

English Bowls Umpires Association

Minutes of an Executive Meeting held on 27 November 2016 at Oxford

Present

Mavis Wellington	–	Chairman
Vernon Findell	–	Secretary/Treasurer
Phyl Jones	–	Deputy Chairman
Ray Keen	–	Area Secretary
Bob Penny	–	Area Secretary
Carol Watt Sullivan	–	Area Secretary
Malcolm Griffith	–	Area Secretary
Val Coldwell	–	Area Secretary

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

Mavis welcomed everyone and thanked them for giving up their time to travel to Oxford. She reminded the meeting that Allan, as W.B. laws committee, and 3 other members as umpires were in New Zealand at the World Championships and she was sure that we all hoped things went well for them

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Allan Thornhill (Development Officer), John Davies – Area Secretary

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed as accurate by Carol Watt Sullivan and seconded by Ray Keen and duly signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

- a) Long sleeve shirts –Vernon reported that he had confirmed with the suppliers that they do not make a long-sleeved version of the shirts
- b) Kit problems – this had been dealt with

5. Correspondence

Vernon had prepared and circulated a list of the correspondence that he had received and how it had been dealt with. He highlighted some of the items in that list for discussion. One item asked him to consider the distance members were travelling when allocating duties at Leamington, it was concluded that this was impractical bearing in mind the number of varying number of duties per day, the number of volunteers and their grades.

The Committee also discussed a letter he had received from Mich Van Putt raising various concerns over various areas of training and its administration.

Vernon also highlighted the 'Bowls Eye' indicator which was now legal for use for bowlers to judge (during an end) which bowl was shot.

6. Secretary & Treasurer's Report

Vernon report had been circulated

Since our last meeting was not that long ago, I have not much to report.

3 of us were invited by Tony Allcock to attend a meeting with him to discuss, mainly the running of the National Championships, which I felt was slightly one sided, but obviously when I read the report to you, you will most probably agree.

I would like to put on record the very good work Phyl Jones, and her side-kick Ken Bickley did in sorting out the week-end of the Top Club, well done.

We have as far as I am aware covered all duties that we were "officially" asked, but I feel we cannot be held responsible when county competition secretaries pick their favourites, and then we get the backlash because they are not good enough.

I would like to thank all the members who carry out a sterling job in running the markers courses and new umpire and re-test courses, which at times must be fairly stressful, trying to balance past experience of the re-testers to how they are today, it is not just a case of "I have been an umpire a long time, I know it all" but sadly that is not the case.

I hope you will join with me on wishing Vic Perry, Graham Gibbins and Angie Watkins/Thompson all the best in New Zealand.

I have had e-mails via Val Coldwell about umpires and markers for the Special Olympics in Sheffield next August, as the appointments will be by their application form I have put it on the web-site for all to apply, although I understand 3 of our members have applied already.

With my other hat on I have nothing to report, all accounts are up to date, we owe no money, and we have just been repaid the £30000-00 loan with £130 interest.

I have "persuaded" the EIBA that they will never get markers, especially finishing about 10-30 at night to increase their fee to £10-00 which they have done.

As stated earlier this month, I will be receiving 500 copies of the new WIIBC Laws of the Sport, and will be sending one to each of the paid up members on the 2nd January 2017. It will cost us about £1800-00.

Vernon added the clarification that the bowls competition of the Special Olympics was not at Sheffield as he had implied but was at Doncaster.

The Committee discussed at length the items arising from the discussion with Bowls England in October. Noting their requirement that the co-ordinators must take time off to comply with employment law and concerning the 'umpires Office' and changing facilities.

Vernon also told the meeting that he did not wish to continue as Secretary after the AGM in the spring. It was agreed that arrangements for finding a replacement would be discussed later when the process for appointing a new NDO was discussed.

7. Development Officer's Report

Allan reported as follows

Very little to report as the last meeting was only 3 months ago. As you are aware I will be in New Zealand at the time of this meeting.

Workshops

3 workshops have been held since the last Exec meeting.
Bromley (Kent), Cambridge & York

Markers Courses

Since the last meeting there have been 5 markers course held throughout the country.

I was extremely disappointed to hear the "word on the street" at Leamington was that I had resigned as National Development Officer, especially from people outside of the Executive!! Below is the exact wording used in my report to the executive:

"The time has come where I feel it is time for fresh blood to further develop the excellent training and development standards that we have in this country. Therefore, I would like to give notice to the Executive of the EBUA that I will not be standing for re-election as the National Development Officer at the next AGM in 2017. This notice should allow time for someone to be found."

