

Oxfordshire Bridge Association

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting

held on Wednesday 9th March 2016 at 7.30 p.m. at Horspath Village Hall

ATTACHMENTS

A: Best Practice Report

B: Congress Data (2 files attached)

PRESENT:

Robert Procter [RP]	Chairman
Sandra Nicholson [SN]	EBU Shareholder
John Slater [JS]	Team Leader, Selection and County Team Management

John Fleming [JF]	Oxford	Chris Kerr [CK]	Oxford
Kathy Talbot [KT]	Oxford	Joan Bennett [JB]	Wallingford
Richard Sills [RS]	Oxford		

1. Apologies for absence

Sandra Claridge [SC]	Secretary	Peter Stevenson	Oxford
John Williams	Asst Secretary	Pat Lewis	Oxford
Peter Briggs	Oxford	Gaye Kyle	Wantage
Peter Bowen	Thame	Rob Dixon	CTD
Alison Nicolson [AN]	Joint Youth Officer	Mike Bennett	Wallingford
Mike Fletcher	Promotion/Youth	Nigel Wilkes	WL Secretary
Matt Wilkinson	Oxford	Marian Day	Kings Sutton
Michael Robinson	Cong. Comm. Chairman	Robert Gasser	Summertown
Jonathan Price	Education Officer	Claire MacDonagh	Treasurer
Peter Litchfield	Abingdon		

2. Minutes of the Management Committee meeting held on 17 November 2014

The minutes were approved and signed, subject to the following change:

In Appendix A, the report of the Congress Committee catering-food section on p5, for "the smoking will not be allowed" read "that smoking will not be allowed".

3. Action points and other matters arising from those and previous Management Committee meetings, not otherwise on the agenda

Honours Boards

SN reported that the contractor was seeking a better price for materials and so there was a delay. She had written after a gap to suggest proceeding in any case but was yet to receive a reply.

4. Regional Improvers event

Following a successful experiment in Yorkshire, the Midlands Region had decided to experiment with an “Improvers Pairs” to be held simultaneously in Cheltenham, Solihull and Spondon on 3rd July at 1430 at an estimated cost of £10 pp to include refreshment and some prizes. It was a Midlands group initiative and so Oxon was included. *(Actions: SC to tell clubs, AN to be kept informed, publicise at Congress and elsewhere, JB, JF and Abbey Smith to consider whether an Oxfordshire version subsequently might gain traction).*

5. Best practice paper

Kathy Talbot reported that there were a lot of good points in the EBU guidelines and that a document with appropriate areas for OBA was needed including descriptions of roles, transparency, website usage, publication of selection criteria, need for collecting opinions through the website, and communications including newsletters with clubs and members. Above all there was a need for monitoring of compliance with things agreed and the speed at which things were done, against a set of Performance Indicators to be drawn up. It was agreed that the work should continue under the guidance of the existing working party. However there were some parts of the document such as the involvement of newcomers in management that were currently not compatible with aspects of our current procedures including those in the governance area. This led to a short discussion of the problems inherent in the existing governance structure which had become more cumbersome after PTP had brought many more members, and the possible need for officers to meet as an executive committee with input from clubs through other channels including the very successful Club Chairs' meeting.

It was agreed that our EBU shareholders were not generally mandated by MC, although they would take notice of opinions expressed. *(Action: KT and JS to take the document forward seeking volunteers as necessary and include some discussion of governance).*

6. Matters arising from Chairman’s report

- a) **NOBC:** RP described the situation at NOBC which involved financial and personal details. It seemed that it was in financial difficulty. It was agreed that, whilst any winding up was entirely a matter for the club, since it had been in receipt of county moneys and was founded on initial OBA support, it was important for OBA through the Chair and Treasurer to ensure that the winding up was orderly and accountable for OBA funds spent - while dealing fairly with all individuals involved. *(Action: Treasurer and Chair advised by CK empowered to come to an agreement with the parties involved and implement it).*
- b) **Education:** It seemed that JP’s fixed term had come to an end in Sept 2015 with no replacement appointed. Discussion was under-way with AN about a possible scenario albeit with a different portfolio (see below). Any residual matters should be dealt with in the same way as in a) with similar empowerment given to wind things up rapidly and effectively. *(Action: as a) above)*
- c) **Vacancies:** There was a growing number of vacancies and likely vacancies for filling immediately or at the meeting in June. There were discussions about Publicity Officer under-way. It may be necessary to remove Promotions from the Youth Leader portfolio

