of the Board meetings and discuss matters that will arise. Occasionally operational decisions which don't warrant consultation with the full Board are made at the meetings, but all significant decisions are discussed and agreed by the Board as a whole. IP advised if any member of the Board would like to propose a change to this, it will be reviewed.

The outstanding actions were reviewed, and the following details were confirmed:

- The Volunteer Policy is now finalised and will be circulated. The Board will sign the policy before asking for all volunteers to sign up.
- The updates following a review of the safeguarding policy have also been finalised and will be published on the EBU website shortly. This will be co-ordinated by GR
- The funding for junior international teams has been reduced, with a hardship fund now in place
- The Disciplinary Laws will be discussed at the EGM on 22nd September
- The SmartBridge project has been delayed
- The Teacher's Directory is now live but in the testing phase. IP raised the question of whether the directory should list all teachers without any validation of quality. Following discussion, the Board agreed it was happy with the current process of self-referral for teachers
- PS identified four County contacts and has used discussions with these people to inform the Competitions WG decisions
- Details of the Strategy Policy were included in the last meeting's minutes
- Green Pointed events will be discussed at the next County Chairs meeting

3. Financial Matters

KP had circulated four reports prior to the meeting.

i. Treasurer's Report for July 2022

KP stated the Management accounts show a deficit of £11.8k, against a budgeted deficit of £19k. She noted the following points:

- Bridge Warehouse: A bumper month of sales, with income exceeding budget by £7.3k. This included three dealing machines with a sale value of £8.9k.
- Membership: UMS income this month was £57k, against a monthly budget of £48.7k. May, June and July (but not April) each saw significant higher player sessions than last year. To date UMS has exceeded the budget by £13.6k. PS noted that he had looked at variance in UMS across the months in previous years; he concluded that there doesn't seem to be a pattern and consequently one should be cautious in drawing conclusions from these numbers.
- Direct Membership is down on budget this month by £1k and is down on budget to date by £3.3k. This probably reflects the fact that some direct members have returned to club bridge.
- Licensing: Licensing income continues to fall behind budget this month by a further £1.6k. GP licence income (£1.1k) and Overseas Licence income (£0.7k) are both slightly down on budget; BP income (£0.4k) is up on budget this month.
- Internationals: Income from the Open Trials is £16.3k, which exceeds the budget by £2.3k as we saw more entries to the Premier League than anticipated.
- Competitions: Some previous months' costs were accounted this month (Louise Crisp being paid in July for 1.75 months and some late additional costs (£1k) received from Arena Travel with regard to last year's Spring Overseas Congress). However, to date, competitions are still reporting a surplus to budget of £4k.
- Admin General: There have been several small savings in various costs to budgets this month within Admin General which amount to £1k (stationery, postage, sundries etc.).
- Junior Internationals: The Junior Internationals have been excluded from the management accounts as there is still some details to resolve in respect to the EBED donation. All income and costs have been deferred until next month (August)

ii. Draft 2021/22 Financial Statements

These are prepared by an external auditor based on the EBU's records. PS noted that surplus is 1% of turnover which is not unreasonable for a not-for-profit organisation.

iii. Final draft Management Accounts for Year Ending 31st March 2022

KP discussed the final draft of the Management Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2022. KP noted some adjustments from the draft report that was written in May. The adjustments include this year's decision to opt for an assurance report as opposed to a full audit, an accrual of £9.6k which has been reversed, together with a few other minor adjustments, which has increased the surplus to £31.5k.

IP confirmed that the definition of the scope of the extra procedures that the auditor will complete this year had been sent to the shareholders last week.

iv. Reserves Policy

The report shows that the EBU meets its current Reserves Policy. KP will review the policy in the next few months

4. Chief Executive's Report including IT Report

GR circulated his report (summarised in Appendix A) prior to the meeting. There were no questions about the report.

5. EGM

The EGM will take place on Thursday 22nd September. IP confirmed that all Board members are welcome to attend if they would like to.

6. AGM – Royal National Hotel, Agenda Items discussed

IP confirmed the draft agenda for the AGM will include statutory items and a brief talk from IP regarding Laws & Ethics updates. IP will also invite a number of additional people to the AGM, including Chair & Vice-Chair of the Laws & Ethics Committee, Chair & Vice-Chair of the Selection Committee, Chair & Trustees from EBED and the editor of English Bridge.

It was suggested that the Selection Committee Chair might usefully give a brief talk on the structure of the junior squad set-up.

KP asked if it would be appropriate for the auditor to join electronically while financial matters were discussed rather than attend in person for the whole meeting.

7. Approval of Members of Disciplinary and Prosecution Panels

IP confirmed there is one new member of the Disciplinary Committee. The Board approved the appointment.

KP asked if there was a set term for members of the Committee's. IP stated that this was at the Chair's discretion or until members wish to stand down, and confirmed that (before online issues lead to a recent surge) the numbers on each panels was around a dozen.