Of course, if it was discussed and is the intention of the Executive that I resign then I will happily do so with immediate effect. To date I have not received any communication on the matter so I will continue doing what I am doing until I hear otherwise.

8. Area Secretaries Reports

Area 1 – Val Coldwell

Val reported as follows;-

Since my last report I have unfortunately lost another county coordinator. Bert Wilkinson has retired from umpiring, and I would like to thank him for the work he has done in Lancashire. He was already coordinator for the men when we amalgamated and has done a very good job since then as well. However Bernardette Hill has kindly volunteered to take on the job so thank you to her.

I am still needing coordinators for Durham and Yorkshire so anyone interested please contact me and I will discuss what commitment is required.

We had assessments last weekend and we are very pleased with the enthusiasm and standard of the people who passed. We have one new umpire Richard Farrall congratulations to him, one upgrade from regional to national Stewart Clark well done Stewart two very good regional umpires re-qualified . Six national umpires re-qualified and one international re-qualified. These people are very active umpires in the northern area and our association could not afford to lose them .Some of these people travelled over two hundred miles round trip to do this, as I had not enough to run one in their area. So thank you to them.

The indoor games are being covered where possible. But sometimes with different games on the same day we are stretched.

Area 2 –Malcolm Griffith

Malcolm reported as follows:-

At the start of the indoor season we had a problem at one of our indoor bowls clubs in Leicestershire ,as this club is in a leisure centre, the building is owed by the council and run by a management company. The management of the centre in their wisdom allowed children to play bean bag football on the indoor bowls green in the closed season, this damaged the playing surface and underlay pulled up some of the griper strips around the sides of the green, also a substance had been spilt on the carpet . I had to go and explain to them that it is impossible to play any National competitions or County competitions with the carpet as it is

The management company were going to have it repaired when they closed at Christmas, it was explained to them that competition dates have already been set months in advance, this will disrupt the entire National and County competitions for the entire midlands area. They finally agreed to close for two days the 3rd & 4th October so repairs to be carried out.

It has been noted by some of our umpires that the maintenance of leisure centre green are a little lax and the playing surface are suffering .

We have a number of our umpires in the midlands area are giving up their measures and callipers due to age or illness or moving out the area. We are trying to attract more of our markers to upgrade to umpires status, as it is getting a little difficult to cover some of the counties. As in one or two there is only two or three to cover a large county , even pulling umpires from other areas to cover, especially at this time of the season as the first rounds of competitions are on us , and request for our services required . My county coordinators are doing their best to cover appointments in their areas.

A workshop is being arranged at Leicester IBC . Slater Street Leicester for the Saturday 22^{sc} & 23rd of April 2017. It was to be on the 15th & 16th as this is Easter weekend it was changed to the following weekend. All of the umpires requiring retest are being contacted .

Bowls Leicestershire are looking at running a markers course sometime at the beginning of next year. Date and venue at this point in time TBA.

Area 3 – Bob Penny

Bob reported as follows:-

A busy outdoor season in the Eastern Area has been completed with continuing requests for umpires to help officiate and support the effective delivery of the game. Most games have been supported where requested and I am grateful to all those who have come forward and made themselves available. Requests for umpires have been met by the core of committed members and it continues to baffle me why there

are members who do not make themselves available to support the game but continue to be members of the Association.

I am very grateful for the time and effort made by the County Co-ordinators in considering and allocating umpires for local and county games in spite of the reduction in numbers who are prepared to come forward.

Area 3 continues to be without County Coordinators for Beds and Herts. I am pleased that a representative of Herts County Association, although not an EBUA member has come forward to assist in the county allocations and this arrangement has worked reasonably well.

Tony Hatch of Essex continues to be very active in arranging Markers seminars and these have been well supported by other umpires and well attended by players leading to the membership of several new marker members.

Markers seminars have been held during the summer in Havering and Harpenden and have been very well supported and well received. These are proving to be a very useful source of future markers and umpires. Seminars are being arranged across Area 3 for 2017.

A successful training and development workshop was held at Cambridge Chesterton IBC in November and I will start making enquiries for future workshops once the development programme is considered by the incoming Development Officer.

This gives me the ideal time to pass on the appreciation of the Eastern Area to the sterling efforts and total commitment shown by Allan Thornhill to make the umpires training and development programme the envy of many other countries. For the credibility and recognition of the Association we all have a role to play in upholding the standards and reputation of the Association. We wish Allan all the best in his future activities.