and consider boundaries with Education. The Northern Clubs Coordinator role had been taken over by SN but it appeared that the clubs involved no longer felt the need for such co-ordination and so the post would be dropped, although it could be resurrected if a clear need was subsequently expressed. JS had taken over as team leader for competitions and there would need to be further changes in that area. A new selector lead would therefore be necessary although there was now little to do before the AGM. SC did not wish to continue and so we would be seeking a new secretary. The MC gave helpful advice and it was hoped that current discussions would meet with good results. In the meantime it was important to advertise, through clubs and otherwise, the vacancies; and also seek volunteers in general to help the county. There was also an issue of duplication, where OBC representatives said that a deal to use their machine for county events was problematic from their point of view. *(Action SC to advertise for volunteers, in general and specifically through the website. Treasurer and JS to find other solutions for duplication).*

7. Expanding the Game in Oxfordshire:

JF spoke to this paper and there was discussion. It was agreed that we should endeavour to invest a sum of money equal to the income from P2P on “expanding the game in Oxfordshire” i.e. in the Youth and Education areas etc., the precise details to be left to the relevant leaders with the Treasurer. Support was given for affiliated clubs (only) getting support for the specific types of measures in the proposal as they were felt to be in strong agreement with a previous minute “that any grants made to clubs for running particular activities or events should be on condition that these should not be just for their own members, as well as that they should help OBA achieve its stated objectives.” However, this year was a difficult one financially and the situation was unlikely to improve immediately. It was not in the best interests of OBA to plan to run at a deficit indefinitely, and there was an issue of fairness to small clubs. It was also pointed out that the management processes of OBA appeared to mean that any such decision could be overturned at a subsequent meeting, and so the funding could not be wholly guaranteed. No vote was taken on the specific proposals. *(Action: Education Officer and Treasurer to come up with concrete proposals).*

8. County Congress Preparation

SN confirmed that preparations were well under-way with no problems envisaged. An agreement had been reached with the existing caterers to unbundle the food, which can now be ordered separately via their website. Prize money was to be concentrated in a smaller number of prizes. Modelling had been done of the pricing and income on the basis of a significant decrease in table numbers compared with the previous year, standstill and significant increase scenarios. All other matters were in hand. There was discussion of advertising and it was felt to be important to take copies of the leaflet to various events *(Action: RP with SC and SN to come up with a plan for getting leaflets to various one day events etc. and then implement it. SC to get the modelling data from SN/MR and promulgate it with the minutes).*

9. Nominations for Dimmie Fleming and Distinguished service award

RP proposed a name for nomination for a Dimmie Fleming award and the committee approved it going forward *(Action RP and SC to take it forward to the EBU).*

10. Preparation for AGM (14th June OBC)

There was discussion of the work necessary. (*Actions: SC to send an invitation to the President and have arrangements in place. CM to organise refreshments, SN to deal with cup retrieval from holders*).

11. Any other business

- 1. Juniors:** RP reported that the juniors had been very successful at Loughborough, that they would like not to have to wait for next year for their next such event, and that he had been talking to Holly Kilpatrick about the possibility of Oxfordshire running a junior invitation event.
- 2. EBED:** RP reported Joan Bennett's concerns that EBED's focus was on the elderly, and that development of juniors was not being given sufficient attention. He had written to Jeremy Dhondy, who had forwarded her concerns to Andrew Petrie. As a result, Joan had been invited to meet Bernard Edlestone. This had happened, but had not dispelled her concerns. The meeting confirmed the county's view that developing juniors is vital to the future of bridge, and encouraged Joan to continue to campaign on our behalf.
- 3. Reports:** All other reports were received.

