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| Glouc Bowls Assoc  TRANSPARENT | **GLOUCESTERSHIRE BOWLS ASSOCIATION**  **A Member of Bowls England.** |

**G.B.A Joint Executive Committee**

**Minutes of meeting of Thursday 30 July 2020**

**Falcon B.C. : 10.00 a.m.**

**Members present**: Chair and Secretary - Lindsay Collin (County Administrator and WD BE Delegate) LC, Myra Savage (GBA Match Secretary) MS, David Rolls (MD Representative) DR, Anne Beaven (WD co-opted Delegate) AB, Les Hanley (Deputy County Treasurer) LH

**Apologies :** Avril Hole (Deputy County Treasurer) AH, Roger Harrison (GBA Deputy Match Secretary) RH, Linda Bennett (WD Representative), David Skeats (Deputy County Administrator) DS, Craig Guthrie (MD BE Delegate) CG,

**Welcome** to Les Hanley, the new MD Treasurer, at his first meeting

1. **Minutes of ‘Zoom’ meeting of 6 May 2020**

Minor correction of on date.

1. **Matters arising from minutes**
   1. GBA Presentation Luncheon. Cancelled for this year. Did not lose the £200 deposit – has been transferred to the new 2021 date of 17th October
2. **Preliminary update on GBA matters** – County Administrator LC

3.1 LC noted that the last four months had been an excessively busy time. Lots of communications with clubs (and others in the County) regarding five main areas :

* re Covid-19 actions, from Bowls England (BE) and GBA
* re publicising financial support for clubs in relation to Covid-19
* re re-opening of greens post-lockdown
* re communication and maintaining interest at a difficult time for our sport (including things like BE podcasts and Webinars)
* re the new BE National Membership Register

3.2 Lots of communications and contact with club secretaries, by LC, by phone and by e-mail mostly, but resulting in enhanced knowledge of clubs and getting to personally know more club secretaries. 24 out of 60 of these are now women, incidentally. Some quite difficult matters to deal with, with particular clubs, to be resolved, a few taking quite a bit of time. One club in particular, but also the issues with Bristol parks clubs to be monitored and supported

3.3 Main concerns all form parts of our present agenda

1. **Financial report** (by County Administrator)

4.1 Quite a few payments still to be made :

* Explanation of situation re County Treasurer clearly made to clubs, re all the refunds, including an update on club insurance and on the Affiliation Fees. 14 May
* WD competition fees refunded immediately after the last meeting. LH also confirmed that the MD are now following suit and returned all competition fees (approx. £5750), but this is hampered by difficulties in him being made a signatory for the account. All banks presently seem to be on a go-slow at the moment, in relation to changing mandates. (Action : LH)
* Refund of 2019 Affiliation fees, agreed by JEC to be at full level (BE £5 and GBA £4 payments), despite money expended from October 2019 to May 2020. Sizeable losses by GBA2010 and both Divisions. £17,790 BE fees due to be returned and £14,926 GBA fees similarly
* Effect of the refunds greatest on GBA2010, as it has no regular income; last levy was in 2016/7. But Divisons will take a significant hit. Has not proved possible yet to repay Affiliation Fees, due to Barclays Bank also being very slow indeed. So LC still waiting to become a signatory, after nearly three months of frustration. But all clubs are completely clear that they will get the refunds in the coming few weeks and realise that they will need anyway to ‘ringfence’ the 2019 refund to pay their 2020 Affiliation Fees
* LC has all the County Treasurer records now, though awaiting electronic copies. Have cheque books, including a new cheque book, enough now to pay all refunds, but she cannot yet sign cheques. Nevertheless, LC will begin process, writing letters and cheques, and then liaise with DR and LB. (Action : LC)
* Former County Treasurer Maddie Hale will kindly assist the production of GBA2010 accounts for this year, in due course, as long as LC can supply the necessary records to her
* Few major payments to be made now for the rest of this financial year, after the refunds and a few expenses. But the situation throws emphasis on finding a new County Treasurer (next agenda item)
* But BE payments will need to be made in early 2021 – sizeable monies then, at end of January.