Uniforms still cause something of an issue. As the uniform is the identification of the Association there are some umpires who are no longer members who are acting in the capacity of a competent person who choose to wear the umpire's uniform. This is not acceptable if they are no longer members of the Association or acting in the capacity of a competent person and not representing the EBUA. Any poor performance by those persons is automatically linked to the Association which brings down the reputation of the Association.

I continue to have concerns regarding the membership of new markers. It must be recognised by all that attendance at a seminar, receipt of a certificate of attendance and payment of EBUA membership does not create a competent marker. Until new markers have got some experience under their belt and have been observed by others as working in an acceptable way do those apprentice umpires receive a certificate of competence.

I have asked the EBUA Executive to reconsider its position regarding the sale of uniforms to new markers and I have confidence that this is being taken forward. For the same reason of protecting the Association's reputation, Markers should be wearing the uniform once they have received their Certificate of Competence and not once they have attended a seminar, obtained a Certificate of Attendance and become an EBUA member.

I am very grateful to those who come forward and make themselves available to assist at games. We are all volunteers who have a love for the sport of bowls. We are there to support the players and make it enjoyable for all.

Area 4 – Carol Watt Sullivan

Carol reported as follows:-

My thanks to all the umpires in the area who have as usual stepped up to the mark when needed, sometimes at short notice

In the counties:-

The transition of management of Sussex with Robin Machell as lead supported by Denise Station on the technical side seems to have gone well (thanks in no part to Angela Barker's organisation and training skills). Finding replacement administrators to handle the divisional structure in Kent to support Alex Duckworth and myself is still providing hard to accomplish and it is to be hoped that the health of some potential candidates improves.

Surrey still proves to provide considerable challenges in terms of co-operation and communication, whilst Middlesex could always do with more recruits to assist Vic Perry

An assessment centre was held at Bromley on 22nd and 23rd October with some candidates travelling a considerable distance to attend. Compliments were expressed to the training team by participants and my thanks are expressed to the examiners for giving their time to make this possible! I was pleased to be able to welcome attendees from Lancashire and Suffolk.

An assessment centre has been arranged for Eastbourne IBC in Sussex on 13 & 14 May and thanks are again expressed to Eastbourne IBC and Terry Boniface for his help in facilitating this. Alan Thornhill and his training team and Vic Perry and his team of assessors have all confirmed availability, so we can conduct a session before we get too busy with the summer cycle of Johns, Middleton Cup etc.

Generally we still need to recruit new umpires, and find a way to make their job easier and more interesting and encourage players to use them more to enable them to enjoy being in the 'thick of it'! Finding available venues is becoming harder, particularly during the indoor season as indoor nationals seem to start earlier and during the summer so many weekends now are taken up with staffing County and national events.

Markers courses still prove popular with a number (as also reported by our web-master) taking place in the Area throughout most of the counties.

Kent – 1 December 24 participants attended a session at Dartford Stone Lodge, with some new members. Although in the early stages of planning a seminar has been requested in the Deal area for the spring.

Sussex; a seminar is taking place at Grattons on 18 February, staffed by our tutors in Sussex (on web-site)

Middlesex: 2 seminars planned for January (7&8 January and 21 & 22 January) (on web-site)

We will soon be coming round to doing the second cycle of courses on our Markers courses, so it will be interesting to see what new ideas come to keep these courses up to date with the new Development team.

Area 5 –Ray Keen

Ray reported as follows:-

I would like to start by thanking Andy Ewens for all the time and effort he put into our Association and for all the excellent work that he did for us.

I am sad to report that Peter Price has decided to retire after 37 years as an Umpire, during that time he achieved International status, worked at the 1992 World Championships in Worthing, was Chairman of our Association and was County Coordinator for Buckinghamshire. I wish him all the best for his retirement.

Congratulations to Angie Thompson on her selection to the World Championships in New Zealand, I hope that she has safe journeys both ways and really enjoys her time there.

We have run some Markers courses in Wiltshire and Berkshire already this year with others booked in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire for next year.

Our next Workshop will be held at Westlecot on 4th & 5th February 2017 and I have sent invitations to all of my Umpires whose Certificates ran out in 2015/6 or run out in 2017.

Like all other Area's we are struggling for Umpires in most Counties, with Herefordshire and Oxfordshire really short.

