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

**Minutes of meeting of Friday 11 December 2020**

**On ‘Zoom’ : 6.00 p.m.**

1. **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, Roger Harrison (GBA Deputy Match Secretary) RH, Linda Bennett (WD Representative), David Skeats (Deputy County Administrator) DS
2. **Apologies** Avril Hole (Deputy County Treasurer) AH
3. **Minutes of ‘Zoom’ meeting of 2 October 2020** Accepted as a correct record
4. **Matters arising from minutes (important points only)**

4.1 Chair briefly referred to a few points :

* + 1. Etiquette publication – additional cost for an extra 1000 would be £90 [Action LC]
    2. Weston sub Edge BC had regrettably withdrawn from the GBA and will close
    3. Absolutely no response whatsoever from anyone in the County regarding the lack of a County Treasurer [Action LC]
    4. The GBA2010 accounts had been efficiently produced by Maddie Hale (with LC), who the Chair wished to thank very much
    5. The revised Affiliation and Competition Entry processes, from BE, had been circulated throughout the County \*

*\* Key BE communication on ‘Membership, affiliations, National Championships, National*

*Competitions*

*Main points :*

* *No affiliation fees for 30 September 2020*
* *Affiliation fees collected as of 1 May 2021*
* *Competition entries allowed for anyone affiliated by 1 May 2021*
* *Competition entries from county to BE by 1 March 2021*
* *Affiliation fees from County to BE by 31 May 2021*

*E-mail circulated to clubs, officers and JEC in October 2020*

* + 1. The National Membership Register would not apply this year

1. **Discussion – Youth development in Gloucestershire**

[Detailed document had been circulated prior to the meeting by DR]

5.1 DR made a number of key points about the proposals :

* Year 1 :
  + He had talked with Bucks and Dorset about their models, very helpfully
  + These two counties might prove to be sources of possible games in 2021, most likely as three-triples competitions
  + For the scheme, experienced coaches were vital, but also experienced bowlers as helpers
  + Need to confirm the database of those young players who participated in the two test days in August. Around 16 players, but includes a couple who are just over the 13-18 limit [Action DR]
  + Parental involvement and support will be vital – good so far. Helps with Safeguarding implications too
  + Not proposed to charge for membership of the Academy, but felt that a small charge should be made for participation. This point very much endorsed by the Committee
  + Would be considering some kind of ‘incentives’ for winners in competitions. Plenty of time to think about this
  + No major financial implications in this first year, unless we have to travel to away Academy games. AH’s e-mail about the contributions from the two divisions was raised by the Chair and generally agreed
  + Noted that some good young players evident already, and support from experienced ‘helpers’ (like nationally-successful younger bowlers and men’s County Team Manager) had been excellent
  + Noted also by LC that the WD were hoping to enter an Amy Rose team in the 2021 Nationals, the first time for several years. A few of the young players would need to be involved
  + Hoping for indoor sessions from March 2021, to get the youngsters back together again [Action in due course DR]
* Year 2 :
  + Will look at having ‘recruitment’ centres (clubs) in the four Sections to increase numbers and promote the Academy, but first aim was for the present group to actually play in 2021 and make good progress

5.2 Chair noted that a specific new competition for the 13-18 year olds (mixed) would be held in 2021, a day tournament modelled organisationally on the WD Benevolent Triples, but taking format and rules from Bowls England’s Sutton Winson Cup for the same age group.

1. **Main discussion – developments relating to the future strategy for our sport**

[Summary points had been noted by LC in advance and circulated to the committee, plus other documents noted below]

6.1 Background document summary :

Important processes under Bowls England July-December 2020

* County Discussion Workshops. September 2020 Topics : Club Services; Player acquisition; Player retention; Coaching/Junior pathway; Communications; Volunteering/Governance; Birmingham 2022 [LC and DS participated]

*Document circulated to JEC : COUNTY DISCUSSIONS WORKSHOPS – TAKEAWAY POINTS*

* BE 2020 Participation Survey - club and individual feedback. August 2020 [973 responses]

*Document circulated to JEC : OUR FUTURE – FEEDBACK*

* BE Counties Meeting. November 2020 [Just involved County Administrators, as online]

*Slides from meeting circulated to JEC. First announcements of key points in BE Strategy Plan*

* BE Focus Groups. Ongoing [involving those who had indicated an interest]

*Ian Gauld’s recent e-mail, with particular reference to competitions, circulated to JEC*

Key points from BE Strategy (Counties Meeting slides)

* Society’s big challenges – Health; ageing population; social isolation; inequalities; greener future
* Fundamental human values – happiness; exploring new horizons; connecting with people; evoking pride; impacting society
* Bowls Qualities :
  + Uncomplicated premise, but lifetime to learn. Joy and achievement from 8 to 88
  + Accessible. Physically doable, inexpensive, lots of facilities, no barriers to playing
  + Disabled people can be involved, also those chronically ill and those not stereotypically athletic can gain health benefits, self-esteem and life chances
  + Inter-generational. Families and friends
  + Clubs friendly and caring places
* BE Vision – for everyone to imagine the joy and benefit of playing sport
* BE Mission – promote and develop the sport across England so it enriches the lives of participants, connects communities, is good for health
* BE Objectives –
  + Make people feel that bowls is a sport where they belong
  + Wider participation. Diversity
  + Achieve a fulfilling relationship with the sport for everyone
  + Nurture volunteers
  + Be an admired NGB
* BE’s financial future laid out
* BE’s values and behaviours. CARE [Collaborative; Adaptable; Responsible; Encouraging]

