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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 8 December 2009 at 1210

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

Present:	Martin Soulsby Paul Applegate Adrian Bond Craig Poxon Grant Richards	Communications Chairman
In attendance:	Tony Butler Lesley Gale Zoë Francis-Cox Phil Sumner John Hitchen Paul Moore Martin Shuttleworth Weed Stoodley	Technical Officer Editor, Skydive Magazine Archant Dialogue (part item 64 only) Archant Dialogue (part item 64 only) NCSO Secretary-General

Item Minute

61/09 Minutes

The Committee noted that the minutes (circulated) of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 October 2009 had already been approved by the Committee, ratified electronically by the Council and published on the BPA website <http://www.bpa.org.uk/minutes>

62/09 Matters arising

62.1 Simon Ward's videotape material (minute 50.2)

This was now in store at the BPA Office.

62.2 Public relations policy (minute 56)

Adrian Bond was drafting a public relations policy for consideration at the next meeting.

Action: Adrian Bond

62.3 Volunteer (minute 58)

Craig Poxon would contact the volunteer member who had offered to help with communications.

Action: Craig Poxon

63/09 Editorial services contract 2010-2

Lesley Gale had countersigned the contract.

Contract signed

64/09 Archant Dialogue

Lesley Gale tabled a paper in which she proposed a new structure: to add the publishing house Archant Dialogue to the supplier set, working on advertising sales, a new Magazine website and magazine editorial.

Part of the proposal was for Archant Dialogue to create a bespoke new website for the Magazine. Zoë Francis-Cox and Phil Sumner from Archant Dialogue were in attendance to demonstrate a draft of the new website they had developed after discussion with Lesley Gale. Lesley Gale, as Editor, would be responsible for the content of the new website.

The Committee reviewed the draft new Mag website and discussed it with Lesley Gale and the representatives from Archant. Its features included an image gallery, video gallery, marketplace and an interactive diary. It would also collect material from online submissions for the printed Magazine. The new website would be fully integrated with the printed Magazine, as an online extension of it, offering additional space. Because of this, it would be possible to offset some costs of the new website, if Lesley Gale also contracted Archant Dialogue to provide sub-editing services. This would mean that she would no longer need to employ a full time assistant if the deal with Archant was agreed.

Archant would sell advertising both in the Magazine and on the Magazine website, taking over responsibility for sales from Warners Group Publications (WGP) as the Magazine Advertising Agency. Lesley Gale had negotiated the same deal as with WGP, that the advertising sales agency retained 30% of sales revenue, remitting 70% to the BPA. With Archant, if advertising sales in the Mag reached £16k or more per issue, the ratio would become 20% to Archant and 80% to the BPA. Warners would continue to print and distribute the Magazine.

Lesley Gale had negotiated the cost of creating the new Mag website down from £16k to £8k and the monthly hosting fee of £200 down to zero. This 50% reduction had been made possible due to economies of scale by placing additional work with Archant Dialogue, ie the advertising and editorial contracts. The new price compared favourably with Warners quote of £7.9k for construction of the site and a monthly hosting fee of £200. Although the costs of the two possible websites were now similar then the Archant site would be completely created for the BPA Magazine whereas the WGP site was template-based.

The Chairman thanked the representatives from Archant Dialogue for their attendance and they left.

Lesley Gale believed the Archant offer to be the best option for the BPA, and the Committee agreed. The Committee considered that the combination of the proven worth, specialist knowledge and membership approval of Lesley Gale as Editor, combined with the resources and publishing expertise of Archant Dialogue, would make a powerful and effective combination in taking forward BPA communications.

The Committee agreed in principle to proceed with Archant Dialogue. However, the cost of the new Mag website, at £8k, exceeded the remaining communications budget of £5980 for the current year. The Chairman would therefore raise this at Council and suggest a solution, such as for example bringing forward just over £2k from next year's communications budget.

Action: Chairman to refer to Council

Lesley Gale said she would arrange for Archant to forward draft contracts for the new Mag website, and for advertisement sales for both the Mag and the Mag website, to be sent to the BPA. The parties to these contracts would be BPA Ltd and Archant Dialogue Ltd. The go-live date for the new Mag website would be 1 April 2010.

Action: Lesley Gale

65/09 Editorial Report

Lesley Gale had circulated her Editorial Report. The letter about Team Satori, which had been published in the December issue, was discussed. Weed Stoodley said that part of the letter read almost like an advertisement. Lesley Gale said it was a valid letter submitted by a member who did not have any association with that team. She extended the discussion about the role of the letters page in these days of online newsgroups and social networking. The Committee believed that the letters page still served a useful purpose in publishing views whose that were likely to be of interest to the membership as a whole. But as there was too much material to accommodate in the space available in the printed Mag, additional content would be hosted online with the proposed new Mag website (minute 52 above).

Lesley Gale reported that there had been no incident reports in recent issues of the Mag. Part of the reason for this was that jumpers now often posted incident reports online to get an immediate discussion going. However, Liz Ashley would be taking over the incident reports section in the Mag from Rick Boardman in February or April next year, and she hoped that she would be able to make regular contributions. As always, these would be run by technical staff at the Office

before publication. Lesley Gale was also planning new sections on kit, a thought for the month, and product reviews.

