



MINUTES

Meeting	EBED Trustee Meeting	
Date & Time	3rd September 2020 from 12.30 to 18.00	
Location	Via Zoom	
Attendees	Andy Margetts – Chair (AM) Terry Hewett – Trustee (TH) Mary Sharp – Trustee (MS) Douglas Wright – Trustee (DBBW) Giorgio Provenza – CEO (GP)	Gillian Fawcett – Trustee (GF) Mike Hill – Trustee & Treasurer (MH) Dom Wilson – Trustee (DoW) Donna Wright – Retiring CEO (DMW)
	1 – Housekeeping 2 – Operational Issues 3 – Finance & Governance 4 – Next Meeting 5 – Any Other Business • Note – minutes not necessarily in actual order of discussion	

1 – HOUSEKEEPING																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes from the June board meeting were reviewed and approved. Updates on open issues were as follows: <table border="1" data-bbox="243 1360 1432 1745"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Matters now completed A067</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A062</td> <td>Carried forward, DMW notes handed over to GP</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A074</td> <td>Deferred due to C-19, project to be reassessed by GP in due course</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A075</td> <td>DBBW reported no progress given the focus on EBS. He will report by email in the next two weeks after co-ordinating with GP</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A080</td> <td>TH reported DBBW ran a successful first event which was well received but the second planned evening event had to be cancelled and will be re-scheduled</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A084</td> <td>Deferred</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A085</td> <td>Scheduled to be performed later in 2020</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A086</td> <td>On the agenda to be addressed in this meeting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A087</td> <td>Not enough participants engage to get meaningful feedback. GP will discuss at this week's YAG</td> </tr> </table> It was noted that publication of the quarterly board minutes was not up to date on the website as the person responsible for assisting in this was made redundant by the EBU. EBED should assume responsibility for this in future and GP will ensure the website is updated. It was also agreed that the minutes of the regular board calls instigated in response to the C-19 crisis should also be published alongside the formal quarterly meeting minutes. It was also noted that the Green Book Teacher Notes need to be uploaded to the Teacher Zone. 		Matters now completed A067		A062	Carried forward, DMW notes handed over to GP	A074	Deferred due to C-19, project to be reassessed by GP in due course	A075	DBBW reported no progress given the focus on EBS. He will report by email in the next two weeks after co-ordinating with GP	A080	TH reported DBBW ran a successful first event which was well received but the second planned evening event had to be cancelled and will be re-scheduled	A084	Deferred	A085	Scheduled to be performed later in 2020	A086	On the agenda to be addressed in this meeting	A087	Not enough participants engage to get meaningful feedback. GP will discuss at this week's YAG
Matters now completed A067																			
A062	Carried forward, DMW notes handed over to GP																		
A074	Deferred due to C-19, project to be reassessed by GP in due course																		
A075	DBBW reported no progress given the focus on EBS. He will report by email in the next two weeks after co-ordinating with GP																		
A080	TH reported DBBW ran a successful first event which was well received but the second planned evening event had to be cancelled and will be re-scheduled																		
A084	Deferred																		
A085	Scheduled to be performed later in 2020																		
A086	On the agenda to be addressed in this meeting																		
A087	Not enough participants engage to get meaningful feedback. GP will discuss at this week's YAG																		



- Under the review of potential conflicts, AM noted that MH had notified him that he has been invited to become President of the London Metropolitan Bridge Association and had sought confirmation that this did not give rise to a conflict of interest. DBBW also reported that he had been invited to be a livery and freeman of MPCC. It was noted that he would not be directly involved in the awarding of grants. Both potential appointments were therefore noted as not giving rise to a conflict of interest.

2 – OPERATIONAL ISSUES

A – CEO's Report (GP) & Questions from trustees

- GP & DMW presented the CEO's report and the contents were discussed. A discussion of personnel issues was deferred to be considered under the Finance section (see below).
- EBED teacher awards were considered. In light of C-19 and its effect on youth bridge in the current year, it was decided that it was not appropriate to make the Tom Bradley and Alec Salisbury awards. The EBED teacher award is next due to be made in 2021 at the next teacher conference.
- It was noted that a review of stock levels of Red & Green books should be performed ahead of the next meeting.

