

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH PIPE BAND ASSOCIATION
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting **Version: Draft 1.0**
Via Video Conference
Saturday 29th May 2021 @ 09:30

Present Via Video Conference: A McGeoch, A Faulkner, B Niven, J Gibb, K Crothers, K Reilly (Chairman), L Ronaldson, M Brown-Scott, M McCrindle, N Greeves, P Brown, S Smith, W MacGregor

In Attendance: I Embelton, G Ussher.

Apologies: K Robertson.

The meeting was started at 09:30am. The Chairman welcomed all and brought the meeting to order.

The Chairman extended the BoD's deepest condolences to K Robertson on the sudden passing of her father and to the Allen family on the untimely death of Heather McKay. The thoughts of the Board are with the families at this sad time.

The Chairman thanked L Ronaldson and M McCrindle for agreeing to take notes that would aid in the production of the minutes of the meeting.

Correspondence

The Secretary of the NI Branch, Danielle McCartney contacted the association by email. The BoD has previously agreed to the NI Branch organising a non-competitive Festival of music that includes Band performances, Drum Major and Highland Dancing displays.

We now have the dates but would like to run Solos and our World Solo Drumming Qualifying at one of the Festivals,

I wanted to let you all know in advance as we intend to put the dates out to our members ASAP,

As the Solos are "new", we will submit our syllabus to the Music Board when it has been prepared,

Do you know if there is anything I need to do in terms of seeking permission to run the solos?

In terms of judges, we would be grateful if we could use "local" judges to avoid the need for travelling where possible,

P Brown said when running local solo / indoor competitions, Branches have been able to contact adjudicators willing to attend the event, then seek formal allocation of those interested from Headquarters. He believed the adjudicators for the WSD drumming qualifiers are allocated from HQ. G Ussher stated as it stands at the minute HQ allocate the adjudicators for the WSD qualifying event.

Further discussion ensued with I Embelton confirming that the APMB appoint the Drumming Adjudicators for the WSD qualifying. The request from the NI Branch for adjudicators for the WSD qualifier would be progressed by I Embelton with P Turner (APMB – Drumming Representative). (29/05 No1 – CEO)

BoD Minutes

The Chairman went through the minutes of the Directors' Meeting of the 19th April and the progress of actions noted. The minutes were approved on the proposal of A Faulkner and seconded by B Niven.

The items Completed or Ongoing are detailed in the tables at the end of the Minute, along with any new items arising from this meeting.

Matters Arising

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Members of the Board were thanked by the Chairman for making donations on behalf of the Association to The National Piping Centre crowdfunding campaign that was launched on the 4th May. The funding is needed to undertake a two-strand project that protects the legacy of the Piping Times and Piping Today magazines; firstly, through digitisation of the publications archive, to create a key-word searchable resource that is freely accessible online; and, secondly, by producing the first volume of a new Piping Times Annual.

It was agreed that K Reilly and I Embelton would look at options for expediting the presentation of the award of Honorary Vice President to G Hamill and J Hughes in advance of the 2022 Season. (29/05 No 2 – Chairman and CEO).

In the April minute actions were noted as 19/05 No x and they should have been 19/04 No x. This error has been corrected in the tables below.

Preparing to return to Practices.

G McDermid joined the meeting, he had been invited by the Chairman to present a Framework document which he had created to prepare for his Band getting back to practice when they reach Level 1 as per the Scottish Government guidance. The Framework document was comprehensive, informative, and detailed and through correspondence had received approval from the highest level in the Scottish Government.

N Greeves thanked G McDermid for all the work he put in. L Ronaldson echoed N Greeves comments and thanked him for the presentation and asked if he would allow the document to be shared. He agreed to sharing the document through the Chairman with a view to this being extended to the Association Branches and Bands.

P Brown said we must emphasise that this is guidance specific to one Bands circumstances. Any Band that wishes to use this for guidance must amend it according to their band numbers and hall size where the band practices and be conscious of the social distancing requirements applying to their regional area.

A Faulkner asked if outdoor practice was preferable. G McDermid indicated that outdoor practice was preferable and was the only way a Band could meet for practice in Scotland until they are placed, in Level 1. He was asked what would happen if someone refused to do a lateral flow test. He said for his Band they will be unable to attend band practice.

