

British Parachute Association

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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 21 June 2011 at 1205

at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Adrian Bond	-	Communications Chairman
	Alex Busby		
	Paul Applegate		
	Kieran Brady		
	Craig Poxon		
In attendance:	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	John Hitchen	-	NCSO
	Kirsty Kelly	-	Archant Dialogue (from item 27)
	John Page		
	Martin Soulsby	-	Chairman of Council (from item 31)
	Phil Sumner	-	Archant Dialogue
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	Secretary-General
Apology for absence:	Liz Ashley		Editor, Skydive Magazine

Item Minute

23/11 Minutes

The Committee noted that the minutes (circulated) of the meeting held on Tuesday 19 April 2011 had already been approved by the Committee, ratified electronically by the Council and published on the BPA website <http://www.bpa.org.uk/minutes>

24/11 Matters arising

24.1 Unauthorised use of the BPA logo (minute 14.1)

The Committee noted that Edward Carroll BPA 116942 had, to date, not removed the BPA logo from his website www.vegasextremeskydiving.com where it was being used without authorisation. His application for membership renewal had therefore been held pending resolution of this matter (89.1/10 of the Council meeting on 7 December 2010). Since the last meeting, the Office had also written to his Internet Service Provider to point out that use of the BPA logo without authorisation was misrepresentation and an infringement of copyright and that the BPA might take legal action on this basis. No reply had been received, but the BPA logo on the website in question had recently been updated to the BPA 50 logo.

As Vegas Extreme Skydiving was a USPA Group Member, the Committee decided to seek the assistance of the USPA in resolving the matter.

Action: BPA Office

[Note: The BPA logo was removed from the Vegas Extreme Skydiving website before the letter to USPA had been written.]

As a separate point, the Committee noted that a UK-based website was believed to be using out-of-date information about an examiner, who was no longer current. The Office would ask for the information to be updated.

Action: BPA Office

24.2 Golden tickets (minute 15.1)

The Chairman reported on the 50 Golden Tickets for a year's free membership that had been circulated at random as an insert to the April issue of the Mag.

32 tickets had been redeemed
10 ticket holders had not renewed
8 members had renewed without using their ticket
total 50

After discussion, the Chairman said he would ask Kirsty Kelly kindly to contact the eight members who had renewed without using their Golden Ticket to try to find out the reason why. Had they received their Mag? Had they found a Golden Ticket inside? If so, why had they not used it? In cases of mitigating circumstances, the Committee would consider each case on a case-by-case basis.

Action: Chairman / Kirsty Kelly

The Chairman reminded the Committee that, as previously agreed and publicised in an e-newsletter, any unused Golden Tickets would be raffled at the AGM 2012.

24.3 Mag downloads (minute 15.4)

Phil Sumner (Web Developer, Archant Dialogue) tabled a log of Mag downloads, as requested at the previous meeting. It showed that of a total of 204 downloads during the period 1 March to 20 June 2011 inclusive, the Starter Mag and the April 2011 issues had each been downloaded 40 times, followed by the February 2011 issue which had been downloaded 31 times and the June 2011 issue 16 times. Craig Poxon asked whether any information could be obtained about whether the downloads were to different ISP addresses, and their geographical location, UK or overseas. Phil Sumner said he would check whether or not this information was available. The Chairman thanked Phil Sumner for the log and asked that an updated log of Mag downloads, with country if possible, should routinely be included in future editorial reports.

Action: Archant Dialogue

Alex Busby asked whether a provision might be introduced for members to opt to receive their Mag digitally instead of as a hard copy through the post. The Chairman said that the economics of the Mag were based on a print run to cover all full members because advertising rates were different in print and digital media.

24.4 Stocks of old Starter Mag (minute 16)

The Chairman reported that he believed most of last year's stock of Starter Mags had now been used up.

25/11 Budget

The Chairman reported that the areas of work that this Committee oversaw were all on budget and there were currently no significant variances that needed attention.

