



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE EBU LIMITED  
AT CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF ARBITRATORS,  
12 BLOOMSBURY SQUARE, LONDON, WC1A 2LP  
ON WEDNESDAY 16<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Present:**

Jeremy Dhondy (Chairman) (JD)  
Ian Payn (Vice Chairman) (IP)  
Andrew Petrie (Treasurer) (AP)  
Jerry Cope (JC)  
Heather Dhondy (HD)  
Anthony Golding (AG)  
Robert Lawy (RL)  
Ron Millet (RM)  
Barry Capal (General Manager) (BC)  
Peter Stockdale (Minuting the meeting) (PS)

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Darren Evetts (DE)

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

**2.1 Accuracy**

The minutes were approved as accurate.

**2.2 Matters Arising**

2.3 / 2.2 / 4.5 – JD reported that he had received a response from the new Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, John Whittingdale, which stated he believed it inappropriate for him to comment given the forthcoming Judicial Review.

4 – It was noted that the new allowance for bank accounts under which they would be protected by the Financial Service Compensation Scheme would be reduced to £75k from 1 Jan 2016. This would be taken into account for future investments.

11 – JD reported that the adoption of Jeff Smith's software to become EBUScore would formally take place on 1<sup>st</sup> October. An email would be sent to all affiliated clubs, and to as many unaffiliated clubs as possible, to notify them of the changes.

13.1 – JD reported that the EBL had turned down Guernsey's application to be considered an NBO. The EBU had not favoured the application when asked by the EBL.

RL had received correspondence from Robert Plumley Chairman of Guernsey. He reported that Guernsey hoped to continue the conversation on the topic, and that they would like to join the EBL as a separate NBO, but stay affiliated to the EBU. It was thought that this would not be possible, though their members could, of course, join the EBU as direct members. JD and/or IP will discuss this informally with Mr Plumley in November. Guernsey had received some qualified support from Jersey, though it was clear that Jersey's intention was to await the outcome of Guernsey's application before considering a similar bid.

### **3. Financial Matters**

#### **3.1 Treasurer's Report for four months ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015**

AP had circulated his report prior to the meeting. He noted that the sales through the shop were disappointing so far this year. Possible factors which were cited included the fact that sales were seasonal, and also that giving away playing cards in February has encouraged clubs to buy extra at that time, so as a result they hadn't ordered yet this year. It was agreed that the issue would be revisited at the next meeting, when a six-month figure would be available. It was also noted that the links and adverts for the shop could perhaps be better positioned on the EBU homepage, and that the shop could display its prices differently to emphasise that it is cheaper than competitors.

#### **3.2 Approval of 2014/15 Company Accounts**

AP had circulated the company accounts prior to the meeting. He thanked everyone for their contribution to another successful year. JD proposed that the accounts be adopted – all approved.

#### **3.3 2016/17 Prices**

AP had circulated his suggestions for 2016/17 prior to the meeting. The Board agreed his summary of the current position, and accepted his proposals, and these would be put forward at the AGM.

#### **3.4 EBU Investment in Education**

AP reported that he and Gail Nancarrow had done a lot of work to separate the finances of the EBU and EBED, particularly to avoid unnecessary costs. Prior to the meeting AP had circulated a report which outlined some principles for the various transactions between the EBU and EBED. This would enable EBED to better plan and make decisions. It was agreed that it was important that the EBU continued to have a financial input in to 'education', whether through EBED or otherwise. It was noted that EBED cannot, however, specifically generate members for the EBU – it was only EBED's purpose to increase the number of people playing bridge, and it was then up to the EBU to involve them in its activities.

It was agreed that EBED should suggest 'targets' to be achieved through their 'business as usual' activities, but the EBU could discuss 'targets' for any projects for which the EBU has provided specific funding. RL had spoken with Jon Taylor, the new EBUTA manager, on how this may work in principle. It was agreed that RL should continue to monitor the progress of EBU-funded projects which EBED was undertaking, and report to the board when appropriate. **Action: RL**

It was agreed that any difference between what was budgeted for use by EBED, and what was spent, would be donated to EBED, rather than going in to EBU reserves. This would ensure the EBU continued to invest its intended amount in education.

#### **3.5 EBU Investment Plan**

AP had circulated prior to the meeting a proposed EBU Investment Plan to look at ways in which the cash reserves could be used in the development of duplicate bridge in England.

One option which was discussed looked at the aim of increasing the number of clubs offering bridge teaching, and increasing the number of bridge students going on to play in affiliated clubs. AP outlined a survey on the topic which he proposed carrying out with help from Sally Bugden. It was

agreed that this would be undertaken, and that incentives would be offered to encourage responses. This general topic may include working with EBED, though it was again acknowledged that EBED could not act in a way as to specifically generate EBU members.

It was agreed that a 'small grants fund' would be established. This would work on a matched-funding basis, and would only be available to those clubs otherwise unable to afford to fund the project in question. Applications would be made to BC who would be given the authority to make a judgment, but could also refer to the board for guidance. Once the system was in place – which is likely to be from April 2016 – then this would be announced to all clubs and counties.