The Chairman thanked G McDermid for the enormous amount of work and time he had committed to producing this Framework and for coming to the Board to present it. The Chairman emphasised that all Bands must work hand in hand with local guidance in their own areas. At this point G McDermid left the meeting

A discussion ensued on what was the best way to share the Framework. G Ussher said we should launch it through the Association website. It was agreed that a News Item on returning to Practices would be drafted by A Faulkner, M Brown-Scott, P Brown, and K Reilly. The group were given approval to publish the item without further recourse to the full Board on the proposal of L Ronaldson, seconded by M McCrindle with the approval of the Board. (29/05 N0 3 – Marketing and Media)

Music Board

Allocated Directors: I Finlay and M Brown-Scott,

The next MB meeting is scheduled for the 12th June 2021.

The MB minutes of the 15th May 2021 were available for the BoD to consider. The MB director M Brown-Scott presented the minutes then reviewed the actions.

A moment of silent reflection was taken on the sudden loss of a friend, colleague, and former Music Board Convenor, Heather MacKay.

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K Reilly chaired the meeting. The post of MB Convenor was not filled. The Board were advised that there was a reluctance of members within the MB to come forward as the Convenor. It was suggested that the lead member within each of the sub-groups within the MB would Chair the MB on a rotational basis.

After a discussion on the best way forward, the members of the Board agreed that for continuity it was best if there was one Convenor to Chair and oversee the MB meetings. P Brown stated all Directors are full members of any of the committees they are appointed to under the Articles of Association. With this in mind and in the event of a Convenor not being appointed from within the MB, M Brown-Scott has offered to take on the role. (29/05 No 4 – MB)

P Brown reminded the Directors if they are unable to attend any of the committee meetings they are appointed to, they must inform the Board to ensure a substitute BoD member can attend in their place.

The Format Group reported to the MB its progress on a number of activities it has in progress. The BoD mainly focused on those items brought to its attention in the actions of the minute.

The MB is focused on the Restart Strategy, particularly the development of a Summer Festival, focusing on planning (the who, what and where questions).

As notified by your MB representatives following the meeting of the 15th May 2021 a meeting has been scheduled for 1:30pm on the 29th May 2021 requesting input and support for the initiative.

“ I hope this finds you well. As you may be aware the Board of Directors have approved the Music Board to lead and facilitate events over the summer period as part of Festival. The purpose of these events is to support member engagement where we would like to invite a Key Officer(S) and those members within the Branch with skills in or related to; *Media production, Event Management, Marketing, social media* to volunteer as part of the Music Board-Format Group (Restart Strategy workstream). If you are aware of anyone within your branch/band etc that may be able to help, please pass on the meeting information and let them join us.

Please contact the Chairman or your MB representative if you could not make the meeting but would like to be involved in any way.

It has been mentioned that the festival is to focus on four key themes;1) Youth – various categories freestyle etc; 2) Pipe Band College – Education; 3) APMB/ AP – Adjudication (Ensemble, Drum Majors etc) and 4) Recital (Bands). It is hoped that various Branch / Band initiatives could then be tied in or run alongside these initiatives.

The Chairman and MB are to engage with the APMB and Pipe Band College over the coming weeks, once they have collated the information from the above meeting, as they develop a roll out plan for the Summer Festival once resources (Skills, financial & in-kind support) are clearer. (29/05 No 6 – Chairman and MB)

The Board received a request for the Format Group to approach Glasgow Life directly for funding for the “Restart Strategy” programme. This was denied unanimously by the BoD. The CEO, I Embelton is the representative from the RSPBA who has the Board’s permission to discuss funding / sponsorship matters with Glasgow Life. (29/05 No 7 – CEO)

The Standards and Grading Group report was brought to the attention of the Board as it is expected that when Bands get back to practice and things start to return to normal there will be an influx of grading and transfer requests as Bands re-evaluate their positions within their current grade. The group are to convene a meeting to try to offer Bands through their MB representatives some advice with regards to regrading / registering of higher to lower transfers.

It was noted that APMB had some concerns over the Juvenile Grade with regards to bands playing up in local competitions where there was no Juvenile Section. Currently they are aligned with Grade 3, but due to the vast range of skill and expertise within the Juvenile grade, some bands played up into Grade 2. MB are aware that some bands may excel in both Grades 3 and 2, however a decision was made to leave the alignment as status quo due to the current situation, but the MB would revisit this after another full competition season.

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The Standing Orders and Steering Group have been asked by the MB to confirm current alignment for both Novice and Juvenile grades. (29/05 No 8 – SOSOC)

A McGeoch said that he supported the MB's decision regarding the alignment as most of the Band Personnel from the 2019 season would no longer be eligible to compete in the Juvenile grade when we return to the competition season in 2022.