26/11 New BPA website

A link to the new BPA website had been sent to Council Members and Drop Zones inviting them to try out the functionality of the site. Phil Sumner (Archant Dialogue) said the feedback this had provided had been useful, as had his visit to the BPA Office on Thursday 16 June to train BPA staff to administer of the content of the website.

Rob Crane of Archant Dialogue was working on sales of banner advertising space on the new website, which had a different size of banner than the current site, and this had raised an adverse comment from one DZ Operator.

Regarding policy on the acceptance of advertisements, after discussion, the Committee agreed to retain the current policy on advertising on the BPA website only (which had never applied to the Mag website) which was, inter alia, that skydiving-related advertisements had to be for the safe enjoyment of skydiving in the UK. This precluded the advertisement on the BPA website of overseas non-affiliated Drop Zones, or skydiving courses or holidays outside the UK. The rationale was that the BPA website was widely used as a source of authoritative information ahead of people's initial investment in the sport.

The Committee agreed the go-live date of the new BPA website as Monday 4 July 2011. The Office would write to the current web hosts to ask them to assist in transfer of the BPA domain to Archant Dialogue.

Action: Archant Dialogue / BPA Office

27/11 Editorial Report

Kirsty Kelly (Archant Dialogue) highlighted the main sections of the Editorial Report that had been circulated with the agenda. The first in a series of five historical articles to celebrate the BPA's 50th anniversary this year, starting with the BPA's first decade in the 1960s, had been well received.

A new advertising schedule had been put in place to allow sufficient time for Liz Ashley to check the content of advertisements.

Liz Ashley (Editor) had earlier today e-mailed the Committee with an updated complimentary Mag mailing list. Kieran Brady asked that Liz Ashley should contact him to go through the list, and Tony Butler said the Office had not received a copy of the updated list. The Chairman asked that Liz Ashley should please contact Kieran Brady and the Office about it, prior to circulating a further updated list before the next meeting.

Action: Editor

28/11 BPA e-Newsletter

In advance of the meeting, the Chairman had circulated a quotation and a design mock-up from Archant Dialogue to produce the BPA e-Newsletter. This was discussed. The Committee considered that, at a cost of £450 per issue, it was too expensive. Paul Applegate said that the design mock-up looked professional, but he missed the personal touch. The Chairman said the way forward was to look for other methods to improve the present arrangements for preparing and transmitting the BPA e-Newsletter.

Craig Poxon reported that only about 50% of the last three or four e-mail Newsletters had got through. At least in part, this was likely to be due to the technical issue that the BPA did not have its own custom from address. Such an address would allow members to flag it as trusted, which would reduce the risk of BPA e-Newsletters being filtered out as spam. Craig Poxon therefore proposed, and Alex Busby seconded, a motion that the BPA should purchase a custom from address (such as bpa-news.org) for approximately £100. This address would then be used for our e-Newsletters by the company that Craig Poxon had engaged to transmit them on behalf of the BPA.

Carried unanimously

29/11 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011

The Committee reviewed progress in meeting this year's Action Plan targets.

29.1 Develop a communications plan

29.1.1 Communicate regularly with members by e-mail

Achieved

29.1.2 Run more regular shorter membership surveys each focusing on a specific theme

The Chairman reported that 226 responses had been received to this year's online BPA membership survey. This had been a lower rate of response than in previous online surveys. The survey had asked a number of general questions, followed by some relating specifically to competitions. The survey results would assist the BPA Council and its Committees with future planning, and would be of particular interest to the Competitions Committee.

Alex Busby said that with only 5% of the membership responding to the survey, he did not see that the responses could be taken as representative. The Chairman said that we had to assume that members with strong opinions one way or the other would have taken the opportunity express them by means of the survey. Paul Applegate said the response to the general questions could be summed up by 'Membership costs too much, and there are too many rules.' The Chairman said that the cost of membership had actually gone down over the last few years, as the cost of insurance had reduced after a big increase a few years earlier. Kieran Brady saw the low response as signifying that most members were broadly happy.

