

British Parachute Association

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Development Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 21 February 2012 at 1530

at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF

Present:	Craig Poxon Paul Applegate Adrian Bond Kieran Brady Marc Fletcher John Page Martin Soulsby James Swallow	Development Chair Chair of Council
In attendance:	Liz Ashley Tony Butler Debbie Carter Jon Gretton John Hitchen Martin Shuttleworth Graham Spicer	Editor, Skydive the Mag Technical Officer Treasurer (from item 5.4) Financial Administrator NCSO Secretary-General Archivist
Apology for absence	Phil Sumner	Web Developer, Archant Dialogue

Item Minute

01/12 Minutes

The Committee noted that the minutes (circulated) of the meeting held on Tuesday 6 December 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>

02/12 Committee composition and terms of reference 2012

The voting members of the Development Committee 2012 were: Craig Poxon (Chair, elected by the Council); Paul Applegate, Adrian Bond, Kieran Brady, Marc Fletcher, John Page and James Swallow. Co-opted, ex officio (non-voting): Debbie Carter (Treasurer).

The Chairman welcomed new members Marc Fletcher and James Swallow to their first meeting.

The Committee's Terms of Reference, set out on BPA Form 174, had been circulated with the agenda, and were noted.

03/12 Matters arising from the minutes

3.1 BPA credit card – Centres prepared to display leaflets (minute 48.1)

The Office had e-mailed Clubs & Centres to ask whether they would be prepared to display promotional leaflets for the BPA credit card. 11 had replied that they were willing. Adrian Bond would arrange for leaflets to be sent to the BPA Office for distribution to these Centres.

Action: Adrian Bond

3.2 Updated data protection statement on membership forms (minute 48.2)

The data protection statement had been updated on forms for the new membership year from 1 April 2012.

Completed

3.3 New computer system at BPA Office (minute 48.4)

John Page reported that the new computer software and hardware had now been installed and was up and running at the BPA Office, to replace the former, life-expired, system that had been becoming unreliable. A new arrangement for automatic offsite backup had been put in place, with an annual fee that was lower than the previous arrangement with the old backup system. Although we would lose a few months on early termination of the annual contract for the old backup service, the new backup was better suited to our needs and it had therefore been prudent to use it from the start of the new computer system.

Completed

3.4 BPA 50 Years Award (minute 48.6)

Liz Ashley (Editor, Skydive the Mag) reported that there was an item in the February 2012 issue of the Mag about this new award. It was open to application by those who had been jumping for 50 years or more. Application was made through CCIs, who would verify the applicant's claim to the award before recommending it to the BPA Office. The Committee noted that to date, no member had yet applied for the award. To help to spread the word about its availability, the Committee asked the Office to e-mail all CCIs.

Action: BPA Office

The Committee asked that this be kept as a standing item on the agenda until the first BPA 50 Years Award had been made.

Action: BPA Office

3.5 Improving feedback to DZOs meeting (minute 51.1)

The Committee agreed with a suggestion from the Office that the annual BPA meeting for DZOs should start with a report back on the action points and referrals set out in the notes of its previous meeting.

Agreed

04/12 Allocation of, and reports on, areas of responsibility

4.1 UK Sport / Sport England / Sport+Recreation Alliance

The Chairman had nothing to report on the activities of the above bodies that were particularly relevant to our sport.

The Chairman then invited Marc Fletcher kindly to take over from him responsibility for monitoring the regular e-mails and other communications received at the BPA Office from these sports bodies for any content that may be relevant to our sport. Marc Fletcher accepted the invitation, and the Chairman thanked him.

Action: BPA Office & Marc Fletcher

4.2 Insurance

Tony Butler (Technical Officer) confirmed a decrease in insurance premium of 5% effective from the start of the new membership year on 1 April 2012. He was, as always, maintaining a watching brief on insurance and was pleased to report that all was well at present.

The Chairman said that, as this was the first Committee meeting of the year, it was necessary to confirm the composition of the Insurance Subcommittee for the year. Last year it had comprised himself as Chair, Kieran Brady and Paul Moore. The Chairman and Kieran Brady confirmed their willingness to continue, and they believed the same was true of Paul Moore (subject to confirmation with him). The Committee approved this composition of its Insurance Subcommittee, subject of course to ratification by Council in the normal manner.

Approved

Note: Subsequent to the meeting, Paul Moore confirmed to the Chair that he would be pleased to continue as a member of the Insurance Subcommittee.]

05/12 Development Action Plan: 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012

5.1 Go live with the new BPA website and database

The new website went live in July 2011. See minute 3.4 of today's meeting of the Communications Committee reference development of the new database.