The Tunes Group reported that an issue over 4 x parted strathspeys listed in the prescribed tunes list only having 2 x parts, has been resolved and the lists have been amended on the web site. There have been 5 new 2x parted reels added to the tunes list.

K Reilly had been invited as RSPBA Chairman to attend a conference call by the Mid-West PB Association of America. Events were the main topics discussed both pre and post covid.

The actions discussed from the minute of the 15th May were approved on the proposal of L Ronaldson and seconded by N Greeves.

Adjudicator Panel Management Board

Allocated Directors: A McGeoch and W MacGregor

Convenor: John Wilson.

A McGeoch reported there had been no further meeting of the APMB, and the next scheduled meeting is to be held on the 10th September 2021.

The ongoing business of the APMB / ADG is progressing in the background as it would at this stage in any normal year.

Finance Insurance and Maintenance

Allocated Directors K Crothers (Convenor), W MacGregor, P Brown and K Reilly and those invited to attend I Embelton, and G Usher.

The Finance, Insurance and Maintenance standing committee met via GoToMeeting at 2pm on the 24th May 2021. The full report is available to the BoD in the Meeting Pack Folder.

P Brown made a case to start the Web Site refresh as there was a need for a smooth and cost neutral switch over between the old and new Web Solutions. The Finance committee had considered the development options available to progress the initiative. The committee recommended to the board that the expenditure on the Web Site development be approved. The Board discussed and considered the different phases of the refresh and unanimously agreed to proceed with the development on the proposal of L Ronaldson this was seconded by M McCrindle. (29/05 No 9 – Marketing and Media)

A confidential discussion took place with regard to the 2022 Competition Season and Venues. The Board will release the information as soon as possible after formal discussions with all the promoters has been concluded and contracts agreed.

I Embelton stated there had been no discussion on the WSD 2021 competition. P Brown is not sure that Universities will open their doors to third parties. I Embelton to speak to Glasgow Life and the University. (29/05 No 10 – CEO)

A McGeoch stated his band had not received an invoice for the PDQB qualifications. I Embelton explained that in some instances there were queries connected to the certifications. P Whelan is only sending out invoices when all the paperwork has been completed correctly and some assessors were remiss in getting the documentation back to P Whelan. N Greeves asked what the current situation is in relation to expenses for those assessors who have incurred expenses. I Embelton confirmed that all outstanding invoices for expenses have now been paid.

The report was accepted on the proposal of A McGeoch and seconded by M Brown-Scott.

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Marketing and Media.

Allocated Directors: K Robertson (Convenor), A Faulkner and M Brown-Scott.

No report was available for the BoD. P Brown gave a verbal report in K Robertson's absence.

PB advised that he has been having discussions with K Robertson and the supplier with reference to the Web Site refresh.

News Item on the need for Ongoing Social Distancing was considered and reviewed a number of times, until a satisfactory item was published.

SOSC

Allocated Directors: P McAndrew (Convenor), L Ronaldson, M McCrindle and B Niven

No meeting of the SOSC has been convened since the previous BoD meeting.

P Brown expressed his concern that no meeting had been held, and there was no report available to enable the Board to track the progress of outstanding matters referred to them.

P Brown to contact the SOSC Convenor (29/05 No 11 – Vice Chairman)

Pipe Band College

Allocated Directors: J Gibb and N Greeves.

Convenor: Pat Whelan

The Reports of meetings held on the 7th February 2021 and the 22nd May 2021 were available for the BoD to consider.

At this point P Whelan joined the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed P Whelan to the meeting, asking that his thanks be recorded in the minute for the enormous amount of office administration that P Whelan and R Gillespie have completed over recent weeks to facilitate the progression of examination results and invoices for payment. N Greeves said "he would also like to have his thanks recorded for all the work that all those involved with the PBC have achieved in this difficult time".

The Chairman reported he was getting an insight into how the PBC operates. The Chairman will be meeting with the PBC Directors J Gibb and N Greeves to discuss the PBC and the work involved. (29/05 No 12 – Chairman)

P Whelan reported that the PBC have been working relentlessly in the background. He believes it was due to the absence of other activity within the organisation that the PBC were inundated with requests for education and assessments. Since December 2020 there have been 200 assessments procured, the fulfilment of which has been achieved with hard work and co-operation, that has been difficult at times due to the Covid 19 restrictions, but we have in the end been successful.