B – EBS Update

- The launch of the EBS in the last two weeks has gone smoothly. However, EBED need to continue to persuade the teachers of the merits of the platform and encourage their students to sign up. The long-term goal is for the platform to be the main teaching aid instead of the Red Book and the Green Book, which would eventually be discontinued. TH questioned why the books should not be used in conjunction with the platform as, although students are using more modern ways of learning, some may still want to start with a book. It is anticipated that even after the Covid threat has been eliminated, some online teaching will continue and that the resources available on the platform will continue to be the main resources for all bridge teachers in the on-line and F2F worlds. This is how the platform should be being promoted to our EBTA teachers. It was acknowledged that, at this stage, the main source of new recruits to use EBS were likely to be new teachers attending CTT courses who do not yet have their own presentation library.
- It was acknowledged that the offering on the current platform is still relatively light. Currently the first ten lessons of the year one course are available so it will be too early to suggest that teachers use the platform exclusively in preference to the books. Additionally, many students may prefer to continue with the books, which provide a long-term reference source. The main problem is that the books are complimentary to the platform but should not be used in conjunction with the platform. The longer-term aim remains that both students and teachers would discontinue the books.
- The student offering will be populated with articles from the EU magazine but these will need to be catalogued. The articles are currently colour-coded and sorted by author but are not easy to access or find. It was suggested that we might ask for volunteers from amongst the teacher educators to help in this process.
- AM raised the question of priorities for the future development of EBS given the current constraints on finances. It was debated as to whether it was most urgent to finish the first-year course, develop the year two course, develop a fast track course or develop additional courses for intermediates to offer an additional reason for teachers to use the platform. It was agreed that the priorities should be:
 - i) to finalise the year one course;
 - ii) to produce the year two course; and
 - iii) then to work on additional materials.
- Additional concerns were raised that teachers who are familiar with Zoom have less incentive to switch to Google Meet and therefore to add their students onto the platform. The only material advantage of Zoom is the breakout room function but teachers are now familiar with it especially given EBED's early-stage covid advice videos encouraged its use.



- Specific personnel are required to manage the platform and these were identified as i) Customer Support, ii) System administration and iii) IT (to look after the platform). EBED's current resources are Harry Watson (a volunteer), Lorna Watson and Steve Hull. Given the ongoing level of IT assistance is an unknown and it is not yet known whether this can be provided by EBED employees, consideration is to be given to Harry Watson being engaged on a consultancy basis in the short term to help assess the ongoing needs ahead of a more permanent solution being found. He is likely to be a cost-effective option in the interim and has impressed Kiat Hung as having all the necessary skills. In the longer term the EBU are currently recruiting for an IT specialist so there may be an opportunity to share the successful applicant with the EBU.
- A concern was raised as to engaging Harry Watson on a consultancy basis with him being the son of an existing employee without a tendering process for the role. It was deemed appropriate to ask for a written reference from Kiat Hung as to his suitability and, given the temporary and short-term nature of engagement and the materiality of the likely costs involved it was deemed expedient to proceed if suitable terms of reference could be agreed.
- Personnel are required to continue to write the material for the platform and additional authors required. GP has been in discussion with several individuals who maybe suitable to write the ongoing material for the platform. Discussions are ongoing.
- There have been enquiries from non-English and even overseas (Irish) teachers using the platform. GP will explore whether this is on behalf of the national governing body or individual teachers. Such instances are expected not to form a material element of future sales but GP will also explore with the auditors whether this gives any taxation or charitable status issues were such sales to become material in the context of the charity's operations.

C – Future of TLAG (MS)

- This group has been running approximately for 18 months with its main aim being to advise the EBED board on educational materials and on the early planning for the requirements of an e-learning platform. It has now served its purpose and a proposal to disband TLAG and introduce a new English Bridge School Advisory Committee (EBSAC) was approved to advise the board on the suggested future development of EBS.
- A draft remit was discussed and approved and possible members and roles discussed with MS being given authority to approach the individuals and to invite them to serve on the committee. Staff members would be GP, Lorna Watson & Jacks Morcombe.