Ongoing

5.2 Develop a resource package for safety events at DZs

This target had now been discontinued consequent on a lack of need being identified, as Clubs & Centres already had access to adequate resources to run the variety of different safety events that were offered at various Affiliated Centres.

Discontinued

The Committee had agreed at its last meeting (minute 50.2/11) to take forward promotion of safety by means of canopy handling coaching roadshows designed particularly for those between their A and B certificates. See minute 6.2.

5.3 Offer Drop Zones a course for first-aiders

Three bids to run a one-day first-aid course suitable for staff at Drop Zones had been circulated in advance. Two had been bespoke bids, the third, from the Red Cross, off-the shelf courses in first-aid for sport. The Committee considered the three bids. After discussion, Kieran Brady proposed, and John Page seconded, a motion to settle on EMC Medical Services of Blewbury, Oxfordshire, as the preferred bidder.

Carried unanimously

The Office offered to seek to negotiate with the bidder on the cost of the course.

The Committee asked the Office to seek to make arrangements with the successful bidder for a trial course for evaluation purposes. Instead of the normal maximum of 12 course members, the evaluation course would have possibly 6 to 8. Among them would be invitees such as the Technical Officer, NCSO, Medical Adviser (if available) and others with a particular interest in this area. The evaluation course would provide feedback to be given to the course delivery team to enable any fine-tuning before the course was rolled out to be offered to staff at Affiliated Drop Zones.

Action: BPA Office

The BPA's insurers, Jelf Manson Insurance Brokers and Liberty Mutual Underwriters, had previously agreed in principle to fund the first run of this course as part of their sponsorship of BPA risk management activities. Once outline costs and arrangements for the course had been settled with the selected contractor, the Office would put this information to the insurers to ask them kindly to confirm their position on sponsorship.

Action: BPA Office

5.4 Update the BPA Articles of Association to reflect the BPA in the 21st century

Updated Articles of Association had been adopted by the AGM on Saturday 28 January 2012.

Completed

5.5 Research establishing and maintaining a BPA archive

The Chairman reported that Andrew Hilton and Graham Spicer, the BPA Archivists, had successfully launched the BPA Archive Project at the AGM on Saturday 28 January 2012. Launching the Archive Project on the final day of celebrations of the BPA's 50th Anniversary had seemed the obvious thing to do. It had meant, however, that we had not only completed the current Action Plan year's target to 'research establishing and maintaining a BPA archive' but had progressed this as far as launching the BPA Archive Project. It was now therefore appropriate to start considering objectives, and a budget, for the project. To this end, the Chairman had invited the Archivists to today's meeting. Andrew Hilton worked outside the UK and so could not be present; however the meeting was pleased to welcome Graham Spicer to represent them both.

Graham Spicer said that his and Andrew Hilton's objective at the AGM, in the Mag and on the BPA website, had been to raise the profile of the BPA Archive Project. Now it was necessary to define its scope and associated funding.

The Archivists had in mind the deliverable of an accessible, searchable, online resource. They envisaged this as a dedicated website, linked to the BPA website. The cornerstone of the project would be to convert back issues of the BPA Mag, starting with its first issue in 1964, into a searchable digital format. Initially, the Archivists had in mind to scan at least the first 20 years of Mags (1964-84). The desire for searchability presented some technical challenges on which the Chair of Development had already carried out some useful research. This was the best starting point because back issues of the BPA Mag provided a ready-made narrative of the history of the sport through its contemporaneous reporting.

Graham Spicer said that he and Andrew Hilton would provide a regular update on progress to the Mag, the BPA website and to this Committee.

Other strands of the BPA Archive Project would include the following.

1. Create a definitive list of all BPA Affiliated Drop Zones that had ever existed, with key information about each. So far, more than 100 had been identified.
2. Collect and compile the biographies of key individuals within the sport.
3. Compile lists of key office holders such as Chairmen of Council, etc.
4. Collect, and where appropriate and budget allowed, digitize images loaned or given by members, of which there were some 1,000 so far, including several reels of film, some from the 1960s. There were so many images that it would be necessary to use metadata to categorise them by category and subcategory in order to assure structured access to this material once it had been assimilated in the archive.
5. Discuss a draft archive site map with a web developer – possibly with Archant Dialogue (who had constructed the BPA and Mag websites).
6. Collect and compile information and data on award and trophy winners in competitions and of annual awards.
7. Collect and compile a UK list of sport parachuting records - there was already a page on the BPA website for this, <http://www.bpa.org.uk/member/uk-records/>

During the next two months, the targets were to:

1. Document the scope of the project as far as it was known.
2. Progress appointing a host of, and developing a draft of, the BPA Archive Project website.
3. Evaluate supplier solutions for scanning back issues of the Mag.
4. Digitize historic video content.
5. Continue to acquire archive images and video.
6. Progress compilation of an initial list of all the BPA Affiliated Drop Zones that have ever existed.
7. Progress compilation of an initial subject list for key biographies of people within the sport.