The PBC are looking to recruit more verifiers for the SQA and PDQB qualifications. The verification needs of the CPBM qualification will be considered next.

The cost of the examinations increased this year to cover the additional expenditure incurred as the overall amount of time has increased due to running individual online assessments, where previously a number of students could have met collectively and been assessed in quick successions.

P Whelan stated RSPBANI was unable to access educational facilities for the NI school.

Several points from the PBC reports were discussed:

- Is there a way of allowing some of the Principal's access to HQ to assess the facilities?

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There is no intention of opening the building to general access until the Covid restrictions are lowered, and access would be in conjunction with staff returning full time.

- The PBC elements of the Website and a new PBC Facebook presence established in the summer of 2020, the delivery of content had not been carried forward and to date there had been a lack of new material uploaded for the membership, as there is an element of quality assurance needed. A number of the Board raised their concerns that there had not been any new online material for the membership.
- The PBC are looking to extending the online presence P Whelan explained that J Nevans is working with his team preparing for an online summer school. The Chairman stated there are recordings and assistance available for the membership that some of the Branches (such as the North of Scotland) are already able to provide (via their own social media).

N Greeves stressed the PBC do not want huge courses online. They wanted to put small bite size snippets online.

P Whelan stated there needs to be quality in what we put online. In discussion it was pointed out that generally Marketing & Media are responsible for external communications. However, in the case of education this was devolved to the PBC. Ultimately, we have to meet the needs of our members.

P Brown stated we have to deliver content and trust those providing it, that it is acceptable for the purpose it was submitted. The Association has trusted J Nevans for a number of years to deliver as Principal of the Summer School. P Whelan stated that John had already identified various short learning activities currently available through branches and individuals as a starting point. The Chairman recognised John's contributions to the RSPBA over the years.

P Brown proposed that J Nevans can develop the online presence and be given permission to run the online summer school. This was seconded by L Ronaldson and supported by all the Directors. (29/05 No 12 – PBC)

- The Board highlighted that there are a number of examination certificates outstanding. P Whelan was aware of this and assured the Board they would be issued in due course.

P Brown reminded the Board that the first PBC AGM is scheduled to take place in November 2021, this was reported in the December 2020 BoD Minute. The post holders of the Summer School Principal and Piping Principal are to stand down at the AGM but may be eligible for selection for a further term. Directors were requested to make their Branches aware of this and ask anyone who is interested to check the website for the positions being advertised and the application procedure. P Whelan and K Reilly are to progress the advertisement and application procedure for the posts of Sumer School Principal and Piping Principal. (29/05 No 13 – Education Officer and Chairman)

The Chairman requested that the draft "Procedures for Assessment" presented to the BoD for consideration, be presented to the PBC at their next meeting. P Brown noted the next meeting date detailed in the report was September and asked who is supporting J Nevans with the summer school. P Whelan responded that the PBC meeting was in September, however the Principals would continue to meet during the summer months. J Gibb and N Greeves as representatives of the Board would be notified of the next Principals meeting. (29/05 No 14 – Education Officer).

P Whelan thanked the Board for their support today and left the meeting.

The PBC reports were approved on the proposal of K Crothers seconded by S Smith.

A O C B

P Brown informed the Board that as the 2021 Season Working Group was no longer meeting, he would pass the information presented by G McDermid this morning to the group. (29/05 No 15 – Vice Chairman).

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G Ussher reported that at the request of the Chairman he had formed a small committee to progress the recruitment of a CEO. They are working on completing the necessary documents for the recruitment process.

P Brown emphasised the need for a further Drop Box administrator(s) to be setup just in case he is not available. He stated training will be provided. S Smith and N Greeves volunteered to assist.

W MacGregor informed the Board that the London and South England Branch had held its third online solo competition with over 100 performances. Reporting it had been a great success, with those taking part being placed into a gold, silver, or bronze category.

He then went on to express his concerns about the summer's festival as time is moving on and we are in the planning stage. He found it very frustrating that the RSPBA are not holding online competitions and said "we should be doing something that the whole world can participate in". N Greeves stated he and his son has had several meetings with different groups regarding streamed / online competitions, he said "we are almost in June and no decisions have been taken". Where is this going? P Brown responded there is a need for two Directors with a will to take the initiative for a competition forward, he would bring forward the idea to the Summer Festival meeting. (29/05 No 15 – Vice Chairman)

G Ussher stated he is anxious that the RSPBA get something online. K Crothers congratulated W MacGregor on the excellent online competition and said it is evident the Directors want some online activity.