12. Dates, times and venues of next meetings

As previously agreed, the next Management Committee meeting would take place on Thursday 21st July 2016 at Horspath. The subsequent two were planned for 21st November 2016 and 8th March 2017. (*Action: KT to make appropriate bookings*).

APPENDIX A

Report to the OBA Management Committee on the EBU Best Practice Document

John Slater and Kathy Talbot

We recommend that aspects of the Best Practice for County Associations document be adopted. The document will be edited and adapted for use by Oxfordshire and will be available on the website. We would give ourselves the date of August 1st 2016, by which time the document and principles within will be ready for adoption.

However, there are a few aspects that we are not well placed to adopt and will need further discussion. These are largely a result of our existing constitution.

Highlights

We should be active in recruiting **volunteers** for the future: keep a list of possible future committee members and officers and other helpers.

With this in mind, we should prepare role descriptions for each officer.

Transparency: we should continue to put minutes on the website. Performance indicator: maintain timely publication (within two weeks of the meeting).
Regular publication of County newsletter. Performance indicator: maintain records of dates of publication.
Also publicise criteria for county selection and update where necessary.

Communication: regular and documented contact of committee members/officers with individual clubs. Performance indicator: regularity, outcomes.
Contact unaffiliated clubs. Performance indicator: document regularity and feedback.

Encourage **newcomers** to get involved in the organization of the county association.

Monitor interest in **new events** through an ideas page on the website and otherwise.

The OBA should give help to clubs with **education**, without actively offering a teaching programme. Performance indicator: monitor numbers of clubs with education programmes and monitor number of learners.

Continue with youth education which is enjoying success. Performance indicator: numbers of players; successes.

Emphasise BBB. Reminders at all levels. Performance indicator: numbers of incidents?

We should send shareholder representatives not delegates

Performance indicators

We should measure, with an aim to improving:

Membership numbers and NGS bands

Club involvement

Income

Playing strength (though increase in NGS though low level NGS is probably good)

Numbers of future volunteers

Competition entries by NGS grade

Progress of projects

Annual satisfaction survey

Canvass ideas

Teaching: numbers of classes and participants

Succession planning

OBA Management Committee Meeting held on 9th March 2016
Agreed action points

Please note, this document is intended primarily as an aide-memoire for committee members and team leaders. Full minutes will be circulated, and published on the County website.

Action to be taken	By whom
<u>Honours Boards</u> : SN to report on costings when a reply from the contractor was received.	SN
<u>Regional Improvers Event</u> : SC to inform clubs, AN to be kept informed, publicity at County Congress and elsewhere. JB, JF and Abbey Smith to consider a possible Oxfordshire event.	SC, AN, JB, JF, AS
<u>Best Practice</u> : KT and JS to take document forward, seeking volunteers as necessary, and include some discussion of governance.	KT, JS
<u>NOBC</u> : Chair and Treasurer, advised by CK, to come to an agreement with the parties involved to wind up NOBC.	RP, CM, CK
<u>Education</u> : Previous arrangement to be wound up and discussions to be pursued with AN.	RP, CM, CK
<u>Vacancies</u> : SC to advertise for volunteers to fill the vacancies, in general and specifically through the website. CM and JS to find other solutions for duplication.	SC, CM, JS
<u>Expanding the game in Oxfordshire</u> : Education Officer and Treasurer to come up with concrete proposals.	AN, CM
<u>County Congress</u> : SC and SN to arrange distribution of fliers to EBU competitions and one-day events. SC to get modelling data from SN/MR and promulgate with minutes	RP, SC, SN
<u>Nomination for Dimmie Fleming award</u> : Notification to the EBU	RP, SC
<u>Arrangements for AGM</u> : SC to invite President and make arrangements for the meeting. CM to organise refreshments. SN to organise trophy retrieval from holders.	SC, CM, SN
<u>Future Meetings</u> : KT to book Horspath Village Hall on 21 st July, 21 st November and 8 th March.	KT
<u>EBED</u> : JB to continue to campaign for more focus on the development of juniors.	JB

