

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF
THE SCOTTISH BRASS BAND ASSOCIATION (SBBA)
SUNDAY 29th MARCH 2009 IN THE HOWDEN PARK CENTRE LIVINGSTON**

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

George Burt welcomed members to the 4TH SBBA meeting of 2008/2009 session.

Present George Burt (President), Peter Fraser (Vice President), Tom Allan (Secretary), John Todd, Andy Smith, John Gilmour, Steven Gray, Alan McLaren, Phil Lodge, Robert Burns, Julie Sanderson, Jennifer Fox, Robert McCorkell.

In Attendance Alan Edmond (YDO), Donald Reid (Minute Secretary).

Apologies Gerry Simonis (Treasurer), John Hamilton, John Martin (FCBA), John Stratford (SBBBA)

2. MINUTE NO: 3 OF SBBA EXECUTIVE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 15 2009

Minute No 3 of 15 January 2009, previously circulated, was approved on the motion of Robert McCorkell and seconded by Steven Gray.

3 MATTERS ARISING NOT OTHERWISE ON AGENDA

There were no matters arising not otherwise covered in the agenda.

4 DEVELOPMENT

(a) **Area Associations**

A letter had been received from Buckhaven & Methil Band regarding its membership of NCBBA. The Secretary advised that it would be beneficial to have a meeting with NCBBA to try to resolve this issue with them.

For NCBBA to have the formal status of an Area Association within SBBA, their constitution had to comply with the rules of SBBA. If the required changes are not made by NCBBA it would simply have the status of an association of bands affiliated to SBBA.

It was felt that the best way forward to resolve this issue amicably for the overall good of brass banding was to have a meeting with NCBBA to discuss Area Association status.

MSLBBA had been advised by Tom Allan that their draft new constitution as it currently stands does not comply with SBBA rules for an Area Association. He had given them appropriate advice and guidance which will ensure that their constitution will meet with SBBA requirements.

It was agreed to invite all Area Associations to a meeting on 26th April in RSAMD (or an alternative venue close to the RSAMD) beginning at 10.00 am. It was agreed that financial assistance for travel be provided for all representatives from Area Associations. In the case of Northern Counties, because of the distance involved and the early start, they will be offered travel and accommodation for up to 4 persons. It was likely there would be a large number attending this meeting, scheduled for 10.00 am with the aim of finishing prior to 1.00 pm to allow members to take part in the Brass Band Day at RSAMD.

The Development Committee had suggested that a sum of £2,500 from the Infrastructure Support grant should be made available to the Area Associations to assist them in developing their own organisations. It was proposed that each Area represented at the meeting will be invited to bid for a share of this sum and to outline the project on which the funds will be expended.

(b) Constitution and Rules

At the previous meeting of the Executive, the proposed new Registry Rules had been referred back to the Development Committee for further consideration. Alan McLaren referred members to the Minute of the meeting of the Development Committee of 4 March which had been circulated. For ease of reference, the relevant sections of that Minute are recorded here:-

"A consensus was reached on all issues on the following basis:-

- (a) The basic concept of the player based system was agreed. (The President) and (The Secretary) reported from their recent meeting with representatives of the other UK Registries that the English Registry would also like to move to a player based system but have as yet taken no steps to do so. It was agreed that once a player was registered for the first time, he or she would remain a registered player until (a) the player requests that his or her name is removed from the registry, (b) the player registers with a band in England or Wales or (c) the registry is made aware of the death of the player.*
- (b) It was acknowledged that the new system did not in any way alter the existing notice periods for new registrations (3 or 28 days), transfers (28 days), re-registering as a member of a band following cancellation of the registered membership by that band and with the player not having joined any other band in the intervening period (equivalent to a new registration – 3 or 28 days) and appearing as a guest player (7 days).*
- (c) The use of a registered player who is not attached to any particular band as a guest player was considered at some length. Essentially there were 3 possible ways this could be dealt with. Firstly, as envisaged by the proposed new rules as currently drafted, the player could guest with any band. Secondly, the player could guest with any band except the band with which he or she was most recently in membership. Thirdly, the player is not permitted to guest with any band.*

There were some concerns that permitting a player to guest with his or her most recent former band would result in some bands operating a pool of players in excess of the permitted maximum of 35 and that this could result in the system being abused. It was however pointed out that such an arrangement already operates in cases where bands have 35 signed players and where players have their registrations cancelled and are then subsequently re-signed by the band. The only real change effected by the ability to use the player as a guest is that the band does not have to cancel the registration of another player and then re-sign the original player. The proposed new arrangements would therefore simply remove otherwise unnecessary registry transactions saving administration for both the band and the registry and also saving expense for the band.

