

British Parachute Association

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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 23 February 2010 at 1150
at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester

Present:	Martin Soulsby Christopher Beattie Adrian Bond Craig Poxon Andy Scott	Communications Chairman (from item 4)
In attendance:	Tony Butler Zoë Francis-Cox Lesley Gale Kirsty Kelly Phil Sumner Martin Shuttleworth	Technical Officer Archant Dialogue Editor, Skydive Magazine Archant Dialogue Archant Dialogue Secretary-General
Apology for absence	Paul Applegate	

Item Minute

01/10 Minutes

The Committee noted that the minutes (circulated) of the meeting held on Tuesday 8 December 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>

02/10 Matters arising

2.1 Public relations policy (minute 62.2)

Adrian Bond said this would be covered later in the meeting (see minute 5).

2.2 Volunteer (minute 62.3)

Craig Poxon would keep details on file of the Member who had volunteered help.

2.3 Contracts with Archant (minute 64)

These had been signed by both the BPA and Archant.

03/10 Committee composition and terms of reference 2010

The voting members of the Communications Committee 2010 were: Martin Soulsby (Chair, elected by the Council); Paul Applegate, Chris Beattie, Adrian Bond, Craig Poxon and Andy Scott. Lesley Gale was co-opted (non-voting), ex-officio, as Editor of *Skydive the Mag*.

The Committee's Terms of Reference, set out on BPA Form 191, had been circulated with the agenda and were noted.

04/10 Editorial Report

Lesley Gale had circulated feedback she had received about the February issue of *Skydive the Mag* by e-mail from Members.

Lesley Gale reported that she was working with Archant to launch a new design with the April issue. She showed the Committee a dummy of the working draft of the April Magazine. Two new sections would be included: the Safety Zone, compiled by Liz Ashley and covering incident reports; and Gear Review.

Lesley Gale and Archant demonstrated a working draft of the new Mag website that was planned to go live on 1 April 2010. It included page-turning software to display the Magazine online. The Committee decided that new issues should go online on the due date for delivery of the Mag. It would be interactive and Club Reps and others would be able to upload copy and photographs. It would also be linked to a You Tube video channel.

The Committee discussed the possibility of the Mag website having a Members' / Subscribers area. Archant confirmed that the site would have the facility for this, although the Committee considered it was too early to set the policy on how it should be used.

After discussion, the Committee decided it would like the archive of Mag articles on the new website to go back as far as possible. Lesley Gale said that back to 2006 would be relatively easy, and she would look further back and start at the earliest practicable date.

Action: Lesley Gale

Andy Scott asked about acceptance testing. After discussion, the Committee decided that Council Members and Club Reps should be invited to take part in this.

Action: Archant Dialogue

The Committee had found Lesley Gale's written Editorial Reports issued a week before each meeting to be helpful. There had been no written report to this meeting, and the Committee asked that the practice should please be resumed from the next meeting, and Lesley Gale agreed.

Action: Lesley Gale

05/10 Starter Mag 2010

Lesley Gale reported that the Starter Mag 2010 would be going to print for delivery to Drop Zones next week. Advertising income was up by £1K on forecast, from £13K to £14K, of which the BPA would receive 70%. Lesley Gale had circulated pdfs of all pages with significant changes to the Committee for review, and thanked the Committee for the responses she had received. The Committee agreed on the cover photograph.

Drop Zones would be pre-loaded with one or two boxes of the new Starter Mag, with a covering letter from the Communications Chair saying that the Starter Mag was a valuable 'viral' marketing tool – first-time jumpers passed their copy around family and friends. Lesley Gale said she would ask Warners to provide a monthly stock report to monitor stock use.

Action: Lesley Gale

In discussion, the following points were recorded.

- All DZs except NLPC (soon to be known as NLSC) Chatteris and Strathallan had agreed to take the new Mag. [**Note:** Subsequent to the meeting, NLPC agreed to take the new Starter Mag.]
- Lesley Gale planned to outline non-IPC disciplines, such as speed skydiving, wingsuit flying, instruction and photography, all within a single new feature in next year's update of the Starter Mag, assuming she was able to make space or that extra advertising revenue was forthcoming.
- If Archant was able to sell more advertising to non-skydiving advertisers, the pagination of next year's Starter Mag could increase.