As there was no other business the meeting closed at 1.00 pm.

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PREVIOUS ACTIONS COMPLETED

Action	Reference and Owner
The chairman would respond to the correspondence as agreed by the BoD	(19/04 No 1 - Chairman)
J Hughes to be awarded a position as an Honorary Vice President. To be informed by his Branch Directors. Event needed at which the presentation can be made.	(19/04 No 2 – Chairman)
Cancellation of the events to be notified on the association's media channels	(19/04 No 3 – Chairman)
APMB feel there is work outstanding from the cancelled Grade Realignment Project with respect to aligning the Novice Juvenile (A & B) and Juvenile Bands with the Adult Grade they could Play in. The Item is to be brought to the attention of the MB for their consideration. To be discussed at the next Liaison Group Meeting. Item has been passed to the MB for consideration	(13/04 No 8 – MB Directors)

NEW ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING

Action	Reference and Owner
The request from the NI Branch for adjudicators for the WSD qualifier would be progressed.	(29/05 No1 – CEO)
It was agreed that K Reilly and I Embelton would look at options for expediting the presentation of the award of Honorary Vice President to G Hamill and J Hughes in advance of the 2022 Season.	(29/05 No 2 – Chairman and CEO)
It was agreed that a News Item on returning to Practices would be drafted and published on the Associations Web Site and Facebook Page.	(29/05 No 3 – Marketing and Media)
The members of the Board agreed that for continuity it was best if there was one Convenor to Chair and oversee the MB meetings. In the event of a Convenor not being appointed from within the MB, M Brown-Scott has offered to take on the role.	(29/05 No 4 – MB)
The Chairman and MB are to engage with the APMB and Pipe Band College over the coming weeks, as they develop a roll out plan for the Summer Festival once resources (Skills, financial & in-kind support) are clearer.	(29/05 No 6 – Chairman and MB)
The CEO, I Embelton is the representative from the RSPBA who has the Board's permission to discuss funding / sponsorship matters with Glasgow Life.	(29/05 No 7 – CEO)
The Standing Orders and Steering Group have been asked by the MB to confirm current alignment for both Novice and Juvenile grades.	(29/05 No 8 – SOSC)
The FI&M committee recommended to the Board that the expenditure on the Web Site development be approved. The Board unanimously agreed to proceed with the development.	(29/05 No 9 – Marketing and Media)
I Embelton to speak to Glasgow Life and the University with regards to availability for the WSD 2021 competition.	(29/05 No 10 – CEO)
P Brown to contact the SOSC Convenor	(29/05 No 11 – Vice Chairman)
The Chairman will be meeting with the PBC Directors J Gibb and N Greeves to discuss the PBC and the work involved.	(29/05 No 12 – Chairman)
To progress the advertisement and application procedure for the posts of Summer School Principal and Piping Principal.	(29/05 No 13 – Education Officer and Chairman)
J Gibb and N Greeves as representatives of the Board would be notified of the next Principals meeting.	(29/05 No 14 – Education Officer)
P Brown informed the Board that as the 2021 Season Working Group was no longer meeting, he would pass the information presented by G McDermid this morning to the group.	(29/05 No 15 – Vice Chairman).
There is a need for two Directors with a will to take the initiative for a competition forward, he would bring forward the idea to the Summer Festival meeting.	(29/05 No 15 – Vice Chairman)

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OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Action	Reference and Owner
DP&A Branch asked that the position with SQA as to why last year's Tenor drumming candidates had not received accreditation for their Theory.	(05/09 No 12 – EO / PBC)
Seek clarification on the VAT definition of a "Commercial Let" regarding our VAT position. Initial feedback indicates we should not have a problem, but we are awaiting final clarification from the accountants, contact is limited as staff are on furlough due to the Covid-19.	(14/03 No1 Finance /CEO)
A volunteer from the full MB is needed to take on the role as Convenor before the next meeting. (19/05 No 4 – MB)	(19/04 No 4 – Full MB)
The MB feels a "Media "policy should be developed to afford protection for the whole Association, so any such requests are steered to the appropriate owner.	(19/04 No 5 – Marketing and Media)
The MB decided the DM format change would stay in place. The SOSC are to progress a rule change if needed.	(19/04 No 6 – SOSC)

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