A degree of control on potential abuses of the system is provided by other existing rules for guest players (e.g. no guest players permitted in certain contests, particularly the Scottish Championships and the limit of 2 occasions in a year when a player can guest with the same band). The proposed new arrangements should increase the potential availability of guest players which should assist bands seeking to participate in contests. There is a possible danger that some players may elect to become long term unattached players only ever appearing as guest players and never retaining membership of any particular band. This could be a problem if large numbers of players were to adopt such a course of action as the membership bond between a player and a band is important in securing the well being of bands.

Overall, the new arrangements should bring advantages to bands although it was acknowledged that there could potentially be problems in some areas. It was agreed that we should proceed with the changes permitting an unattached player to guest with any band but keep matters under review once the new system is actually in operation. If, once the new rules had been operating for a period, there was evidence of problems or abuses of the system, further adjustments could then be made.

- (d) The existing Guest Player Rules would require adjustment to ensure conformity with the new Registry Rules. In particular, the rule concerning the section of the band to which the guest is attached would require to be adapted to allow for unattached players. It was agreed that the most appropriate method to deal with this situation and to achieve a rule which would be easily understood by all would be to treat an unattached guest player as being a member of the band with which he or she was last in membership of. The section of the band will be that applying at the date of the contest as opposed to at the date when the player ceased to be in membership of the band.*
- (e) The question of who should hold the card of an unattached player was also considered at some length. The proposed new rules allow for the card to be held by the registry or by the player or by the band with which the player was most recently in membership of. This was designed to allow for a number of potential scenarios and to avoid an unattached player having to obtain his card from the registry in advance of appearing as a guest. (The*

Secretary) was concerned that if cards are held by the unattached players themselves, there would be an increased number of cases of players losing their cards. He could also foresee difficulties where cards of unattached might be retained by a band. It was therefore agreed that the cards of unattached players would be retained by the Registry and simply taken to contests where any guest is to appear. As an aside, (The Secretary) wished matters generally to return to a situation where all guest player cards are retained by the registration team at a contest and passed to the registry. The registry will then return the guest player cards to the player's own band (or, in the case of unattached players under the new rules, retain the cards at the registry). It will be made clear that all cards remain the property of SBBA at all times.

- (f) *It was agreed that we should implement the new account basis of settling registry fees on the basis proposed in the draft new registry rules. It was stressed that bands will have the option to use the new account basis or to settle fees on the occasion of each individual transaction as at present. Bands opting for the new account basis will require to lodge a deposit of £100. The registry will maintain a record of the band's transactions in each accounting period and at the termination of each 6 monthly period the band will be sent a statement detailing the transactions and requiring settlement of the total (and to effectively reinstate the £100 deposit) within a period of 3 weeks. If a band does not make full payment within the time allowed, all subsequent registry transactions for the band will be suspended until such time as full payment is received. Whilst the registry will require to maintain a ledger for each band using the account basis and obtain settlement every 6 months, this will be balanced by not having to process larger numbers of small payments throughout the year. For bands opting to use the system the advantages are reducing cheque payments to the registry to only 2 per year (plus the annual retention fee), an element of credit (where total fees within any accounting period exceed the £100 deposit) and the ability to submit applications for transfers or re-registrations to the registry by fax or as an attachment to an email as no cheque requires to be sent with the application.*
- (g) *The annual re-franking fee will be replaced with an annual retention fee paid by each band. Bands will no longer have to submit cards to the registry for re-franking and the registry will be spared the laborious task of re-franking each individual card. The fact that a player's name appears on the sheet provided by the registry for each contest will be deemed to show that the player's registration is current. It was acknowledged that it will be necessary to make contact with all of the organisers of contests in England where Scottish bands participate to outline the new system to them and to ensure that no difficulties arise on account of individual cards not having been re-franked.*
- (h) *There was some discussion on the amounts of individual registry fees. With the new system, there will be rather more work for the registry on the occasion of the first registration of a player as opposed to a transfer or a re-registration as a member of a band. It is therefore proposed that the fee for a new (28 day) registration (and also the fee for re-issuing a card where the original has been lost) should be increased to £10 but with the fee for a 3 day registration remaining at £40. It is further proposed that the fee for a transfer or a re-registration should now be £5. In view of the reduction in work with the annual retention fee as opposed to the current annual re-franking arrangements, it was considered that the annual retention fee should be at a lower level than the current re-franking fee of £55. Suggestions ranged from £50 to perhaps as low as £30. Whilst the current registry operations generate an annual surplus, this is then available to subsidise other SBBA activities.*
- (i) *(The Secretary) suggested that it might be better to introduce the accounting changes separately from the changes to create the player based system to avoid one very large change to registry rules and procedures occurring at the one time. It was therefore agreed that we should seek to implement the accounting changes with effect from 1 May 2009 with the other changes to be implemented from 1 November 2009."*

