



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED**  
**held via Zoom, Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 11am**

**Present:**

Ian Payn (IP) (Chair)	Rob Lawy (RL)
Adrian Darnell (AD)	Patrick Shields (PS)
Kay Preddy (KP)	Tony Russ (TR)
Gordon Rainsford (Chief Executive) (GR)	

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Abbey Smith (AS) and Gayle Webb (GW)

**2. Co-option of Board members for 2022/23; Role of Board members; Board Director Responsibilities (IP)**

The Board discussed and agreed the following roles and responsibilities:

IP: Chair of the Board, Annual Report, I.T. Working Group (member), Marketing Working Group (member), Selection Committee (member), Editorial Board (Chair), Laws & Ethics Committee (member)

AD: Vice-Chair of the Board, EBED, Education Working Group (Chair)

KP: Treasurer, Finance, staffing

RL: Competitions Working Group (member), Volunteers, Education Working Group (member)

TR: Clubs, Counties, Competitions Working Group (member), Education Working Group (member), Marketing Working Group (member)

PS: Bridge Warehouse, Strategy, Internationals, Competition Working Group (member), Education Working Group (member), Selection Committee (member)

AS: Junior Liaison Officer, Safeguarding Officer

GW: Competition Working Group (member), Marketing Working Group (Chair)

There is currently no Board member responsible for Legal Matters.

KP suggested creating a small working group to look at the feasibility of sponsorship, the group will write a paper and present to the Board at the next meeting. The group will be PS, RL & AD.

**3. Minutes of the meeting 20th October 2022; and 15th December**

**3.1 Accuracy**

Minor matters of accuracy were amended prior to the meeting.

**3.2 Matters Arising**

There were no further matters arising.

All actions from the previous meeting have been complete.

#### **4. Chief Executives Report (GR)**

GR circulated his report prior to the meeting. He highlighted a couple of points. The Year End congress was successful. The Easter Congress will likely be held at the ILEC. Both events will remain in London but may change venue in future. There was discussion of a few minor complaints made during the Year End Congress.

KP asked if more could be done to market the Year End Congress to bridge players outside the UK. GR advised that events are placed on the EBL and Bridgescanner websites. Further paid advertising may be possible with BBO and Bridgewinners. The details of any paid marketing will be discussed at the next Marketing Working Group meeting.

AD noted he was pleased to see details from the new HR advisor. GR confirmed the advisor has made good progress so far. GR will send details of the proposal to AD. KP noted that she would like an audit of all policies and procedures to be completed.

#### **5. Financial Matters (KP)**

##### **5.1. Treasurers Report & November Management Accounts**

KP circulated the Treasurers Report prior to the meeting. She highlighted some of the details. The UMS income continues an upwards trend and is currently exceeding the budget. The Bridge Warehouse income is only slightly below budget. There will be further details in the December report.

There were no questions about the report.

##### **5.2. Reserves Policy**

KP compared the current reserves policy against common practice for the new proposal. Under KP's proposal the liquidity ratio will remain the same. The amount of funds available for operational reserves will also remain at a similar level and will be based on future forecasts. KP suggests reviewing the reserves amount annually.

PS asked if it was feasible to use the reserves for projects. GR confirmed that the covid pandemic encouraged caution in the Board in keeping the levels of reserves as they are. KP noted she is uninclined to change the current level of reserves. The Board agreed. KP stated the operating reserves, and the capital are two separate issues. Money should only be spent on projects if they are the Board agree they are the best use of funds.

RL asked how the financial position of the EBU compares to 2018-19. KP confirmed the EBU now has less income, but we have also cut expenses.

AD noted the EBU looks resilient and praised KP for the work on the report.

The Board approved the new reserves policy.

##### **5.3. Assurance Report**

KP circulated the report prior to the meeting. The assurance report noted findings that had not been raised during previous audit reports, the details of which were highlighted at the AGM. The report was prepared by KP, Gail Nancarrow (GN) and Gordon Rainsford (GR) for review by two shareholders. The Board considered the paper and agreed the shareholders the report should be sent to. The shareholders will be consulted for their opinion on the scope of next year's assurance report. The report this year looked at banking, fixed assets and the Bridge Warehouse.

PS asked if the funds in fixed term accounts could be staggered so they mature at different times. KP confirmed this is already the case but agreed that for some accounts that are coming to natural maturity, we could get better interest rates.

## **6. L&E Matters**

### **6.1. Disciplinary Panel & Prosecution Panel 2023-24 Confirmation**

The Board approved the appointments for the L&E Disciplinary Panel and Prosecution Panel.

KP asked if the figures from the previous year have now been published, as agreed at the AGM. IP confirmed the details had been published.

There was a discussion around the complaint's procedures for the EBU. There is not currently a satisfactory complaints procedure for complaints from staff and volunteers. IP is looking to improve the framework to ensure behavioural complaints are handled as consistent with other complaints. The process for issues of abuse of staff and volunteers will also be made more as the current process is not entirely satisfactory.