8. Updates from Sub Committees

a. County Chairs Meetings

TR noted that the next County Chairs meeting is set to take place on 29th September. IP and GR will attend the meeting. Green Pointed County events will be discussed during the meeting.

b. Competitions Working Group

The CEWG now consists of a core group comprising GR, PS, IP, Peter Clinch, RL, KP, GW & TR. This core group meet regularly to discuss upcoming competitions and events, managing and developing policy particularly in relation to the calendar. A consultative group comprising the original members of the Tournaments Panel are included in e-mail discussions. The plan is to extend this group in the near future. It was noted that the National Handicap Pairs Championship was had improved noticeably with over 400 pairs taking part. It is hoped that next year the event will attract even more players. It was noted that events (as with Eastbourne) are more successful when one person takes a lead role in the promotion.

TR noted that proposals on the future of One Day Green Point events have been put to the County Associations for feedback, and these will be discussed at the County Chairs meeting in September.

Other decisions of note:

- i) The Lockdown League has now been replaced by the National Teams League (16 boards rather than 8, and with a RealBridge session on a Wednesday evening offered as a default venue).
- ii) The Schapiro Spring Fours in 2023 looks likely to be held in Bristol.
- iii) Consideration is being given to having the Spring Bank Holiday and Scarborough Congresses run by Oliver Cowan in 2023.

In support of players planning holiday bridge such as the Eastbourne Congress, CF asked for the competitions calendar to be planned at least 12 months in advance.

Actions: PS will chase selected county contacts and engage them in the WG discussions.

c. Technology (IT) Working Group

The IT Working Group was included in GR's report.

CF noted that the ITWG is currently undergoing operational restructuring. Tim Anderson (TA) and Harry Watson (HW) have been asked to consider the practicalities and estimate timescales for replacing our main database system.

d. Membership/Marketing Working Group

CF stated that the MMWG have been looking at ways to build on the success of the Summer Meeting and planning for future events. They are currently reviewing and re-prioritising all ongoing projects. CF confirmed that Ros Wolfarth (RW) has agreed to become a core member of the MMWG.

9. EBED General

The Board discussed the relationship between the EBU and EBED.

AD confirmed the Education Working Group is meeting regularly. The EWG believes that there are not enough bridge teachers teaching in clubs and so not enough new members coming into clubs. The EWG proposes that there is a menu of ideas for clubs that they could call upon to help them increase the amount of teaching; the menu information could be on the EBU website. The group also proposes a teachers' forum. It was agreed that the EBU should not duplicate any work that is currently ongoing with EBED. A meeting with EBED is planned to discuss a joint plan of action.

10. Annual Report

IP confirmed that the Annual Report would be written and circulated via email.

11. Awards 2022

IP noted that most of the awards were decided at the previous meeting. The Board discussed and agreed nominations for the Dimmie Fleming Award.

12. EBL/WBF Matters

IP congratulated the English team members on their success at the World Bridge Games. The WBF has a new President Jan Kamras, from Sweden.

The Board discussed the proposal from the EBL that the EBU nominates a representative to the EBL Women Committee.

13. Any Other Business

GW asked if she could discuss the increase in printing charges with the Editor of English Bridge, with suggestions of possible alternative printers. IP agreed.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday 20th October (Zoom) (AGM items)

Future Meetings:

Board Meeting TBC

EGM: Thursday 22nd September (via Zoom)

AGM: Wednesday 30th November (Royal National Hotel, London)

County Chairs: Thursday 29th September (via Zoom)

Meeting closed at 16.48pm

Action Points

Date	Action	Person Responsible	Status
15/09/22	Volunteer Policy is now finalised and will be circulated. The Board will sign the policy before asking for all volunteers to sign up.	GR	
15/09/22	Safeguarding Policy now finalised and to be published	GR	
15/09/22	Disciplinary Laws will be discussed at the EGM on 22 nd September		
15/09/22	PS to identify and engage suitable county contacts to provide consultancy support to the Competitions WG	PS	
15/09/22	Clarification of regulations for data sharing with EBED	GR	
15/09/22	Check copyright details for the Bridge for All books and any legal documentation dating to when EBED was initially set-up	GR & KD	

Appendix A

Chief Executive's board report for September 2022 – bullet points of topics covered

- We have had some interest in our proposal to let part or all of the Aylesbury building, now that we do not need it all for ourselves, with fewer staff and more working from home.
- One of our ongoing cases in the courts has been settled in our favour and the other party has agreed to our request for costs. The remaining one has yet to be given a date by the court.
- The re-formatted Summer Meeting was widely considered to have been a success, due to lots of hard work from board members and Ros Wolfarth as a local volunteer.
- The CEWG continues to have discussions about the future composition of the Competitions calendar and the responsibility for online ODGP events.
- Louise Crisp has settled in well as Charlie's replacement in the Competitions department.
- We are in the process of clarifying the scope of Tim Anderson's two roles, as Membership Development Officer and as IT Manager.
- The new banner section on the front page of the website is working well and was used to advertise the Summer Meeting and the successful National Handicap Pairs Championship.
- Recent IT additions include a club update form, an online teachers' directory and an online club directory.
- In addition, the automation of the submission of results from daily online games, which has required a lot of manual input since their inception 2.5 years ago, is now well under way.
- We are having to migrate to a new hosted service for direct debit processing since our existing one has restructured its fee basis and would be costing us a lot more.
- Future projects include the sending out of emails to members after each game they play at their local clubs.
- The replacement of our current CRM, Workbooks, is also being considered.
- The Club Liaison Officer attended the opening of York Bridge Club, along with the EBU CEO, at the same time as visiting other clubs in the area.