1. **Replacing the County Treasurer**

* DS had kindly mentioned the need for a new County Treasurer, while seeking a Men’s Division (MD) Treasurer, but this had sparked no response at that time
* LC thought that the time for general pleas had gone and it was now a matter of identifying individuals and approaching them. But how to seek out such individuals in the first place?
* Discussion about need for a special County Treasurer, but accepted that this was necessary, with two particular pressure times each year – Affiliation Fees and Presentation Luncheon – with several less demanding processes, plus obviously regular attendance at the JEC. LC has a document defining what needs to be done each month, written originally by Maddie Hale
* LH enquired about the possibility of a Divisional Treasurer doing this job as well, but the consensus on the committee was that this was undesirable (and the reason that the post was agreed in the first place, with Divisional Treasurers having many other responsibilities and big enough jobs). But it would have to remain the fall-back situation if no County Treasurer could be appointed
* LC asked to write to Club Secretaries, simply to try to identify individuals within the clubs who could be approached by the Administrator. (Action : LC)

1. **Actions by Bowls England during the Covid-19 pandemic**

6.1 Huge amount of information and guidance emanating from government and from BE during the last four to five months :

* BE have had to lead on the reaction to lockdown and on meeting government strictures on Covid-19, in their capacity as our NGB. Including interpreting DCMS rules for sports clubs and for our sport in particular, sometimes checking back with DCMS. JEC members receive most circulars coming to Administrator. Initially, in March and April, lots of pronouncements and cancellation of 2020 competitions and events
* Financial implications for clubs in particular most crucial. At least three updates came out on all financial implications and in particular on sources of pecuniary support for clubs. Key circulars on this mostly on GBA Web Portal, along with all Covid-related documents
* More latterly, taking the lead on the various phases of emerging from lockdown and on subsequent guidance re re-opening of greens and on associated playing restrictions. Has been well done and successful, insofar as those clubs who have wanted to re-open and their members have wanted to play (see Audit – item 8)
  1. Necessary adjustments to Covid-19 situation at BE itself. All BE staff working from home and all BE meetings are on-line. Most notably Board Meetings, but also many others, including the involvement of counties. Absolutely the wrong time for all this to happen, of course, as BE (i) just have a new Chief Executive and (ii) are on the point of having their new headquarters next to Victoria Park in Leamington converted. LC has maintained regular contact on all sorts of matters, but had just circulated to JEC members a useful list of ‘at home’ contacts, just in case. In practice, though, most contact should routinely flow through the County Administrator.
  2. Our new BE Chief Executive has recently taken up his post. Jon Cockcroft, who has come from leading England Hockey. Knows little of bowls, so is seeking to quickly acquaint himself with the sport of lawn bowls and with the problems for the future that counties, and many others, identify. Has already :
  3. Undertaken a series of interviews with Counties to talk about the sport and about the main issues. For us, County Administrator and David Skeats involved in this three-person ‘Zoom’ meeting earlier this month
  4. Set up a series of ‘County Discussion Groups’, with each county on two of the 7 groups (10 persons each group). We are in the ‘Player Retention’ and ‘Communications’ groups. Others cover ‘Club Services’, ‘Player Acquisition’, ‘Coaching and Junior Pathway’, ‘Volunteering and Governance’ and ‘Birmingham 2022’. All JEC members have received this information, as well as the video of Jon later reporting back on the County interviews
  5. Communication with clubs and members has been a big consideration. The ‘Extra End’ podcast is something on which all JEC members will all have received updates. Most of us will have watched at least some of the interviews carried out by Sian Honor :

1. Tony Allcock
2. John McGuiness
3. Kirk Smith
4. Workout videos (with board members, including Mal Evans)
5. John and Katherine Rednall
6. Amy Gowshall
7. Jon Cockcroft

A good attempt has been made to keep members interested and prompt clubs. There have also had the on-line Webinars on several areas, including use of Social Media and club communication generally (had to be signed up for)

* 1. There will be a BE Annual Dinner in February (in Coventry Doubletree Hilton), but obviously no presentations involved this year, so purely social, in preparation for next season. After AGM
  2. Disciplinary hearings will restart on 1st August, but only ‘virtually’ initially

1. **Ongoing Covid-19 implications for 2021**

7.1 A general discussion took place, to try to identify implications for next year/next season, both in general for our sport, but also in relation to GBA activities. Including :