### **3.6 Bridge as a sport, VAT Claim, Sport England, APPG**

JD reported that the VAT tribunal had taken place in late July. It had been referred to the European Court for a ruling which would likely determine the final decision. A solicitor had been recommended to do some of the necessary work for the referral. It was unlikely that a decision would be known this year. It was noted that, unlike Sport England, HMRC had been fair and helpful, citing instances from other European countries where no VAT was charged on bridge. The amount of available evidence of this type gave cause for optimism.

JD advised that the Judicial Review would take place on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> September. It was recognised that if the Judicial Review did not find in our favour it would be possible to appeal. Consideration would need to be given first however to a) the likelihood of it being successful, and b) the cost of so doing.

JD reported that the rules relating to All Party Parliamentary Groups had changed, and the Chairman now had to be a member of the House of Commons. Bob Blackman MP had therefore taken over as Chairman, with Baroness Henig acting as secretary.

### **3.7 Annual Treasurer's Report for 2015 (AGM) – 1<sup>st</sup> Draft**

AP had circulated this prior to the meeting. A few minor modifications were suggested.

## **4. General Manager's report**

BC had circulated his report prior to the meeting.

He reported that the amount of storage available for the shop was being increased so it could buy in bulk and offer tables at a more competitive price. Consideration was also being given to offering a service which would include free delivery on regular orders.

The implementation of Workbooks was continuing. The migration of data would start in about a month, and it was likely that the switch to it would be made in January or February.

BC reported that 14 clubs had affiliated in the previous twelve months, and on average there were 352 new members per month.

## **5. EBED report**

JC reported that the Junior Teach-In had taken place at Loughborough over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Attendance had been higher than in previous years, though the numbers were again disappointing. The event had, however, received good feedback from the attendees. Consideration would be given in the coming weeks to the future of the event, including its location and timing.

JC reported that slow but steady progress was being made on the 'cognitive benefits' project, and the first phase may be started soon. The 'schools' project was facing some difficulties, however, although JC noted that a positive decision at the Judicial Review would give the project a boost. A firm proposal had been received for the 'accelerated learning' scheme which EBED was considering. The matter would be discussed further at the meeting of the EBED Trustees the following week.

JC advised that the new EBUTA manager had started, and he had been well received by the EBUTA members.

## **6. Awards**

The board approved the ten recommendations for Dimmie Fleming Awards which had been made by the advisory panel following their consideration of the nominations which had been received.

Possible recipients of the Tony Priday Award, and Gold and Silver Awards were discussed. The recipients were agreed. It was agreed that the Diamond Award recipients would be as discussed at the June meeting.

## **7. Standing Committee Reform**

JD had circulated a document relating to Standing Committees prior to the meeting. Given that the proposed changes had been widely supported at both the last Shareholders Meeting and the County Chairmen's Meeting, it was agreed to proceed and the necessary changes to the articles would be put to a vote at the AGM. It would also be proposed that, should the motion be passed, the existing standing committees would continue in their current positions for a short period to allow for the sub-committees to be established.

An election process would be set up as normal for the committees but the vote on changes if successful would render the election unnecessary.

## **8. Board Members**

The composition of the board following the AGM was discussed.

## **9. EBL/WBF Matters**

JD gave the background to some of the 'cheating' allegations which had been made against international players of other countries. It was agreed that JD would officially request that the European Bridge League and World Bridge Federations undertake full investigations in to the alleged indiscretions. **Action: JD**

## **10. Membership Matters**

RM introduced the paper on Membership Development which he had circulated prior to the meeting. It outlined the ideas behind 'membership acquisition' being a specific target. He highlighted a number of key areas which would contribute towards an overall increase in membership: the retention of existing members and keeping people playing; ensuring that those who learn to play go on to participate in clubs; making the general public more aware of bridge.

JC commented that EBED was working to achieve some of these aims, though not with the specific goal of increasing EBU membership – only increasing the number of bridge players in general.

It was noted that any work should be done in combination with the counties and clubs, and to be successful would require their input– it could not all be undertaken by EBU staff and board members.

It was agreed that RM and JD would liaise regarding setting up a working group to investigate possible activities. This working group would be chaired by RM but would otherwise comprise people who were not board members or staff. It was recognised that any work should not duplicate, or be in conflict, with that done by the County Working Groups. JD would discuss the matter with DE. **Action: RM & JD**

#### **11. Calendar of Meetings for 2016**

Proposed dates of meetings for 2016 were discussed. The January meeting will be held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January.

**Update:** The Shareholders Meeting will be on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May. The date of the June Board Meeting and Strategy Meeting has been changed to 28/29 June and will be at the EBU offices in Aylesbury and the Horwood House Hotel.

#### **12. Any Other Business**

It was agreed that future meetings would be held at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club.