Craig Poxon noted that the same issues came up in the free response part of the survey every time. Although most if not all of them had been answered in the Magazine over the years, with new members coming in the sport all the time, there was a need to answer the most frequently

asked questions in a way that could easily be referenced. To this end, he offered to set out the most often asked questions, with answers, to go on an 'FAQ' page on the new BPA website. The Chairman thanked Craig Poxon for this helpful initiative.

Action: Craig Poxon

29.1.3 Publish campaign posters to send to DZs on (i) BPA information; (ii) safety

Achieved

29.2 Contact stakeholders on developing a marketing and retention strategy for the sport

Martin Soulsby was continuing to progress this as Chairman of Council, and had broadened it to cover future BPA Strategy, on which he would report at the meeting of the full Council tonight.

Action: Chairman of Council

29.3 Publish a BPA Skydiving calendar 2011

Achieved

29.4 Re-apply for a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant to create an historical image archive of parachuting in the UK

There was no further update to report.

Action: Chairman of Council

30/11 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012

30.1 Enhance media and public relations

The Chairman said that work on this item would start by arranging a meeting with Archant Dialogue to leverage their expertise.

Action: Chairman

30.2 Celebrate the BPA's 50th Anniversary 1961-2011

- The BPA 50 anniversary car sticker had been issued to members as an insert in the June 2011 issue of the Mag.

Completed

- The series of five articles would continue in the Mag, looking at the history of British skydiving in each of the BPA's five decades to date. The August Mag would reflect on the 1970s.

Action: Editor

- The Committee agreed to commission a signwriter to prepare an honours board listing the BPA Chairman of Council from foundation in 1961 to date. The names of future Chairmen could be added to this or a follow-on honours board, which would be ordered at the same time. In discussion, the Committee decided to adopt a format to include with each name, where applicable, military rank above lieutenant and any post-nominal letters for public awards, as held at the time of the individual's tenure as Chairman.

Action: BPA Office

30.3 Run an online BPA membership survey in spring 2012

The survey would be drafted nearer the time.

Action: February 2012 meeting

30.4 Research costs and issues in building a digital archive of the BPA Mag and, possibly, BPA minutes

Craig Poxon was progressing this target. He had already carried out some research, and had yesterday circulated a paper by e-mail, which included a number of quotations for different options for digital archiving of the Mag. Not all Committee members had yet had an opportunity to consider the paper, and the Chairman asked all to do so by the next meeting, at which he also asked Craig Poxon to put forward his recommendations. He thanked Craig Poxon for the work he had carried out in reviewing the various options and their associated costs. John Page advised that we should opt for the system that offered the best optical character recognition (OCR) and search facility our budget would allow.

Action: Craig Poxon

31/11 AGM

31.1 Reebok Stadium, Bolton, January 2012

The Chairman reported that the Premiership fixtures for next season had been announced last week. The good news was that there was no match at the Reebok Stadium on **Saturday 28**

January 2012. The Committee was content with this date for the BPA AGM and would put it to the full Council tonight.

Action: Recommend to Council

A meeting of the AGM working party had been held this morning. Alex Busby was approaching potential seminar presenters, and he gave a summary of those he had contacted or would contact, and the range of topics. The Committee was pleased with the breadth of topics, although it was of course unlikely that all invitees would agree to give a presentation. Craig Poxon asked Alex Busby to enquire if speakers, once confirmed, could provide their own cameraperson to record their presentation if at all possible – the BPA would provide an upload facility to the web. If not, Craig Poxon would endeavour to record as many seminars as possible with his own camera.

Action: Alex Busby

31.2 January 2013

The Chairman reported that he was in the process of finalising negotiations for good rates with the Leicester Marriott Hotel. He was awaiting final confirmation and asked the Committee to confirm Leicester as the AGM 2013 venue. The Committee did so by way of a recommendation to the full Council, noting that in the recent online membership survey (minute 29.1.2), some 70% of respondents were happy with changing the venue each year.

Action: Recommend to Council

32/11 Dates of future meetings

At 1200 noon at the BPA Office, Glen Parva, Leicester, on Tuesdays 16 August, 11 October & 6 December 2011.

The meeting closed at 1425.