* We don’t know the future and what 2021 might hold for either the Association or for our sport more generally. Depends on ‘second peak’ and how Winter 2020/1 goes re Covid-19. In a worst-case scenario, could be a repeat of 2020, and that is a good chance. Depends to a large extent on the arrival of a vaccine
* We cannot just take the situation, but must be pro-active at coming forward with suggestions as to how the sport could be undertaken in those circumstances, including as much competitive activity as possible
* Loss of members for our sport is totally inevitable and there could be significant numbers
* Generally thought that individual and team games, including at County level, could be possible, but that side games raise many more problems
* Felt that competitions, up to purely County level (giving us County Champions), could be practicable, even under current restrictions. Clubs would have to be co-operative and (with only three rinks in use) give precedence to County competitions. But whether BE would see that complete National Championship Competitions could be undertaken is a much bigger question
* Actual National Championships could be undertaken [employing only three rinks per green] if focused on, say, only quarter-finals onward, to make scheduling feasible. That is, more earlier National Championship rounds played at Regional level. This would need more time and possibly a delayed start to the Leamington phase. Felt that LC should convey this idea to BE, though many other counties might have thought the same. (Action : LC)
* Side games, including the higher level games like Middleton and Johns, could be played on a ‘home and away’ basis, with three rinks at each location. This would reduce the difficulties re travelling in coaches and allow car use for just the 12 players on each side playing away. Again thought that this idea might be conveyed to BE by LC. (Action : LC)
* Meals/food would not be part of the inter-counties competitions, and appropriate mitigating measures would also have to be paramount. Officer attendance would be minimised and no supporters encouraged to attend
* The previous ideas would allow ‘competitive play’, but inter-club friendlies and County friendlies may not happen if Covid-19 is still circulating

7.2 The particular case of the two County level ‘Champion of Champions Competitions’ in 2021 was discussed. A pronouncement had already been made by BE about the ‘National Champion of Champions’ that 2020 club winners would be allowed to enter the 2021 competition (the 2019 entrants are ‘rolling-over’). LC had discussed this informally with Ian Gauld, as it was known that the GBA men were keen to allow bone-fide 2020 4-Wood singles club competition winners to be allowed into the 2021 County Champion of Champions (in addition to the 2019 winners who are ‘rolling-over’) and there have already been enquiries as to whether this would apply to both genders.

Felt by the JEC members present that we should follow BE’s lead, and do so in a unified way. It was likely that this would only produce a few such 2020 club winners, as few clubs will organise such formal competitions and the winners may not anyway wish to enter the County competition. If a few do, it is unlikely to add more than one extra round, so no great complications for Section Competition Secretaries, but extra revenue for the divisions ! Passed unanimously.

1. **GBA Club Audit, July 2020** LC

LC had provided separate documents for the meeting: The original questionnaire; the tabulated results to 29.7; the preliminary overall results to 29.7.

Safeguarding & Coaching Noted by LC that she had intended to carry out an audit of coaching in GBA clubs and compliance with Safeguarding laws, early in 2020. With everything happening, this was delayed, so she also took the opportunity to ask about Covid-19 finances and restarting bowling in clubs in Summer 2020.

* Coaching knowledge useful and LC would chase up clubs who had not responded (response rate 40 out of 60 clubs, to 29.7). DR could supply some of the missing data, but LC would try to complete. Good coverage, with 34 clubs having a Coach Bowls coach
* Safeguarding seemingly quite well covered now by clubs, 35 having a Safeguarding Officer, 33 of these with qualifications. Online Safeguarding courses devised under Covid-19 will be continued.
* Take up of Covid-19 grant aid good, with around half of all GBA clubs having gained some support. Impossible to say why some clubs remained impervious to the many reminders from the Administrator about monies available now, but which will not be there in following years. Seems unwise
* Club interest in playing also very common. Only 7 of the 40 respondent clubs have not started playing again. The average number of people now playing, per club, is 28, with figures as high as 75 for Fairford and 73 for Cheltenham BC. [More detailed statistics available]

1. **Coaching. Youth coaching. DR**

9.1 Coach Bowls is going online for Level 2. There will be 2 practical days, but the rest of the course will be online

9.2 Also probably going online for Level 1 – an online trial is being undertaken. This will include assessment by video

9.3 Nothing new at County Level, but will try to proceed with the initiative agreed at the February meeting at Cotswold and subsequently circulated (on 22 March) to clubs with U-18 players as a poster about a ‘Youth Academy Taster Day’ on 26 April. DR has now had further discussions with various people and agreed that this can still take place this season, on 30 August

