

# **English Bowls Umpires Association**

## **Minutes of an Executive Meeting held on 4 August at Leamington Spa**

### **Present**

Mavis Wellington – Chairman  
Jessie Clark Deputy – Secretary  
Vernon Findell - Treasurer  
Allan Thornhill - Development Officer  
Phyl Jones – Deputy Chairman  
Val Coldwell – Area Secretary  
Michelle Van Putt – Executive Member  
Carol Watt Sullivan – Area Secretary/Child Protection Officer  
Ray Keen – Area Secretary  
Brain Burton – Area Secretary  
John Davies – Area Secretary

### **1. Chairman's Opening Remarks**

Mavis welcomed everyone to the meeting saying that she would keep her remarks short as there was quite a lot of business to get through and the conditions were not very comfortable!

### **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Rick Moore (Secretary), Sue Trott (Executive Member) and Trevor Hackett (Area Secretary)

### **3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed correct by John Davies, seconded by Brian Burton and duly signed by the Chairman.

### **4. Matters arising**

The question of the date of the AGM was raised as this had been the subject of considerable discussion at the EC meeting when it was agreed that the best date was April. However at the AGM the Secretary has told the meeting that in future it would be in February. After a discussion it was agreed that this be carried forward to the October meeting when the Secretary would be there.

### **5. Correspondence – Nil**

### **6. Secretary's report**

Rick had not sent a report, but had asked his deputy to raise various matters for the committee to discuss:-

a) EIBA Ltd representation.

The Secretary had received a request from the EIBA Ltd that they should send a delegate to EBUA Executive Committee meetings. After a discussion it was agreed that for an initial period of one year an observer be invited to attend. They would not be entitled to any vote and neither would they be able to speak unless they were invited to do so.

b) Match EIBA versus EBUA

Rick had received an invitation to play at Solihull in February and was asking that Area Secretaries confirm that they would each be able to bring a rink. Val, Mitch, Carol, Ray, Brian and John all confirmed that they would be able to attend and bring a rink of players.

c) Annual Donations

It was agreed after a discussion that Indoor Clubs be asked for donations at the rate of £10 per rink with a maximum of £80

d) It was agreed that no approach should be made to inter-county leagues with a view to asking them for donations.

## 7. Treasurer's Report

Vernon reported as follows

'Not really much to report, as this is a 'quiet' time for the accounts.

The monies held are as follows

Current Account	£663.00
Deposit Account	£6037.00
6 month short term Account	£25000.00 – due out in September 2013

Now that the ladies do not seem to get expenses from their matches there has been an increase for travelling, which is fair enough, but it also shows the depths of poverty this country has fallen to when I get claims for 1/2/3/4 miles, surely if these amounts are claimed one should think seriously about officiating. One other troubling thing that has come to light, talking to some ladies is that an umpire officiated for them, they paid her due fee, and since then I have found out that she has claimed in full for all her travel. You cannot have it both ways.

Membership numbers

Male	418	(down from 429 at 5 June)
Female	354	(down from 361 at 5 June)

Deleted from 1 January to today's date, 128. – Reasons, non re-taking of exams, non payment of fees, fed up with the Association, and of course the man with the scythe.

As I understand from Rick, the letter has gone to all Counties, via Bowls England stating that all counties have to contribute a £100, which will be added to their affiliation fee.'

The question of very small claims was discussed and it was agreed that no claim of under £5.00 would be paid – even if the total of ‘rolled-up’ claims exceeded £5.00. It was also agreed that the mileage rate from 1 October 2013 would be 40 pence per mile.

## **8. Development Officer’s Report**

Allan Thornhill said that his preliminary report and recommendations had been distributed (see attached) and he answered questions arising from them. He said that he would be creating a ‘roadmap’ to clarify the development route for umpires through the system.

He felt that to abolish the Club Umpire grade has been a silly decision and now needed to be reversed. He was devising a ‘marker’ course and proposed to incorporate this in the development of all umpires, to both encourage more members from the clubs and improve the quality of marking.

He suggested that markers should wear the normal Association uniform, pay the same fees and have the same voting rights as other members.

Vernon agreed to supply Alan with a list of Club Umpires so that he could contact them about the change to their position.

He had got approval from Vernon to hold a meeting of tutors and examiners, once the revised courses were written so ensure that a consistent standard of examining returned across the Association.

## **9. Area Secretaries Reports**

### Area 1 – Val Coldwell

‘My report was printed in the last newsletter. Thanks to Trevor.

We have had very successful indoor internationals at Stanley earlier this year which the EBUA umpires covered well.

