

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF
THE SCOTTISH BRASS BAND ASSOCIATION (SBBA)
SUNDAY 10 JANUARY 2010 IN THE HOWDEN CENTRE, LIVINGSTON**

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

George Burt welcomed members to the second SBBA meeting of the 2009/2010 session. Phil Lodge was in hospital and he asked that best wishes from the Committee be sent to him via the Secretary.

Present George Burt (President), Peter Fraser (Vice President), Tom Allan (Secretary), John Todd, Andy Smith, John Gilmour, Robert Burns, Lynsey Paterson, Mark Bell, Kenny Crookston and John Muir

In attendance Alan Edmond (Development Officer), Donald Reid (Minute Secretary).

Apologies : Ann Murray, Phil Lodge (Hospital), Steve Gray, Jennifer Fox, Robert McCorkell,

2 MINUTE NO: 1 OF SBBA EXECUTIVE MEETING OF SUNDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2009.

Approved on the motion of Andy Smith and seconded by John Todd without amendment.

3 MATTERS ARISING NOT OTHERWISE ON AGENDA

No matters not already on the agenda.

4 DEVELOPMENT

The President indicated that there would be a meeting of the Development Committee soon and those involved were asked to meet at the end of the meeting to confirm a date and venue.

(a) Area Associations

The East of Scotland Area Association asked for permission to purchase a mobile piano and speakers from their grant. Alan Edmond explained the rationale behind this which included making it available to member bands. After discussion it was decided to seek further information about costs before making a decision. The Secretary advised that all constitutions meet the criteria laid down by SBBA. Area Associations will be a separate item on the SBBA agenda from now on.

(b) Constitution and Rules

The President highlighted that SBBA's rules can be difficult to understand and should be reviewed. It was felt that the current banding year (1 November – 30 October) should be reviewed to see if it is still relevant. It was referred to the Development Committee for recommendations.

(c) External Liaison

A letter had been sent to BFBB and British Brass band Registry proposing a meeting. No reply received as yet. Secretary and Registrar Tom Allan advised that he had contacted Alan Hope, Kapitool, about issue of re-franking of cards which no longer applied in Scotland. No reply as yet. He also advised that the Contest Controller of the Spring Festival and British Open had agreed to accept the cards without current franking. Contact is still to be made with the Cambridge Masters and Brass in Concert

(d) Annual Census

The annual census form needed to be reviewed, and the Development Committee would be tasked with looking at this and coming up with a relevant form.

(e) SBBA Office

The possibility of an office for SBBA was again raised. It was felt that SBBA really did require a base for operations. So much equipment was held in private houses and band halls as well as archive material that should be in a central base where it could be readily accessed. The proposed office should also be large enough to hold SBBA meetings. It was felt that mid Scotland would be the best location making it reasonably central to everyone.

West Lothian Council had various premises available for let. The Council officer for West Lothian had

asked for a specification to be supplied highlighting the needs of SBBA in terms of premises. Kenny Crookston asked if it was proposed that there would be staff manning the office. The President said that a post might be created and funding sought for this, and it was the intention to ensure that SBBA had a professional approach to all its varied activities. It was estimated that it would take some £20,000 per year to fund a permanent post, but funding may be available.

Peter Fraser felt that that SBBA had developed very quickly over the years and that office premises, if large enough, could also house the SBBA Registry; Development Officer; a rehearsal/workshop area if large enough; a museum; and retain the wide variety of equipment that could be made available to Scottish bands. Looking forward, office premises would need to be large enough to account for future development of SBBA services.

It was agreed that this issue be taken forward and the President and officials look at all the issues including costs, size of available premises with good storage and potential staffing, even on a part-time or voluntary basis, and come back to the next meeting (February 14) with positive ideas.

5 FINANCIAL REPORT

(a) Accounts

The accounts had been circulated by the Treasurer prior to the meeting. The President reminded the Committee that Gerry Simonis will retire from the post of SBBA Treasurer at the next AGM and it was felt that there was now an urgency to identifying a suitable Treasurer (designate) be identified in early course who could work closely with Gerry Simonis to ensure a seamless handover. The accounts were in a healthy state and full details were outlined in the Treasurer's report.

The President highlighted several written points raised by Gerry Simonis in his report. Some bands have not yet paid their annual retention fee and the Secretary will liaise with the Treasurer on this issue. 48 bands had been registered for the Scottish Championships in 2010. Turiff and Kilmarnock Bands have been 'lost' hopefully on a temporary basis and it was hoped that in future they would be able to develop their bands and re-affiliate to SBBA.

The Treasurer's report highlighted that no further funds have been received from the Scottish Arts Council and this could create a cash flow problem. It was reported that £4,000 was due from SAC for YMI projects and the President had recently raised this issue with SAC. SBBA is still due the advance payment for the grant for 2010 and £47,000 will hopefully be received within a few weeks.

The Treasurer reported that the Scottish Open estimated costs were concern. Besson's contribution has not yet been received. There was likely to be a shortfall for the Friday night concert and the weekend of the Scottish Open/Youth Championships. The President said that it was a very successful weekend, but SBBA must always aim, as a matter of good governance, to ensure that events are fully self-financing. However, this was the first event of its kind involving a major concert and lessons will be learned.