D – Branding

- MS presented some initial thoughts on branding highlighting the potential for confusion as EBED (together with the EBU) has five different sub brands in use and queried whether we should rebrand under the English Bridge School logo.
- It was debated whether the overarching brand was simply English Bridge and whether it was too early in EBS's life to pin the identity onto a new and as yet unproven platform. Additionally, it was debated as to whether to rebrand using the EBS logo.
- It was unanimously agreed that it was desirable to simplify the branding and identity of EBED and its operations and that it might be appropriate to use EBS as an umbrella as there are too many brands associated with EBED's operations and, despite efforts, that there is low brand recognition of EBED itself with many still perceiving it as "part of the EBU".
- However, it was also recognised that there was no appetite to commit scarce resources given the current financial situation to a major rebranding exercise. It was therefore agreed that the transition should be done over time and without incurring costs, using any opportunity to show a direction of travel that in due course would render a rebranding appropriate.



E – Teacher Training & EBTA plans update

- DBBW confirmed the club teacher course is arranged for the weekend 5/6th September and will be taught online following a rewrite of the course based on the feedback form the trial earlier in the year. There are 11 delegates who have signed up. The course will be used to showcase EBS alongside the existing Red and Green books to new teachers who have not developed their own materials. DBBW has been working closely with Jacks Morcombe to ensure the delegates are given as much experience as possible to teach in this online environment and that they have practised using some of the online platforms ahead of the course to allow more time on the day to focus on teaching methods rather than how to use systems.

F - F2F advice for teachers

- There is a small move to resume F2F activities with the likes of Rugby Bridge club regularly using screens and other organisations exploring social distancing players on tables and playing against each other online using tablets and laptops. EBED has had some enquiries as to how teachers might return to F2F at some stage and so GF had volunteered to draft some advice to teachers based on current EBU advice, government policy and taking into account the likely insurance position.
- The proposed advice was discussed and it was agreed this was to be adopted and put on the website making it clear the date at which the advice was current and highlighting that things may change quickly in the current Covid environment.

G - Youth update (YAG)

- TH advised the next meeting is 8th September and that there had been little youth activity since the last YAG meeting. The on-line mini bridge taster for the MPCC (run by DBBW) was excellent and well received. The youth officer is still on furlough and there doesn't seem much appetite in school to resume bridge as extra curriculum activities span different year groups and teachers are still grappling with the basics of operating with C-19 restrictions. It therefore appears that bridge in schools will not resume in a meaningful way for the foreseeable future.
- Notwithstanding that, DBBW reported he is at the start of discussions with a school in his area to offer online youth bridge and he had had an enquiry from a young teacher about teaching bridge in a school at Accrington.
- As chair of YAG, TH recommended some possible new YAG members to change the mix of participants and to arrange a replacement for Liz Dale who has stood down as a member. The suggested appointments of Simon Cope and William Clennell had already been approved in a board call and the appointment of William Bourne and Bill Chadwick were now considered and approved. It was noted that Tim Warren (departing youth officer in Surrey) has also suggested June Middleton (his successor) as a potential candidate and TH will explore the possibility.

H - Research update

- DoW updated the board on the Stirling and Imperial projects:
- At Stirling, the PhD methodology has been adapted to allow for Covid-19 restrictions and Kevin Judge appears to be progressing well. DoW will attend a virtual team briefing in mid-September to learn more
- Sam Punch reports much Scottish (and international) interest in EBS developments.
- Stirling are running the 4th International Bridge Conference scheduled for 1 July 2021 will feature papers reflecting the research. Papers also invited from EBED.
- The Imperial methodology has been much curtailed by effect of Covid-19 and the current inability to proceed with scanning may cause problems with observing the effects of bridge on participants.



- Nevertheless, Caroline Small reports that some data analysis is possible and would have been available for comment by now were it not for the current non-availability of a key team member. DoW will meet the team virtually on 10 September to get a fuller update and will invite Caroline Small to update the board at the next meeting.