Examinations in Harrogate were satisfactory with

- 5 national re-qualifications

- 2 national up-grades

- 2 regional up-grades

- 4 new umpires being successful

The resignation of the Yorks co-ordinator made this position vacant. However after this fact was mentioned in the Newsletter I have had 2 people express an interest in the position.

I have also had an expression of interest in the Durham co-ordinators job. Showing people do read the Newsletter!’

### Area 2 – Brian Burton

This was the quietest year he had ever had.

The VIBE championships would take place in Leamington later this month, and anyone offering to help out would be appreciated.

He had arranged his Development workshop for April 2014.

### Area 3 – Trevor Hackett

In the absence of Trevor Mitch confirmed what had appeared in the Newsletter. The area as a whole was short of co-ordinators.

Trevor would be standing down in October and a successor was being sought.

### Area 4 – Carol Watt Sullivan

Carol reported

‘Allan and I have continued to work together to ensure a smooth handover of the Area Secretary role and also continue dialogue with the Area Co-ordinators.

Sussex has been handed over to newly qualified National Umpire Angela Barker, based out of Horsham and I have been mentoring her through the first initial stages following handover. Angela, Allan and I will be having a review meeting in September.

Mike Swann has retired as co-ordinator for Kent and Alex Duckworth has agreed to take over the role, working in co-ordination with myself, Neville Bedford and Alex Kendrick.

I have arranged to meet with several of the lady county secretaries to review arrangement and try and harmonise allocation of duties within the counties concerned and ensure more involvement of the EBUA County-Coordinators, particularly in the light of the forthcoming changes.

Through the good auspices of indoor clubs seminars and assessments have been held at Bromley, Hounslow, Eastbourne and Tunbridge Wells since the last meeting (in no part due to the intervention of EBUA members sited in these clubs). Goodwill has been built up with the clubs, so hopefully we can use these venues again. It was good to see so many attend both the seminars and assessments, with relatively few failures/ no shows (for various reasons). In addition we have been able to ascertain the use of Adur IBC in West Sussex – so hopefully seminars and assessment days can be arranged during the winter season. This will enable us to catch up with those EBUA members who have been unable to attend due to various reasons.

Applications to upgrade club umpires to regional level still continue to be received, particularly for those due to requalify. Comments have been made by a few of their preference still to mark, so hopefully Allan’s proposals will be appreciated by many.’

### Area 5 –Ray Keen

A seminar weekend had been held in May.

Somerset was proving a nightmare but had succeeded in covering all the umpire duties requested. One of his co-ordinators had resigned and he was looking for a replacement, he hoped Sue Trott would help out.

He was going to arrange a development seminar in Somerset in early 2014 as it appeared that some umpire re-examinations were remaining from 2008/9.

## Area 6 – John Davies

He had held three seminars in the area and eleven new umpires had qualified, but he had, of course, also 'lost' some.

He had encountered a problem where Bowls England had been allowing counties to play on neutral greens as he had not learnt of the match until the night before but had managed to find an umpire for the matches.

John made the suggestion that the application forms for Leamington should contain the date of the applicants current certificate.

### **10. Any other business**

- a) Phyl said that she had raised the question of 'electronic' cigarettes, which players were starting to use. This was being reviewed by Bowls England.
- b) The committees attention was drawn to the letter (of 9 July) from Tony Allcock concerning the use of communications equipment for those with a disability under Law 38
- c) Jessie Clark said that she thought that the revised Development committee was too large and too top heavy to be effective. It was agreed that the future composition of that committee would be referred to the committee who were to meet after this meeting.
- d) Vernon asked the meeting to clarify the division between those duties allocated by the Area Secretaries and those by County Co-ordinators. It was agreed that the umpires for the following matches would be appointed by Area Secretaries  
Middleton Cup/Johns Trophy  
Walker Cup  
Liberty Trophy/Atherley Trophy  
Regional finals  
All others should be appointed by the county co-ordinators.  
It was agreed that Area Secretaries remind county competition secretaries that they should notify their requirements for all matches on that list to them, and other requirements to the county co-ordinators.

### Next meeting

The next meeting would be on 12 October at Goodwood B.C

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 12.50pm.

M Wellington  
Chairman

## **EBUA Executive Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

### **Development Officer's Report**

In the past few months since the AGM I have been concentrating on getting straight in my mind where we are with the development programme which was set out in 2010.

Clearly we have deviated from the fundamental principles of the original programme in the last 18 months or so and unfortunately I believe that decisions have been made which have undermined this programme.

However, let's move forward and try and pick up the pieces. This development programme was due a review in 2013 anyway so now is the right time to review everything that we do and to plan ahead again. I would like to say a huge thanks to all those that have provided feedback and observation from within their roles and this feedback is being used to develop the proposals to move forward.