The Executive Committee approved all of these proposals, to be introduced on 1 May.

The Development Committee had proposed an amended fee structure of £10 for a new (28 day) registration, £40 for a new (3 day) registration, £5 for a transfer or re-registration, and the annual retention fee will be £50 per band, being a reduction on the existing £55 re-franking fee which it will replace.

John Gilmour asked how difficult it would be to change photos on cards. It was explained that the plastic card system was still some years away. However, it was felt that changing cards on a plastic system should be reasonably straightforward as equipment would be available to achieve laminating etc.

Following some recent cases, the Development Committee intends to undertake a review of the Substitute Player rules. It was acknowledged that the existing rules were designed to deal with a situation arising on the day of the contest and did not really cover a situation where a problem was known to exist some time before the contest. The members of the Development Committee have agreed that what is required is a rule which balances assisting a band faced with a problem of this nature, with ensuring that other bands in the contest are not unfairly disadvantaged.

Tom Allan advised that SBBA's new Constitution had now been formally accepted by OSCR.

(c) Annual Census

Alan McLaren advised that Annual Census returns are still awaited from 42 bands which is rather disappointing as the information is very important for taking issues forward with the Arts Council and other grant providers. The information gathered also provides important statistics and evidence of particular membership trends for brass banding in Scotland. All members were asked to encourage all bands to complete and return this important form.

(d) External Liaison

George Burt reported that we were still to hear back formally from the BFBB following the recent meeting of representatives of the various registries. It is anticipated that they may be delaying writing pending their own forthcoming AGM when they may seek agreement of their own members on certain changes which were agreed at the registry meeting. It was agreed that Alan Edmond would attend the BFBB AGM, as he would be in the vicinity at that time, but strictly in the role of an observer.

5 FINANCIAL REPORT

(a) Accounts

The accounts and a report had been previously circulated by the Treasurer, Gerry Simonis, who raised some issues for discussion

There seemed to be an absence of a budget to meet costs in developing a new registry system. Alan McLaren explained that the present changes were within the existing "paper based" system. There would be development costs in preparing the proposed new "plastic card" registry system but that would be several years yet, and funds could be made available from the infrastructure support grant or any equivalent grant in the future to meet such costs.

The committee had made a decision to charge a £200 entry fee for the Open 2009 that included 30 band tickets. The Treasurer was concerned that this represents a further shortfall of £10 per entry, the previous arrangement being that it was formerly £170 + £40 per 30 tickets. Peter Fraser explained that the previous fee of £170 included tickets.

Besson will now give half of their sponsorship in kind, and the Treasurer was concerned that the Scottish Open 2009 could run at a deficit of around £5,500. Peter Fraser explained that a number of measures would be taken to balance the budget, including a concert by a major band on the Friday evening. This concert would be aimed at a non-brass band audience as bands would generally be rehearsing on that Friday evening. This proposed concert would take place in Perth Theatre, but would require further investigation before finalising details. Peter Fraser advised members that Fountain City Band from USA had intimated they would be coming to the contest and it was possible that they, together with another major band, could be incorporated into the concert programme together with another "non-brass" crowd puller.

The 2009 deficits on the Solos' and the Scottish Championships are likely to be around £5,400. Peter Fraser pointed out that not all of the income had yet been received for the 2009 events. He felt that the deficits highlighted in the Treasurer's report, whilst valid and sensible to raise, related to overall event losses, and showed the 'real' cost of the entire event. However, he felt that it provided a somewhat pessimistic picture as monies had still to come in, but he very much appreciated the warning signals from the Treasurer.

Considering SBBA's stated aim to host the European Championship in the foreseeable future, from a financial point of view it was evident that SBBA may never be in a position to be the host nation unless they ring-fence some resources for such an event.