Graham Spicer said that he and Andrew Hilton had made the following assumptions.

- If there was a lack of funding for direct costs (scanning, website, etc), this would lead to lack of progress.
- Older material was of the most interest in stimulating curiosity amongst the membership.

- There was a lack of consolidated BPA records, including lists of competitions trophy winners over the years.

Marc Fletcher suggested adding another strand, the cost of a jump ticket over the years. Martin Soulsby suggested that among the lists compiled should be those of Council, staff, competitors at the Nationals, members who represented our country at class 1 international meets, scores, trophies, instructor of the year, new skydiver of the year, instructor courses and ratings, and Life Members.

The Chairman thanked Graham Spicer on behalf of the Committee. He suggested that Graham Spicer and Andrew Hilton should talk to Archant Dialogue about possible arrangements for a website for the BPA Archive Project.

Action: BPA Archivists

The Chairman said he had discussed reporting arrangements with Graham Spicer. With Skype and e-mail, this should be straightforward.

Graham Spicer and Andrew Hilton were both BPA members who were generously giving their time and expertise to the BPA Archive Project on a voluntary basis. However, there would be costs payable to external contractors for services such as for scanning, digitization and website hosting and development. The Chairman then asked Graham Spicer to estimate some of these costs of the Archive Project. Graham Spicer replied that he estimated scanning back issues of the Mag would cost somewhere between £3,500 and £5,000, and scanning old film (which needed to be digitized to preserve it, as the film was unstable) was also expected to cost around £500.

There followed a long discussion about how the budget should be set and allocated. Debbie Carter (Treasurer) suggested the mechanism that the Committee should recommend a budget amount for the BPA Archive Project to Council, and for this funding to be allocated to one or more Committees, which would release it and account for it as the project progressed. She said that a figure of, say, £10,000 equated to only £200 per year for the BPA's 50 year history. Kieran Brady said it was important to budget for particular items, otherwise it would be too open-ended. Martin Soulsby therefore suggested that the budget should be allocated to the Development Committee, who would hold the purse strings and release funding in tranches for specific strands of the project, such as scanning and digitization.

James Swallow noted that, at the meeting of the Communications Committee immediately preceding this meeting, there had been talk of possibly making the Mag website a section of the BPA website. He noted that another website was now being proposed for the BPA Archive Project. Martin Soulsby said that the Archive Project might chime with the Mag website, which already had an archive section with digital back issues of the Mag going back to June 2005.

The Committee noted Graham Spicer's advice that there would be an ongoing annual cost of maintaining the archive once it had been established. At this early stage, it would probably not be wise to seek to set a specific budget figure for annual maintenance.

Marc Fletcher proposed that this Committee should recommend that the identified costs should be reported to Council and that a straw poll be taken at tonight's meeting of the full Council on the amount of funding to be allocated to the BPA Archive Project.

Kieran Brady made a counter-proposal, seconded by Paul Applegate, for this Committee to make a recommendation to the Council that the total spend on the BPA Archive Project should be up to £10K (irrespective of whether this was over one or more financial years), plus a lesser annual amount, to be arranged, for maintenance of the archive. With this went a proviso that the BPA reserved the option to consider whether or not separately to fund any possible add-ons or extras at a later date, on a case-by-case basis. The Treasurer urged the Committee to make a clear recommendation to Council, and confirmed that this proposal did meet the criterion of clarity.

Carried unanimously

The Committee was asking for Council to this budget to the Development Committee now so that the Committee could authorise expenditure on the Archive Project in controlled tranches commensurate with meeting essential direct costs in establishing the archive.

The Chairman thanked Graham Spicer for attending the meeting and apologised for the long and convoluted discussion on budget, which nevertheless came to a clear and unanimous recommendation in the end, which would go forward to tonight's meeting of the full Council. The Office would advise Graham Spicer and Andrew Hilton of the outcome of the Council meeting.

Action: BPA Office

5.6 Investigate means of video conferencing for use between meetings

See minute 32.6 of the meeting on 16 August 2011.