Below is a summary of the main areas that require review and indeed have already been reviewed. The list is intended as a proposal from me to the Development Committee / Executive Committee (same thing!) for the way forward commencing with the next round of training this year. I will avoid going in to too much detail with the proposals and the workings of these as it will mean a very meaty document.

#### **Club Umpire**

In my opinion the biggest mistake in the past 12 months has been the apparent abolition of the Club Umpire grade.

This appears to have been done with no thought of the implications. These implications are far reaching due to this grade being the entry level for umpires to this association. It would appear that there has been total disregard shown to the members that are affected by this and indeed the applicants that have been innocently working through the papers to become club umpires. It also has implications on the minor things such as the Home Study Manual which now has incorrect information in it and will not be reprinted for some time to come.

#### ***Proposals***

- Application form to be revised
- Entry level for Umpires will now be Regional Grade
- Written theory module to be completed as previously
- Upon passing the candidate will be send a log book and a list of mentored duties to complete before attending a workshop and examination
- Markers course to be attended plus working assessment as a marker which will count towards umpire qualification
- Candidate attends a workshop and examination to become a Regional Umpire
- Existing Club Umpires will proceed with an upgrade to Regional Umpire.
- Those that wish to remain as Markers may do so after completion of a markers course.

## **Examinations**

It is clear that examination questions require review. Most of the examinations have proceeded without incident and many candidates have commented positively on the experience. However, there is evidence of existing procedures not being followed in some areas. I also have evidence to suggest that procedures have not been read and understood by examination personnel and even the use of the incorrect and old examination papers. This has resulted in different examinations being carried out in some areas, clearly not acceptable if we want a national standard. It has also resulted in some written complaints being received from candidates which have all been responded to.

### ***Proposals***

- Review procedures documents and publish to ALL personnel involved in the process.
- Review examination questions for all levels
- Review score sheets for all grades and ensure relevance to exercises.
- Review procedures for candidates who fail at any level.
- Review recruitment of examiners. This MUST be done nationally and not regionally as we cannot maintain control and training and hence procedures are not being followed.
- Recruit new examiners where there is a shortfall
- Set up “Train the Trainer” sessions for existing and new examiners to ensure consistency throughout the country
- Introduce Markers examination to the existing examination sessions (see separate Markers Proposal)
- Maintain National Examiners to prevent dilution of the procedures and maintain the top down structure
- Ensure that examinations are covered by local personnel where possible
- ALL examiners must attend a workshop to ensure that they are understanding what is being taught
- Examiners coaching (tutoring) candidates MUST STOP
- Introduce examination time slots for candidates. This has worked extremely well in trials.
- Ensure that adequate assistants are available at each examination session
- Establish a single portal for papers for all personnel to access ensuring that the most up to date version is being used. Sorry but I will drag you into the 20<sup>th</sup> century

## **Workshops**

Generally the workshops have progressed well and with the help of a Tutors Handbook this has ensured that new tutors have understood what is required.

However, I have received two written complaints about the standard of tutoring in some areas which have been responded to but require action. I also have evidence that misleading or incorrect information has been passed to candidates. The tutoring role is the absolute key to the process. If this area is wrong then the whole training standard is diluted.

Again, as with examiners, National Tutors and assistant tutors **MUST** be selected nationally and not on a regional basis to avoid such issues.

### ***Proposals***

- and publish to ALL personnel involved in the process
- Review tutoring material and media to ensure consistency nationally
- Review recruitment of tutors. This **MUST** be done nationally and not regionally as we cannot maintain control and training and hence procedures are not being followed.
- Recruit new tutors where there is a shortfall
- Set up "Train the Trainer" sessions for existing and new tutors to ensure consistency throughout the country
- Ensure that workshops are covered by local personnel where possible.

## **Markers Course & Examination**

The proposals for a markers course and examination are detailed in a separate paper and this will support the entry level to Regional Umpire whilst providing additional membership and income to the association.

### **Assessments**

I believe it is becoming more critical to now revisit our trials with assessments of working umpires. There have been some appalling displays at high level competitions from officials.

I would like to propose that we look at this process again in 2014 after our existing training programme has been revised.

### **Next Steps**

If you are in agreement with the above proposals then we will continue to review each action. Some are already in progress for example review of examination questions.

There is a lot to do and I will be asking for assistance with some of these actions.

My priority is to update the procedures documents and send them to you all for review.

If you wish to start to arrange workshops and examinations for the coming Indoor season then please go ahead perhaps commencing in October. By then we should have examination papers available for use.