The Treasurer pointed out a new item in the financial statement "Asset and Stock acquisitions" at £888.64. This related to: £290.09 James Abbot Trophy; -£169.90 Just Music – Music Scores for Library; £351.70 25 CD's for resale – "Regionals 2009;" £ 74.95 Just Music – Music Scores for Library. He further pointed out that the music scores were previously charged to "Scottish 2009" but these scores do not in fact relate to the Scottish Championships 2009. At the financial year-end, he proposed to introduce these and past acquisitions to the balance sheet. He is also considering headings such as Trophies, Music Library, Stock for re-sale and Inventory (printer, laptop, communication equipment etc).

In addition, he advised that last year's independent examiner would unfortunately not be available this year. The committee will need to identify a replacement at the earliest opportunity and he recommended that this subject be an agenda item until resolved. This was agreed

The Treasurer had prepared a draft Budget for 2009/2010. It was agreed to add this to the next agenda.

The Scottish Arts Council claim for the 2nd year of the YDS has been completed and will shortly be submitted. A sum of £1,460 has been added to the Open Youth Championship 2008 section. The final result has turned into a surplus of £802.

During the Scottish Championships 2009 he had taken the opportunity with the help of Steven Gray to record the stock situation together with the agreed resale margins that apply. Consequently the Gerry Simonis will shortly be distributing around £400 to member bands as their share of the sold CD's and tapes and other stock items. The stock value, based on their purchase price, of items owned by SBBA is £2,928.

The treasurer had reservation as to whether all the stock will ever be sold. In his opinion this represents a hidden deficit. Steven Gray's other stock items are CD's and tapes handed in by bands for re-sale. The resale value of these items is £4,670 at present. The treasurer voiced his concern that there is no formal procedure to monitor these sales and he suggests that in Steven Gray's interest, that such a formal procedure should be agreed at the earliest opportunity. It was agreed that this will be added to the agenda of the Executive Committee until resolved.

The President said that the narrative report provided by the Treasurer for the current meeting was very useful in fully understanding the present financial position of the Association. Moreover, everyone valued the issues that the treasurer had very properly flagged. Whilst SBBA resources stand at almost £40,000, not including reserved funds from the Arts Council, it was important that all events, wherever possible, are run to at least break-even, as a matter of good financial governance.

(b) Grant Funding

The President advised he had written to the Scottish Arts Council asking for a meeting with regard to discussing enhanced core funding for SBBA which was vital to take the organisation forward on a professional footing. He pointed out, however, that SAC are currently merging with another organisation, so things may take somewhat longer than he would wish, but it was important to have additional core funding on the agenda.

6 **DISCIPLINARY MATTERS**

Peter Fraser had chaired a recent appeal hearing. The sub-committee reviewed all the facts and decided to substitute a fine of £100 plus a letter of censure to the band in question. In addition they were given advice about their administration, which was one of the reasons for the problem occurring. He further reported that the band had since accepted the revised finding and paid the fine and reported that their administration was now in safe hands. The matter was therefore finalised.

7 **EDUCATION / YOUTH**

(a) Child Protection

Jennifer Fox (Child Protection) advised that there had been no progress with the work of child protection at the recent Scottish championships. Child Protection seems to be a very slow process and this is causing frustration with member bands.

(b) Youth Development Report

The SBBA Youth Championships photo-booklet is now ready with 500 copies ordered and a formal launch will take place on Brass Band Day in Glasgow on 26th April 2009. 8

PUBLICITY & COMMUNICATIONS

(a) Brass Band Week

BB week takes place from 23 – 31 May 2009 and supporting information would be sent out to bands. George Burt advised that only 15 events representing 8 bands were currently listed on the SBBA website. Even one event per band would make an enormous contribution to the success of the week.

He reiterated his concern that bands were not taking this opportunity to give bands a high profile. It was important to have an active and successful BB Week 2009 which promoted brass bands and helps to recruit new members and helpers. Posters would be sent out to bands to encourage them to get involved.

(b) Website

George Burt hoped that the website could be developed so that members could post information on the site. John Martin was not at the meeting. It was intimated that one firm could set up a web site, including at least one page for each band, and it would be updated by either the web firm or SBBA officials or nominated individuals. The SBBA web must be kept up to date and taken forward as a major means of communications between the executive and bands.

(b) Publicity Officer

It was agreed that this issue be taken forward in early course. There was a distinct lack of publicity about the Scottish Championships in local papers in Dundee and district.