No further action

5.7 Consult with Clubs & Centres about the possible development of an online system for Provisional Student Memberships

Following consultation at the meeting of Drop Zone Owners and Operators held on Tuesday 1 November 2011, the Committee had agreed at its last meeting (minute 50.7/11) that the development of an online system for Provisional Student Memberships would be a Development Action Plan target for 2012-3. See minute 6.1 below.

Take forward for Action Plan 2012/3

06/12 Development Action Plan: 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013

This would be finalised at the April meeting, to recommend to the Council that evening. The Committee's plans so far in formulating the targets were as follows.

6.1 Develop of an online system for Provisional Student Memberships

See minute 5.7 above.

Confirmed target for Action Plan 2012-3

6.2 Develop safe canopy handling coaching roadshows (covering CH1, CH2, JM1, etc) designed particularly for those between their A and B certificates

See minute 5.2. John Hitchen (NCSO) said he believed that this was something Clubs & Centres should be providing, and that it should not be a call on BPA funds in effect to subsidise a Centres' instructors. The Chairman said he believed it to be a valid Action Plan target because it supported one of Council's strategic goals, that of improving retention rates. Paul Applegate said it was the duty of Centres to look after their own students. James Swallow said he could see the BPA ending up paying local instructors to do the briefs. Paul Applegate said we had identified a problem, but not in his view an appropriate solution.

Alex Busby, who had been a member of this Committee last year, had kindly offered to progress this target, as it had evolved from the now aborted target he had been researching on providing resource material for safety events at Centres (minute 5.2). However, the Office pointed out that it believed it to be prudent, for reasons of communication and accountability, that a member of this year's Committee should take responsibility for the target. If they wished to work with others in progressing it, that was up to them. John Page offered to take responsibility for the development of this potential target, which would be further considered and at the next meeting, and the Committee agreed.

Action: Next meeting

6.3 Inaugurate BPA customer service award/s

Martin Soulsby outlined his idea of inaugurating a BPA customer service award or awards to help to highlight good practice by Clubs & Centres in this area. He had in mind inviting the submission of testimonials about exceptional service received at a Drop Zone that might be considered by a panel of judges such as, perhaps, the BPA Vice Presidents, from a shortlist of say five or six finalists. James Swallow suggested that it might be more appropriate to have an award not for Drop Zones but for individual members who had provided the exceptional service. Liz Ashley said an award for an individual would reflect well on their Centre. The Treasurer noted that the BCPA was full of members who could be 'mystery shoppers'.

Kieran Brady expressed concern that the effect of an award for Drop Zones might be to create the impression that one was better than another: what gave the BPA the right to do that? The

whole point of the BPA was that it set common national standards of safety and training, and gave parity of esteem to all its Affiliated Centres.

The Chairman said that the rationale underlying the idea of some kind of BPA customer service award was that we were seen as an Association that did nothing when members had poor experiences with customer service in the sport. Paul Applegate suggested, and the Committee agreed, to give further consideration to the idea of a BPA customer service award between now and the next meeting in April. Martin Soulsby said he would draft a paper.

Action: Chair of Council / Next meeting

6.4 'Buddy' programme

This was another possible target arising to support the Council's strategic goal of improving retention. The idea was to have a nominated member at each Drop Zone to be the first point of contact to help make new members feel welcome, by acting as their guide around the Centre introducing them to the people there. It would help to promote a spirit of community. Liz Ashley said successful models already existed elsewhere, such as 'sisters in skydiving' in the USA; and BCPA had used a similar kind of approach. Tony Butler suggested an article in the Mag to encourage members to talk to each other, and to 'adopt a student'. Paul Applegate said it was all part of Centres' front-of-house customer service.

The Chairman said the idea needed to be fleshed out, and asked those around the table to contact him outside the meeting if they might be interested in doing so.

Action: All Development Committee Members / Next meeting

07/12 Investments

The Chairman reported that one of the BPA's investments of reserves had matured last year and had needed to be reinvested. The Council had therefore established a Finance Group comprising the Chair of Council, Treasurer, Financial Administrator and Weed Stoodley, and had asked them to look at the possibility of investments that might have a higher element of risk to seek to improve what were now lower returns consequent on the economic downturn. Having, consulted an Independent Financial Adviser, as always on such matters, the Group had been advised that the low level of risk already being taken with BPA investments was appropriate for a body of the BPA's kind (as the Treasurer had always maintained). This would be reported to the full Council at its meeting tonight.

Action: Report to Council

08/12 Dates of next meetings

1530 on Tuesdays 17 April, 19 June, 14 August, 9 October and Thursday 13 December (revised date) at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF.

The meeting closed at 1825.