6.2 General discussion on these matters included a wide range of points/views, including, in no particular order :

* DR noted the problem of ethnic diversity, where it had so far proved difficult to interest many BAME individuals. LC advised that BE will probably mount a campaign to involve a more diverse membership
* Members not aware of any prejudice in our sport, at any level. Indeed, next but one BE President is non-white (LC)
* Lots of objectives in Strategy, but can’t all be attained at once. So priorities need to be decided and indicated (DR)
* Talking to members, most are more concerned about recruitment and about their clubs continuing, rather than a Strategy for the sport (LH)
* Some clubs have difficulties with their landlords, including ‘company’ greens (AB) Local councils becoming less supportive (LC)
* Suggestion made about clubs sharing facilities, as usage so low in most cases and maintenance costly. Huge contrast with green usage in Australian clubs (DR)
* Previous point might lead on to small clubs disappearing, leaving us with just even-larger clubs. Games would then become more intra-club than inter-club (LC)
* Discussion of contrast between competitive players and social players, and the balance of activities in clubs. Can both be content in the same club ? But clubs do need their most experienced players, to tutor new members. Some ‘competitors’ will not play social games. Can’t afford for club activities to become generally more competitive, as this simply isn’t what many club members want. Encouraging families and friends important. Lots of other implications. (Many)
* Several points from Ian Gauld’s focus group considered [mainly re competitions] : Changing formats of competitions; changing lengths of game; more mixed competitions; novice competitions; more ‘regional’ events; changing attitudes to ‘dress code’; more imaginative scheduling of National Championships. And more. (Many)

6.3 National Open Weekend mentioned by LC. 28-31 May 2021. More information to come

1. **All GBA meetings early 2021**

Agreed that there would be no change to the decisions taken under Clause 7.1 in the JEC Minutes of 2 October 2020. LC to convey this to the clubs again. [Action LC]

1. **Prospects for 2021 season**

8.1 Generally agreed that, though the GBA should be optimistic, the likelihood of full/normal play in 2021 was not high. In all areas, though we must plan, as an Association, on the basis that everything will happen normally, it may well not. Everything depends on the progress of Covid-19 and on associated government regulations, despite the vaccine. BE would be issuing guidance, but it was felt that they should not make decisions for the whole season, and particularly in relation to competitions, too early.

8.2 Several matters were discussed at length :

* We could afford to delay the start of the Gloucestershire season a little, but not too long, but this would require decisions about which activities (inc competitions) would be able to take place
* If there are still Covid-19 restrictions :
  + There may be geographical variations within the County
  + There may be age group variations
  + Age might actually affect the desire or willingness to play
  + Suggested Covid ‘passports’ might be an issue
  + Clubs may not be willing to play inter-club games, preferring to just play within their own club
* County Competitions will require considerable thought :
  + Possible that BE would determine what National Championships and National Competitions would be played, if any
  + If no national competitions generally, the County could run some or all equivalent events just within the county i.e. County singles, pairs, triples, fours
  + Age group competitions need special consideration
  + Some competitions would not take place
  + Competitions might be ‘truncated’ in a shorter Summer season, but this would need some thought. Could be more competitions played on days rather than over a period [Action LC, Ian Gauld, Chris Magee]
* Could be particular issues with competitions or games which specifically required either or both large numbers of people and travelling long distances. So inter- county games generally, including National competitions like Middleton Cup and Johns Trophy, might well not take place
* National competitions even at the club level, rather than county, might have similar – if lesser – issues. So perhaps Top Club and things like the Tony Allcock Competition

1. **GBA publications 2021**

Men’s Yearbook almost complete, including that competition draws have been made. GBA Club Handbook and Women’s Yearbook nowhere near and can only be done in January, due partly to manifold pressures on LC, but including that the women’s competition draws have not yet been made. Some small changes in Unified Competition Rules still to be incorporated in update for Yearbooks. Also written pieces about ‘Coaching’ and ‘Youth Academy’ by DR, plus an ‘advert’ for the new single-day U18 singles competition. Some clubs have been unresponsive in terms of providing information for the GBA Club Handbook. [Actions LC, DS, DR]

1. **Any other important business**

10.1 DR noted the point about possible pre-Commonwealth Games training camps being located in Gloucestershire. Possibly two clubs have submitted bids to BE, certainly one.

10.2 LC raised the possibility of the County Administrator having some level of allowance, emphasising that it was not on her own behalf, but in principle. 2020 had been particularly demanding, but much was expected of the Administrator, with no recourse to any out-of-pocket expenses. Generally supported and the topic should be returned to.

10.3 LH initiated a conversation about whether the GBA has ‘a register of assets’. LC confirmed that neither the GBA overall nor the WD have any assets in that sense, so anything in that direction has purely been a matter for the MD. LH will make further enquiries, but this will have to involve previous MD Treasurers and Secretaries. [Action LH]

**Meeting closed 8.20 pm**

**Date of next meeting - will be decided according to events**