This issue must remain a key priority for SBBA.

9 EVENTS

(a) 2009 SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

The President thanked Peter Fraser, Events Organiser, for his outstanding organisation of the Scottish Championships and thanked everyone involved for their work on the day. He pointed out that the stage management was first class. Jennifer Fox, who assisted on the stage, praised the bands for their professional approach, and together with Carrie Boax, they felt that having trained percussionists on stage to oversee changeovers was very helpful indeed.

There was concern about the time taken from the end of each section until the adjudicators finalised the results. In one case this was almost 1 hour. This would be raised with adjudicators to see how this could be resolved as audiences tended to be very frustrated at this inexplicable delay.

Several bands had again asked about pre-draws. Some bands left at 6 am to attend but did not play until 1.00 pm. With the cost of transport, this was an important issue. It was agreed that this issue would be looked at. Another issue raised was that several bands wished the championships be played regularly in the Perth Concert Hall which they felt was an excellent venue.

Overall the championships were a great success and the President intimated his thanks to all the bands for their co-operation and to everyone who contributed to a successful weekend of banding.

(b) 2009 WEST LOTHIAN FESTIVAL

Peter Fraser advised that the West Lothian Festival would be held in the Brian Duguid Auditorium in Livingstone on Sunday 7, 14 and 28 June, all starting at 6.30 pm. The adjudicators were Brian Harper and Bruce Fraser, with Ray Farr adjudicating the final on 28th. The World of Brass grading tables are used to invite the top ranking bands to take part. The Scottish Co-op had to withdraw as they had won the competition on three occasions in a row. This rule was being reviewed after the contest this year.

(c) 2009 SCOTTISH OPEN, CHALLENGE SHIELD, CHALLENGE CUP AND SCOTTISH YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIPS

This is being held in Perth Concert hall on 28/29 November 2009 and invitations had gone out to the first six bands in the Championship section, the first two placed bands in the First Section and various English and Welsh bands. It was likely that there would be very strong competition this year. Peter Fraser advised that he felt 17 bands was the maximum that could reasonably be catered for. He proposed there would only be one presentation ceremony at the end of the day. The change-over between bands in 2008 was very poor and this was an issue that had to be addressed on the day. There will be a change-over in adjudicators this year between each section to reduce the time between sections. He advised there would be 8 bands in the Shield and 8 bands in the Cup. The Shield is for 1st and 2nd and the Cup for 3rd and 4th sections.

As regards the Shield and Cup, after taking account of bands which have automatically qualified through their results at the Scottish Championships, there are currently 4 spare places in each competition. Following discussion, it was agreed that the allocation of the remaining places would be by means of a ballot of bands indicating they wish to enter. It was confirmed that bands relegated from the Championship Section are entitled to seek a place in the Shield. It was agreed that the closing date for bands to indicate they wish to enter the Shield or the Cup will be 1st July. The ballot will take place at the August SBBA meeting.

John Gilmour advised that details of the Youth Championships will shortly be circulated to all 32 bands. The presentation of prizes will take place after the first two sections and after the final two sections. John Gilmour will provide a timetable for the next Executive Committee Meeting.

(d) **2010 SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIPS**

This will be held in Rothes Hall, Glenrothes on 13/14 March 2010. Fife Council had not yet made any decision about support and sponsorship. It was decided to go ahead with Rothes Hall as it was important to have a venue in place now.

GRADINGS

Gradings are due to be set following the Scottish Championships. John Martin had passed some information to the Secretary but the President felt that a full table fully detailing how each grading score has been arrived at was required. This also required to take into account the bands which have dropped out of the system and become non contesting. Alan McLaren agreed to examine and prepare the grading tables based on the current rules..

10 **REGISTRATION**

(a) **Registration Figures**

There were currently 1793 registered players. After a quiet period, the Registry has been busy over recent weeks.

(b) **Exceptions to and breaches of registration rules**

Nothing to report.

11 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(a) **Change of Name**

Secretary, Tom Allan, advised that Annan Town APD will now be known as Annan Town due to losing their sponsorship from APD.

(b) **SBBA Scarves**

Julie Sanderson agreed to deal with this issue, and advise the President or Vice President of costings.

12 **DATE AND VENUE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The next meeting will be on 17 May in Howden Centre, Livingston at 10.30am. Other previously agreed meeting dates during 2009 are: 2 August; 4 October.