Kenny Crookston felt that if a top rank band was engaged then future concerts could be a sell-out ensuring that a surplus resulted. A discussion ensued on the possible restructuring of the entire Scottish Open weekend with the suggestion that the concert could take place on the Saturday night when more band members might be able to attend. Against this there was the danger of the Open over-running.

John Gilmour asked if the Youth Championships ran at a loss. It was felt that based on figures in the accounts it was difficult to tell, but that it was unlikely they had incurred a deficit. A more detailed look at the accounts would be required to confirm surplus or deficit for this specific part of the event.

(b) Grant funding

The President was hopeful of future funding from SAC of £15,000 for youth infrastructure. He advised that discussions were ongoing on how this amount could be wisely spent. It was said that perhaps NYBBS could be used as a vehicle for utilising this money. Alan Edmond felt that anything SBBA could do to help NYBBS would be greatly appreciated. He suggested that young people from NYBBS would be in a good position to spread the brass banding message around Scotland, but specifics have still to be finalised. It was agreed without reservation that SBBA need to support NYBBS as much as possible as most of the young people who play in the band also play with SBBA member bands.

Peter Fraser spoke about future test pieces for the Scottish Open etc and felt that it was important to have new commissions funded, as new work had to be planned well ahead. It was felt that it was too late to organise a commission for this year, but it should be on the agenda for the future. We needed the money (£3-£4,000) before selecting a composer for a commission. The test piece for 2010 should ideally be announced by the end of February for the Scottish Open.

6 DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

Nothing to report

7 EDUCATION / YOUTH

(a) Child Protection

Jennifer Fox was absent, but the Secretary advised that she had been considering organising another workshop on child protection issues.

(b) Development Officer Report

A detailed written report was circulated and spoken to by Alan Edmond. This report is also circulated to all member bands direct by the Development Officer. He made special mention of the work of John Gilmour on his planning of the very successful Youth Championships adding that it was unfortunate that John had been unable to attend the actual event to see the results of his work.

8 PUBLICITY & COMMUNICATIONS

(a) Website

Peter Fraser reported that progress with the web site was been disappointingly slow and he had given the selected website builder a deadline of 1st March to achieve the goal of a first class SBBA website. There are a number of issues that he will be discussing with the website builder in coming weeks to ensure that the site is professional and fit for purpose. He hoped to be able to report progress by the next SBBA meeting on 14 February. It was also emphasised by Peter Fraser that once the website was operational it would be updated on a regular basis to ensure that it was up to standard as the main information service for SBBA.

It was reported that the current SBBA grading tables were not up on the current web site and contact will be made with John Martin, current webmaster, to resolve this.

(b) Publicity

Peter Fraser advised that Allison Hunter, PRO, had managed some good publicity for the Perth Open Championships including newspaper, radio and the banding press coverage. Kenny Crookston said that it was a historic achievement for an American Band to win the Scottish Open contest. He said Fountain City Brass are considering returning to defend their title in 2010. The Scottish Open Cup was now in USA with Fountain City Brass.

The Secretary reported that SBBA publicity materials were running out and needed to be updated and reprinted. Kenny Crookston and Alan Edmond would work together to deal with this matter. The President asked that the updated brochure be sent to MSPs, MPs etc and local education authorities and of course to SAC and any other relevant body to let them know about the work of SBBA.

9 EVENTS

(a) 2009 SCOTTISH OPEN, CHALLENGE SHIELD, CHALLENGE CUP AND SCOTTISH YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP

The President highlighted that the sub-committee system worked well at the Youth Championships and thanked John Gilmour and his committee for their efforts. He emphasised the need to develop the Events sub-committee so that all the work did not fall on one person. More members needed to be involved and he sought volunteers, not only from the executive, but indeed from elsewhere in the banding world. They would think about possible candidates to come on the sub-committee.

The Scottish Open weekend was held in Perth Concert Hall on 28/29 November 2009 and proved to be a great success. Peter Fraser had received many letters of thanks for the excellent organisation of the Open. He did, however, highlight one letter from Bert Ritchie of the Dalmellington Band, which he read out to the members. The issue had been settled amicably and the valid points raised will be attended to in the future.

It was suggested that in future it might be sensible to arrange for adjudicators to stay in accommodation away from other bands, if possible, though adjudicators had to be trusted to be totally above board.

Besson had been unhappy about the late finish of the event. The Open had started half an hour late and the change-over of bands had taken an average of 9 minutes which was totally unacceptable. Individual bands need to be more disciplined and perhaps SBBA will require to set a time-limit for change-over with penalties for those who breach the recommended time-scale.

John Gilmour asked if the Cup and Shield competition could be amalgamated to save time in future and this will be considered. Alan Edmond thought that the top three bands in each section in the grading tables should be rewarded for their efforts and loyalty with a 'champion of champions' competition.

The President felt that some of the issues raised by Alan Edmond could be discussed by the Development Committee who would come back to the executive with recommendations.