06/10 Communications strategy

The Chairman said he wished the Committee to develop a communications strategy to (a) engage more with Members; and (b) get the media more involved with the sport to help to engage the public. Printed copies of e-mails from Becca Armstrong and Rich Rust, volunteer

BPA Media Co-ordinators, who were both willing to continue to serve during 2010, were circulated. The Committee confirmed their appointments as Media Co-ordinators for 2010, and thanked them for their continuing contributions and ideas.

With regard to communications with members, the Committee agreed that periodic e-mails, say 3 or 4 a year, would be appropriate. The Committee was aware of the pitfalls of too many e-mails and would not spam members. In response to a question about using e-mails for safety notices to all full Members, Tony Butler said this would be an appropriate additional communications channel for urgent safety messages, although these did not occur very often.

After discussion, the Committee decided that appropriate topics for inclusion in an e-mail to Members now would include a reminder to complete the membership questionnaire (e-mail addresses of Members who had completed the questionnaire entered the optional prize draw could be identified so they would receive instead a thank you message for having already completed the questionnaire). Also in the e-mail would be included a membership renewal reminder.

Craig Poxon had found a free-of-charge e-mailing facility included with the survey software website used for the BPA membership questionnaire, and it made sense to make use of that.

Action: Craig Poxon

This software could not be used in the future, unless in conjunction with a survey. The Chairman asked about cost separately when emailing and Craig Poxon advised that the BPA had an agreement with the service he used last year for the lapsed member survey that cost 1p per email.

Following Craig Poxon's trial of streaming and video recording the AGM and some AGM Day seminars and presentations, the Committee decided to trial live video streaming of its next meeting in April. This could lead the way to streaming Council meetings. He would bring his own equipment to stream the April meeting so it could be trialled at no cost.

Action: Craig Poxon

At the Chairman's suggestion, the Committee considered whether there could be an alternative title for the Chair of Communications. The consensus was that everyone knew what this title meant, and other sports associations also used similar titles. Therefore, it was best to stick with the status quo.

Andy Scott volunteered to identify a PR Events Calendar for 2010 to therefore notify the Media Co-ordinators in advance of major skydiving events, including competitions and large charity jumps.

Action: Andy Scott

The opportunities of social networking sites were considered. The Chairman and Craig Poxon said he would start Facebook and Twitter pages for the BPA / the Mag.

Action: Chairman & Craig Poxon

Zoë Francis-Cox (Archant Dialogue) said that it might be possible for Archant Reps to put each DZ in touch with their local media, and to help to highlight stories they thought were newsworthy. The Chairman believed one of our objectives should be to issue news to the media more proactively, for example when medals were about to be won. Adrian Bond suggested use of the chargeable press release search engine optimisation service PR Fire (£20-£50 per release).

07/10 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010

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

The Chairman had circulated in advance a draft role description and person specification. In discussion, Tony Butler said he saw no need for the role as Clubs were responsible for recruitment, and he believed no one individual, however talented, could have much impact on this. He said that none of the four Development Officers the BPA had engaged in the past had made any significant difference. Tony Butler said that BPA statistics showed that, despite the

recession, last year had been the best year ever for recruitment, and that this excellent result had been achieved through the existing arrangements. If the new postholder had been in place last year, he was concerned that the Committee would probably have attributed this success to them, whereas in fact it would have happened entirely because of other factors. The Chairman thanked Tony Butler for his input and said he would continue consult with other stakeholders for their views.

Action: Chairman

7.2 Conduct online Membership Survey/s

The survey was currently running online on the BPA website. Archant Dialogue had kindly donated a prize of a digital camera for a lucky winner whose name was to be drawn from those who had completed the survey anonymously but opted to give their membership details for the prize draw.