3 – FINANCE & GOVERNANCE

A – Finance Update

- MH confirmed reserves as at 30th June 2020 were £300 k and on current projections might fall to £196 k by the end of the financial year. It was noted that the charity's losing approximately £40k per quarter at present reduced by any sales/subscription of education materials including EBS but this will change as the furlough scheme draws to a close. DMW reported that the costs of developing EBS are still within the board authorised spending limit.
- The EBU has confirmed that the regular 3rd quarter donation will not be paid but there is no decision yet on the 4th quarter. However, they are considering a one-off exceptional payment for a specific project and have indicated that future funding may be more specifically directed than previously.
- Whilst any donation is welcome, AM and MH have both spoken to the EBU treasurer expressing concern at any move to directed funding and have requested that future funding be structured so as to preserve the independence of EBED. AM reported that he had offered that he and GP meet with the EBU to discuss their preferences for EBED's future development so that EBED can feed the thoughts of its major donor into the forthcoming strategic planning exercise. The board discussed how it would prefer a Q3 donation to be spent and it was agreed that we should request it to be designated to accelerate the development of EBS and in particular to allow work to commence on the development of the year two course to be in parallel with the completion of the first year course rather than in series as might otherwise be the case with no additional funding.
- It was noted that the government furlough scheme was coming to an end. Given the continuing deterioration of the charity's finances as a result of C-19 and as the prospects for an early return to normal had if anything receded recently, the board discussed the ongoing impact of the crisis on the charity's services and of EBED's ability to afford to retain staff in certain areas for an eventual resumption.
- The trustees then discussed the current and likely ongoing staffing requirements for the various activities of the charity. In particular, it was noted that schools and other youth organisations were unlikely to be able to resume cross year extra curricula activities such as bridge activities for some time even though pupils had returned as their principal focus would be on the health and safety of pupils and on the main curriculum. Additionally, TD training was unlikely to be in demand until face to face bridge could resume given the differing characteristics of the role of the director in online versus FF2F environments. There was also less administration involved with online course preparation in comparison to F2F training and increased process automation had had an effect on requirements. It was agreed that existing staffing levels were unsustainable and that some roles no longer existed given there was no realistic prospect of a return to normality and that redundancies should now be contemplated.
- Every effort should be made to keep redundancies to a minimum and where possible staff would be re-assigned to other roles where they had relevant skills. Any terminations of employment will be made in accordance with all redundancy legislation and the EBED is mindful of the sensitive nature of any decisions made and, even though not legally obliged to by virtue of our size, will consult with all staff ahead of taking action.
- GP was authorised to start a staff consultation process ahead of deciding any redundancies.
- MH will produce a financial reforecasting later in 2020 once staffing requirements and future staff costs are clear. Additionally, GP will cost the next stage of EBS for board approval.



B - Governance

- AM reported the results of the trustee self-assessment survey which highlighted no areas of specific concern. The following points were noted:
 - need for new CEO priorities was highlighted (being addressed by plans for strategic planning - see below);
 - the treasurer’s monitoring of finances until the Management accounts for the Q1 were made available had been particularly useful; and
 - EBED’s accounting for staff time allocations could be clearer to make management accounts more useful from a management perspective

C– Strategic Planning

- AM outlined the proposed steps and timetable for a strategic planning exercise to be performed now that GP was on board as the new CEO:
 - AM and GP to review results of the last planning exercise in 2018;
 - AM & GP will work with DoW to produce discussion points ahead of a full board exercise;
 - strategic input from the EBU will be sought ahead of the board discussion;
 - the board will discuss EBED’s future strategic direction on 1 October; and
 - a strategic priorities document will be presented at the December board.
- DBBW suggested taking views from key staff (GP to action)

D – Future board call frequency

- It was agreed that future calls should be monthly rather than weekly now that EBS had been launched at on the first Thursday of the month at 4.15pm with the flexibility to call for short notice meetings if and when required. The 1st October will double as due to the Strategic Planning update and so will commence at 12.30pm subject to confirmation once two trustees had confirmed their ability to attend.

4 - NEXT MEETING

- The next quarterly board meeting will take place on Thursday, 3 December 2020 at 12.30pm, via Zoom .

5 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- AM delivered the board’s thanks to DMW on her last day at EBED and presented her with a leaving gift, funded by personal donations from the trustees, work colleagues and EBU staff.

MEETING CLOSED c.17.00

ACTION	AGENDA ITEM / ACTION / NOTES	RAISER	OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS	UPDATES
A074	Classroom to Clubroom project scope to re-examine	-	GP	Deferred	Open	



A075	DBBW to put together a proposed communication plan for proposed EBTA changes	-	DBBW	ASAP	Open	
A084	Fund raising trustee appointment	MS	AM	Deferred	Open	
A085	Financial re-forecasting exercise to be performed	MH	MH	Later in 2020	Open	
A088	Redundancy consultation report	GP	GP	ASAP	Open	
A089	Develop Strategic Plan	AM	AM/GP	December board	Open	