66/09 Starter Mag 2010 reprint

The Chairman reported that the Starter Mag had been discussed at the BPA meeting for Drop Zone Owners and Operators held on 27 October 2009. Notes on the meeting had been circulated with the agenda. The Starter Mag was popular with DZs, and there were no specific issues with it. Four DZs did not currently hand out the Starter Mag to first-time jumpers. Three of these had indicated they would do so with the next issue. Consideration of the possibility of an electronic version of the Starter Mag had received a lukewarm response, the consensus being it was better to issue a hard copy Magazine, and that any e-version should be in addition to, not a replacement for, the printed version. The idea of an electronic Starter Mag being personalised to each DZ, for example by its cover photograph, was not an option that appeared to enthuse most DZs. One suggestion from the DZO meeting was that feedback should be sought from the readers of the Starter Mag, who were its target audience. Lesley Gale said she would consider how to do this - perhaps by an online survey with a prize. Also, Weed Stoodley had previously suggested that the successful media contact form for first-time jumpers, developed by Paul Ledden, should in future be included as an integral part of the Starter Mag

Action: Lesley Gale

Stocks of the current Starter Mag had run out because of an exceptional number being given out over the 2009 season, which had seen significantly higher jump numbers than last year. Lesley Gale tabled costs for publishing an updated Starter Mag in February 2010, so as to be in time for the new season.

After discussion, Paul Applegate proposed, and Grant Richards seconded, a motion to order a print run of 25,000 copies of the updated Starter Mag, at a cost of £4,500 from BPA running costs that would be expected to last for about a year.

Carried unanimously – Action: Lesley Gale

The Committee was minded, subject to confirmation nearer the time, to accept Lesley Gale's suggestion of making the Starter Mag an annual publication in future. An annual publication was likely to be more attractive to advertisers. The Chairman re-confirmed the Committee's standing decision not to take advertisements by overseas non-affiliated drop zones.

67/09 AGM

67.1 Saturday 16 January 2010

Adrian Bond reported that he had this morning completed negotiation of a 3-year contract with Istead Business Presentations to supply audio-visual services to the BPA AGM. This would save approximately £1k a year on av costs. Together with reductions he had secured with the hotel, and with commercial sponsorship of one of the seminar rooms, he estimated the overall savings on the 2010 AGM to be approximately £2.5k.

The Chairman noted that the amount saved was more than the budget shortfall for the new Mag website (minute 64) and might therefore provide another solution to the shortfall that he could propose to the full Council at its meeting tonight.

The Chairman reported that the five finalists from the 18 entries to the BPA Film Festival would be announced before Christmas. These five best entries would be shown at the Film Festival finals on AGM Day. Short clips would be sent in advance to regional television stations and the Film Festival would be publicised to local media as open to the public, together (subject to confirmation) with an 'Introduction to skydiving' session immediately afterwards.

Adrian Bond also confirmed that AGM attendees would receive a goodie bag.

67.2 Saturday 22 January 2011

The contract with the Barceló Daventry for the AGM 2011 was now nearly ready to sign. Adrian Bond would advise on whether or not he considered there was any further potential to negotiate for reduction in the room rate, etc, based on the contract with the Blackpool Hilton for 2010 (the room rates had already been negotiated to be lower than those at Blackpool).

Action: Adrian Bond & BPA Office

68/09 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

68.1 Feasibility study of high-level full-time marketing/communications/PR staff post

The Chairman and Adrian Bond would develop this idea.

Action: Chairman & Adrian Bond

68.2 Conduct online Membership Survey/s

Adrian Bond had called for questions for the online membership survey 2010 and was currently compiling a draft. The survey would be ready to go live in February 2010.

Lesley Gale said that Archant Dialogue would welcome data from a survey for reader profiling of the Magazine for advertisers. She tabled an annotated copy of the last such survey that had been carried out in 2002, and said the questions would be suitable to use in the 2010 survey. Lesley Gale said that Archant would be willing to offer an Olympus M58 camera for a prize draw of survey respondents. The responses would not be associated with any individual - only cumulative data would be compiled. Adrian Bond said he would consider how to incorporate the Mag reader profiling questions in the survey.

Action: Adrian Bond

68.3 Publish a BPA Skydiving calendar 2010

Target achieved

68.4 Apply for a Heritage Lottery Grant to create an historical image archive of British parachuting

The Chairman reported that the grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) had unfortunately not been successful on its first submission. HLF had provided helpful feedback, which he believed would enable the application to be re-worked and re-submitted. It was likely to be possible to meet a HLF representative to discuss what was required for re-submission. One of the suggestions in the feedback was to include an oral history of the sport. The target of submitting the grant application had therefore been achieved, albeit unfortunately not yet winning a grant. However, it provided a good starting point for further work on the application next year.

Re-work the grant application next year

68.5 Harvest data on members' routes of entry to the sport

This would involve adding new tick-boxes about routes of entry on the conversion form, and recording such data on the new BPA Membership database, once this was available.

Action: Chairman & Craig Poxon

69/09 Photograph for new membership card

Lesley Gale suggested, and the Committee agreed, the photograph to appear on the membership card for the 2010-11 membership year.

70/09 Chairman's thanks

As this was the last meeting of the 2009 Committee, the Chairman thanked the Committee, Editor and BPA staff for their hard work during a busy year.

The meeting closed at 1415.

Ratified electronically by the Council and published on 12 January 2010.