KP asked about the current levels of online cheating and what is being done to combat this. It was confirmed that the levels of online cheating have reduced, and that cases are considered when complaints of potential cheating are made. It was agreed that the current process will be looked at. GR will discuss improvements to Heather Bakhshi (HB) for implementation. PS will refresh the wording of 16.1 and bring the updated version to the next Board meeting.

## **7. Selection Committee (Terms of Reference)**

The changes to the [Terms of Reference](#) were agreed by the Board, with minor changes to be made.

PS suggested that the guidance for committees is looked at annually in January.

## **8. EBU Strategy Review (PS)**

PS talked through the EBU Strategy Policy and changes. The aim is to formalise the current EBU strategy and changes. The Board discussed the details and agreed that further changes should be made. PS will make the changes to the document and circulate to the relevant parties prior to the next Board meeting.

The details from the strategy meeting held in June 2022 have not yet been finalised. PS noted that while the EBU is unlikely to return to the status held in 2019, looking ahead and planning is very important. The Board agreed that more people should be consulted to help with the strategy plan, with the aim of completing it in the next two months. AD & RL will also aid PS in writing the plan.

PS confirmed all the current documentation is available for the Board to read on the shared Google drive. The strategy plan will be shared with other governing bodies in the UK once complete.

## **9. AGM Matters (IP)**

Following the AGM IP sent an email to shareholders regarding the questions raised during the meeting.

The Board agreed that shareholders should be informed when minutes from committee meetings are published, and they should be encouraged to ask questions about the detail.

## **10. EBED Matters (IP/AD)**

Discussed during point 11.4 of the meeting.

### **11. Updates from Working Groups**

#### **11.1 Membership & Marketing Working Group**

TR gave a brief update from the Membership & Marketing Committee. He confirmed that KP and CF have now left the committee and IP, Jonathan Lillycrop (JL), Heather Bakhshi (HB) and Tim Anderson (TA) have joined the committee.

#### **11.2 Competitions Working Group**

RL confirmed the CWG is meeting regularly. The wider group now consists of two smaller groups, with a total of 9 members. Recently the committee revised the competitions calendar and introduced the new One Day Online Green-Pointed events. A number of EBU run events have been discontinued to try to reduce costs and encourage more people to join the existing events. The National Pairs format has been revised for 2023. The new three stage format will allow anyone who has scored 55% or higher at a club session during the first two weeks of February. KP asked if there would be more improver events, building on the 9-high run by Kent in conjunction with the Year End Congress. GR confirmed that the 9-high events will continue.

#### **11.3 IT Working Group**

GR confirmed the ITWG is working well, with various ongoing projects. Recently the new Master Points recognition reports have been brought into effect. GR noted that there may be a need for a replacement of our current database system "Workbooks". The IT team are also working to introduce carousel adverts to the website and improve the EU calendar of events.

#### **11.4 Education Working Group**

The Board discussed the best course of action for creating and implementing a new Education strategy.

It was agreed that IP will speak to Lee Guy (LG) to discuss setting up a meeting between the EBU Board and the EBED Board.

AD asked if the Board accept the Terms of Reference (ToR) amendments. The Board asked AD to redraft the ToR with some changes before the next Board meeting.

## **12. Bridge Great Britain Representative**

IP confirmed that he will remain the EBU BGB representative for 2023.

## **13. AOB**

The Board formally approved the Accounts.

KP asked if there was worth in discussing the decision not to make the EBU a charity. It was agreed that the discussion would be best had with all Board members present.

#### **Next Meeting:**

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March (Zoom) to start at 11am

#### **Future Meetings:**

Wednesday & Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> June (EBU Offices, Aylesbury) to start at 1pm

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September (Zoom) to start at 1pm

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October (Zoom) (*AGM items*) to start at 1pm

**AGM:** Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November (Imperial Hotel, London tbc\*) to start at 1pm

\*Venue needs to be confirmed

**Meeting closed at 14.30**

#### **Actions**

1. PS, RL & AD will write a short paper to be presented at the next Board meeting, detailing the feasibility of sponsorship for the EBU.
2. The Marketing Working Group will discuss the possibility of using paid for advertising on BBO and Bridgewinners at their next meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January.
3. GR will send the details of the HR proposal to AD.
4. IP will contact two shareholders and invite them to review the report prepared by KP, GN and GR following the Assurance Report.
5. IP to improve the framework for behavioural complaints.
6. GR to discuss with HB improvements to the register of suspected cheating cases.
7. PS to refresh the wording of 16.1 before the next Board meeting.
8. PS, AD & RL will complete the updated Strategy plan before the next Board meeting.
9. The shareholders will be informed when minutes from committee meetings are published.
10. IP will speak to LG about setting up a meeting between EBED and the EBU.