Area 6 – John Davies

No report submitted

9. National Development Officer and Secretary Posts

As both these posts would become vacant at the AGM it was agreed to discuss the arrangements for filling them at the same time

Secretary

It was agreed that this 'vacancy' would be advertised on the web site, asking for nominations to be submitted. Vernon would write a job description for issue to those interested in the post

National Development Officer

It was agreed that a formal request for 'expressions of interest' from those who would like to be considered for this post would be put on the website. These needed to be received by Vernon by 31 December 2016. Vernon would also issue a similar notice to County Co-ordinators), to ensure maximum 'coverage' of the membership. Bob and Phyl would draft a job description for issue to applicants prior to their being asked for their cv for consideration by the Committee

10. AGM

a) – Timing.

Whether April was the best time of year to have the AGM was discussed. It was noted that many members, who might not otherwise have attended the AGM, were already at Leamington during the Championships and it might increase the numbers attending if the AGM was moved to the 'overlap' weekend. It was agreed that a motion be put to the AGM making this change to the constitution.

Phyl would find out the relevant week number and draft a motion for review by the committee at the next meeting

b) Proposals for Life membership were also discussed

c) Shorts

The inclusion of shorts in the uniform was discussed. It was agreed that a proposal be put to the AGM to amend the uniform set out in the constitution to include Navy blue shorts, bearing the Bowls England logo. Phyl would draft the necessary motion for review at the next meeting.

d) Venue – Phyl would book the Naval Club room.

e) It was agreed that the AGM would commence at 12.00

11. Any other business

i) Vernon reported on the circumstances behind the appointment of the Umpires for the televised Test Match series. It was agreed that for next year this would be overseen by the Executive Committee and the team would include some ladies.

ii) Vernon reported on the meeting that had been held by Bowls England and the EBUA concerning the Leamington Championships, the County levy, recruitment and other matters.

It was noted that the levy did not seem to be really satisfactory to either side as some counties were stressing its unfairness and some counties did not feel they were getting the 'service they were buying'. It was agreed that it would be reviewed. It was also noted that BE required that those manning 'the office' to have time off to comply with Employment Law.

It was not possible to give the umpires a dedicated changing room and so they would need to continue to share these facilities with the players.

It was also agreed that Val would review the 'umpire kit' held by BE to ensure that it met requirements.

iii) Phyl raised the question of raising our profile at Championships and recruitment in general. (It appeared that this had also been raised at the meeting with BE).

It was agreed that Vernon would contact all counties with a view to getting our 'advertisement' in their yearbooks for 2017.

That some members of the Executive would be at Championships (both indoor and outdoor – subject to permission being given) manning a ‘stand’ encouraging people to find out about the Association and how to be trained as a marker or become an umpire. Vernon would ask for permission for this to take place at the ‘Indoor finals’. The question of signs was also discussed and it was agreed to obtain costings.

lii) Carol raised the question of the position of those umpires who were not keeping their qualification up to date and were avoiding attendance at training/examination weekends. It was agreed that Vernon would write to them pointing out that they could not be allocated any duties until they had rectified the position.

iv) Both Carol and Bob raised questions concerning the competency levels of markers, the issue of Certificates of Competency and purchase of uniform. It was agreed that the Certificate was only issued when the county co-ordinator was satisfied with the standard of marking attained and at that stage the logbook would be forwarded to Allan with the recommendation that the Certificate be issued. At this stage of progression from a Certificate of Attendance to a Certificate of Competence not only would Allan be told, but also Vernon and Karen Wood as they would then be entitled to purchase a uniform with the ‘Marker’ flash.

12. Next meeting

It was noted that the next meetings would be as follows;-

Sunday 19 February 2017 11.00 at Oxford

AGM – Sunday 23 April 2017 12.00 at Leamington

Mavis thanked everyone for their hard work and for attending the meeting. There being no further business she closed the meeting at 14.00, wished everyone a safe journey home and looked forward to seeing them at the next meeting.

M Wellington
Chairman

Appendix A

Profit & Loss

Sales

Blazers, General, Manuals & training DVDs	4,549.65	
Course/Exam Fees	3,460.95	
Subscriptions Received	4,648.00	
Grants – BE/EIBA	9,000.00	
Donations Received	162.40	
		21,821.00

Purchases

Purchases	1,141.43	
Course/Exam Expenses	2,725.51	
		<u>3,866.94</u>
Gross Profit/(Loss)		17,954.06

Overheads

Training Costs	596.88	
Postage & Telephone	1,061.15	
Travelling	(7,563.06)	
Printing & Stationary	974.50	
Computer Costs	228.18	
Accountancy & Insurance	111.00	
Flowers & Donations Paid	50.00	
Bank Charges & Interest	(0.78)	
		<u>(4,542.13)</u>
Net Profit/(Loss)		22,496.19