In progress

7.3 Publish a BPA Skydiving calendar 2010

Target achieved

7.4 Apply for a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Grant to create an historical image archive of British parachuting

The target of applying for a HLF grant had been achieved. However, the grant application to the HLF had unfortunately not been successful on its first submission. HLF had provided helpful feedback, and the Chairman had had a meeting with their representatives earlier today. He would now re-visit the grant application, again with the assistance of the Office, and this was likely to require considerable extra work.

Action: Chairman

7.5 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/updated BPA Membership database, once this was available.

Action: Chairman & Craig Poxon

08/10 Communications Action Plan: 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011

The Chairman said the Communications Action Plan for the year beginning on 1 July 2010 would need to be recommended to the full Council at its April meeting. He asked all Committee Members to contact him with ideas and suggestions ahead of the next meeting so that the Action Plan could be finalised then.

Action: All Committee

09/10 AGM

9.1 Saturday 16 January 2010

Adrian Bond tabled a paper on feedback about this year's AGM. The event had been well received by those who had attended, scoring some 8/10 to date on the online survey. Attendance had been a little down on Hinckley the previous year – travel distance was one reason, exacerbated by the snowy and icy conditions during the preceding week. The BPA Film Festival Final (which had been open to the public) had been a success, the goodie bag had gone down well and the change to a new venue had had a revitalizing effect. The Hotel had sold 108 rooms (and sold out of rooms in early December) but a clear advantage of Blackpool had been the easy availability of other accommodation to suit every pocket. Adrian Bond reported that the cost of the whole event to the BPA had been about £500 less than the 2009 AGM at Hinckley.

9.2 Saturday 22 January 2011

Adrian Bond reported that the contract with the Barceló Daventry for the AGM 2011 had not yet been signed. It had been put off until this year's AGM in Blackpool had taken place. The easy availability of alternative overnight accommodation in Blackpool (minute 9.1 above) had raised concerns about there being little alternative accommodation in Daventry, and probably nothing within walking distance of the hotel. Adrian Bond was still negotiating with the Barceló Daventry and he was also looking at other Central England venues with the Office. He reported that instead, the audio-visual contractors, also had an events management company and they had offered an advantageous fee arrangement.

Action: Adrian Bond & BPA Office

Chris Beattie agreed to join Adrian Bond, with the support of Martin Shuttleworth, Secretary-General, to form the AGM steering group.

9.3 Saturday 22 January 2012

The Committee agreed the above date. Venue to be arranged. Adrian Bond reported that 75% of respondents to the online survey to date had supported moving the location of the AGM each year.

10/10 BPA website

Adrian Bond reported that Hcoms, the BPA's web consultants, had fallen behind schedule. This had delayed the trialling of online renewals that should have been taking place now. Hcoms had said the delay had been because they had won two contracts with other clients. At the suggestion of Adrian Bond, after detailed liaison with the BPA Office, the Committee agreed on a plan of action. Adrian Bond and Martin Shuttleworth, Secretary-General, were due to meet Hcoms at the BPA Office on Tuesday 2 March, a meeting that had originally been scheduled to involve Craig Poxon before Christmas that Hcoms had postponed.

Action: Adrian Bond / BPA Office

11/10 Visit

In reply to a question from Andy Scott, Lesley Gale confirmed that she and Archant would be pleased to welcome any Committee Member who happened to be in area, subject of course to availability, to show them around.

12/10 BPA Matters – April Mag

Craig Poxon noted that the due date for submission of copy had been today, the day of the meeting. He asked whether in future, copy dates could be after meetings days so any relevant matters from the meetings could be included.

Action: Refer to Lesley Gale

13/10 Dates of next meetings

The next meeting would be held at noon on the day of the next Council meeting, to be confirmed at the Council meeting tonight.

[Note: At the Council meeting, the following dates were agreed for meetings of the Council 2010, and for meetings of Committees that meet on Council days:

Tuesdays 23 February, 20 April, 22 June, 17 August, 12 October and 7 December at the BPA Office, 5 Wharf Way, Glen Parva, Leicester LE2 9TF.]

The meeting closed at 1400.