(b) **2010 SCOTTISH OPEN, CHALLENGE SHIELD, CHALLENGE CUP AND SCOTTISH YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP**

A discussion ensued on the test piece for the 2010 Scottish Open. A number of options were considered including the cost involved and potential areas for sponsorship to finance a new composition. The President advised that a report on progress will be given at the February meeting. Peter Fraser said that some time needed to be spent on honing the logistics of the weekend to ensure that the event flows better and there is no time wasted. It was suggested that the speeches and adjudicators comments could be made whilst the results were being compiled, and this will be considered in the planning process.

(c) **2010 SOLO & ENSEMBLE CONTEST**

This will be held in Howden Park Centre, Livingston. It has been confirmed that Besson will sponsor the event. There had been a delay in identifying and confirming adjudicators who had to be on the Besson approved list. Alan Edmond is looking to identify suitable adjudicators for the event in liaison with Peter Fraser. Possibilities include Roger Webster and one other. It is hoped that this will be formalised by the next week. A new percussion section will be added this year and, as this is the first such competition in Scotland, it was intended to be flexible with rules including time limits and types of percussion/single instruments. The brass ensemble will be restricted to 5 brass players as three area heats had already taken place with this criteria applied. Fiona Dickson will be the accompanist for the weekend.

(d) **2010 SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIPS**

This will be held in Rothes Hall, Glenrothes on 13/14 March 2010. Peter Fraser advised that it might be helpful to have a meeting with a few SBBA executive members at Rothes Halls. He advised that Fife Council will cover the cost of an estimated loss of around £5,000 on the 2010 Championships. This will come under the banner of Flagship Fife and their logo will be included in the programmes and other advertising materials for the championships. All adjudicators were now confirmed.

A concern was expressed that adjudicators should not be appointed to judge Scottish Championships when they are playing or conducting bands in England and potentially taking part in the National Brass Band championship thereby competing against Scottish bands that they have adjudicated on. It was felt it was unfair to place adjudicators in a position where they could be subject to criticism or innuendo. It was a better policy to engage adjudicators who were not in a position of conflict of interest viz playing or conducting another band in the same national championships. Some members strongly agreed with this view, whilst others felt that adjudicators had to be trusted to act with total impartiality.

The difficulty of appointing adjudicators was highlighted and the criteria for adjudicating were that those selected should be top class musicians. In order to avoid charges of bias, arrangements may be made to change the adjudicating order this year and this issue was left with Peter Fraser to organise as best possible, having accepted that changes may not be possible. It was again reiterated that there had to be trust in adjudicators.

(e) 2011 SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIPS

It was suggested that it be held on 27/28 February in Perth if possible. It would also allow bands going to national championships to book accommodation early. Once dates are known, adjudicators could be sought and booked and this would be a real advantage for forward planning. John Gilmour felt that if weather conditions were like this year, the 27/28 February may prove a disaster in terms of bad weather preventing rehearsals due to cancellation of practices. After a general discussion on the issue of dates and availability of halls, it was agreed to hold the 2011 Scottish Championships on 27/28 February in the Concert Hall, Perth.

(f) 2010 WEST LOTHIAN FESTIVAL

This has been set for 6th, 13th and 27th June in Howden Centre, Livingston, featuring the music of Peter Graham. All administrative arrangements are already in place. The adjudication will be open.

(g) 2014 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2014 European Championships will be held from 27 April till 4th May 2010 in Perth. A video was prepared during the Scottish Open weekend in Perth and Peter Fraser advised that the filmmaker has raised his price to £800. However, the film-maker has been told him that it will not be increased further under any circumstances.

As Peter Fraser will step down as SBBA European representative in May 2010, it was proposed by Peter Fraser and seconded by Andy Smith that Alan Edmond should be put forward to the European Brass Band Association as the SBBA representative, this was unanimously agreed. Alan needs to prepare a CV with photo and this will be voted upon at the European AGM. Peter Fraser said that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time on the European Executive and he felt it was vital that Scotland was at the heart of European banding and he was delighted that Alan had accepted the nomination. Three Scottish candidates aged between 17-21 years, Ian Tonner, Hayley Edmond (and one trombone player still to be confirmed) are likely to be involved in the European Youth Band.

(h) CONTEST DATES / EVENTS CALENDAR

NCBBA Solo and Ensembles on Sunday 24 January 2010;
Brass in the Park on Saturday 4 September 2010
Fife Brass Band Festival on Saturday 16 April 2011.
Fife Charities Contest 2 October 2010 in Adam Smith Theatre, Kirkcaldy.

10. REGISTRATION

1722 players currently registered.

(c) Exceptions to and breaches of registration rules

Nothing to report.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Lesley Rose, Jedforest, was approved for Life Membership of SBBA. Two applications for SBBA awards have been received and will be considered by the Development Committee who will make recommendations.

12 DATE AND VENUE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting will take place on Sunday 14th February possibly in the Howden Park Centre, Livingston, but this will be confirmed by email as soon as possible. The following dates were agreed for future meetings of SBBA for session 2009/2010: 16 May; 1st August; 3rd October. Venues to be confirmed once the price of the Howden Park Centre is confirmed by the Secretary.