9.4 This revised Taster Day will be supported by notables Nathan Kitchen, Lee Williamson and Graham Phillips. Cheltenham BC have agreed to provide refreshments on the day. Suggested by DR that we invite any players up to their early twenties, in fact. DR will discuss further with LC prior to the circulation of the new poster. (Action : DR, LC)

9.5     Development sessions for the WD might still be arranged.  No Team Manager to liaise with at present, however

1. **National Membership Register.** Inc 2020 Affiliation process LC

10.1 New National Membership Register. A lot to do on this and proving quite difficult to administer, due to reactions from clubs ranging from helpful, compliant through to rather unhelpful. Obviously came at wrong time, but has to be done

10.2 Only about a quarter of the clubs have sent their membership lists so far, but technically, haven’t yet been asked for them. LC will be pursuing this in the next few weeks

10.3 Feel that we are actually in front of other counties

10.4 Should ideally be related to 2020 Affiliation process, but varying messages coming out of BE at the moment. Ongoing. If we don’t get further guidance from BE, the 2020 affiliation exercise will be carried out as previously. (Action : LC)

10.5 LH raised the possibility of a joint membership database with the EIBA, as there would be a large overlap outdoor/indoor. LC advised that this had been discussed more than once over the years and EIBA didn’t seem keen, a point confirmed by DR. Interesting aside that Coach Bowls uses GoMembership as well as BE does

1. **GBA 2021 Mixed Matches** MS

11.1 Of the intended four mixed matches from 2020, three have been agreed again for 2021, same date (less a day), same location; only Somerset outstanding

11.2 Worcestershire worth approaching also for next year. (Action : MS)

11.3 Gloucester Spa Centenary just postponed until next year. Same basic arrangements will be suitable.

1. **Umpiring changes in 2021** DS

12.1 On Umpires Association, new officers have been appointed to fill the vacancies and these should be confirmed at the AGM on 16 August

12.2 On a day-to-day basis, problems centrally should not have any effect on the running of umpires in the County, which is now under the direction of Joe Taylor (Wotton-u-Edge), under Steve Alway as Regional Coordinator

1. **Possible changes in GBA Constitution and Rules and in GBA Divisional Rules (where these affect GBA C & R)** LC

13.1 Any changes for 2020 Annual Divisional Delegate Meetings and 2021 GBA AGM need to be discussed soon, due to necessary timescales. Probably a few minor improvements in divisional working arrangements and in the C & R are possible, but JEC needs this year to concentrate only the things that are demonstrably out of date or out of line with actual practice. Anything more complicated will not be possible. LC will look at things in C & R that might need minor improvement. (Action : LC)

13.2 Clubs have just been circulated with request for club propositions by 1st September, as required in C & R

13.3 What the JEC could consider, this year, as requested by DS, is whether the composition of the Joint Executive Committee needs any consideration. It is 10 years since the GBA came into being – a suitable period for a review to be undertaken. This was agreed by all members of the committee and will be set in motion during the later part of 2020.

1. **GBA 2020 meeting and event dates** LC

Updated list of dates provided, for all GBA meetings. LH noted that he still works, so Executive Meetings during the day are potentially difficult. Noted by LC that CG sometimes has the same problems, so MS suggested that we might consider either moving existing meetings to the evenings of the agreed dates or look at having future meetings on Saturdays.

For the next meeting, will just move to 6.00 pm, from 10.00 am.

1. **Etiquette publication** (action from previous meeting; circulated)

* LC’s basic document accepted, but DR suggested that it should refer to actual laws where these were relevant, to make it clear that some actions are actually illegal, not just bad etiquette. DR will undertake these additions. (Action : DR)
* Completely accepted that etiquette of many players is poor. Not that much said in clubs these days and new players are often devoid of any good etiquette. Felt that this publication is so important (updated as above), that the GBA should produce a copy for every member, despite the cost implications. LC will get quotations for an 8 page A6 booklet, 3600 copies. (Action : LC)

1. **Any other business**

16.1 LC noted that some JEC expenses payments were outstanding, but would be sorted once she is a GBA2010 signatory. (Action : LC)

**Date of next meeting - Friday 2 October 2020 - *6.00 pm - Falcon B.C***