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Communications Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on

Tuesday 22 October 2002 at 1440

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

Present:	Kieran Brady	-	Committee Chairman
	Paul Applegate		
	Eddie Jones		
In attendance:	Tony Butler	-	Technical Officer
	Lesley Gale	-	Editor, <i>Skydive Magazine</i>
	Beverly Fairhurst	-	<i>Skydive Magazine</i>
	David Hickling	-	from item 30
	Martin Shuttleworth	-	National Administrator
	Sue Waterfield	-	Administration Secretary
	Jim White	-	from item 30
Apologies for absence:	John Hitchen		
	Ian Midgley		
	Craig Poxon		

Item Minute

26/02 Minutes

Paul Applegate proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that the minutes of the Communications Committee meeting on Tuesday 20 August 2002 should be approved.

Approved

27/02 Matters arising

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

28/02 Report on Skydive Magazine

28.1 October 2002 issue

Lesley Gale spoke to her written report on the content and distribution of the October issue of *Skydive Magazine*. In discussion it was noted that some pictures of teams at the Nationals had not been taken at the event itself. Lesley Gale explained that this was a case where there had been no good pictures available, and she had therefore used earlier photographs taken elsewhere. She confirmed that one roll of film that had been sent to the Magazine had contained shots that had unfortunately proved to be unsuitable for reproduction because the pictures had been tainted by a green cast. The Chairman suggested that Lesley Gale might consider liaising with a photographer in advance to provide a checklist of commissioned shots for the Magazine.

28.2 December 2002 issue

Lesley Gale then reported on plans for the December 2002 issue. This was intended to contain the first of a new series of features *For starters*, an article on skysurfing, and reports on the Classics/CF Nationals and the World Cup, including *VMax's* gold medal, a piece on Penny Roberts and a DZ focus on Cyprus. Paul Applegate would be the subject of the *People in the*

Sport feature. There followed a discussion of potential subjects for future *People in the Sport* features, at the end of which the Chairman said he would pass to Lesley Gale a list of people for consideration for possible inclusion in this series, for which Lesley Gale was grateful.

28.3 Affiliated Clubs & Centres and Associated Organisations Pages

A Drop Zone Operator had expressed concern about the amount of text available to Associated Organisations, compared with the more restricted format of symbols available to Affiliated Clubs and Centres. Moreover, some of the Associated Organisations were involved in taking students outside the UK to train. There was also the consideration that the Magazine was running out of Clubs and Centres to feature in *DZ Focus*. Extensive discussion followed about plans to re-design these pages.

Paul Applegate proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that, with effect from 1 April 2003, the entries for Associated Organisations in the Magazine would be set out in a new format comprising their name and contact details together with a straightforward list of the services they provided, such as 'AFF' 'Static line', etc, with the 50-words of 'free text' no longer being used.

Carried

The above would be part of a wider re-design also involving the Affiliated Clubs and Centres page, where no variations were being proposed to the format of presentation information, but there would be a design makeover. Lesley Gale said she would bring a proposed new layout for the Affiliated/ Associated pages to the next or next but one meeting, and it would be necessary to highlight in advance to Associated Organisations the Committee's decision about the format of their entries in the Magazine changing from the April 2003 issue.

Action: Lesley Gale

28.4 Club News, Newsround and ratio of content to advertising

Beverly Fairhurst reported on the *Club News* and *JM's Newsround* sections of the Magazine. Lesley Gale then referred to a sheet (circulated) showing the ratio of editorial content to advertising from December 1999 to October 2002, which had shown little variation. This had been during the period in which the number of pages had increased from 68 to 84, and the number of editorial pages from 44 to 56.

28.5 Proposed magazine budget 2002/3

Lesley Gale had circulated a proposed Magazine budget for 2002/3 ahead of the meeting, and spoke to highlight the variations compared with last year's budget, to which she said it was otherwise very similar.

The budget showed an outturn loss of £3,225. Whereas Lesley Gale assured the Committee that the Magazine's performance had historically been better than budget, the Chairman said the Committee could not approve budgeting for a loss because it was not good practice - the budget had at least to break-even. The Chairman also raised the issue about how to treat the previous year's profit of £3,582 in the budget for the current year. In the tabled budget, this had been included as income during the current year. The Chairman said that, although there was no problem with the content of the budget he did have an issue with the way it was laid out which, however unintentionally, could potentially be misleading. Therefore asked Lesley Gale to recast the way in which the budget was laid out so that (i) the previous year's profit was not shown as income for the current year; and (ii) the outturn was at least break even.

Lesley Gale recalled that discussion of the format for setting out the budget had arisen on an annual basis, and expressed concern that the previous year's profit would no longer be earmarked for the Magazine if it was not to be shown. She pointed out that paragraph 5 of the Editorial contract stated that 'All profits made by the Magazine will be kept by the Association for Magazine use.' The Chairman said he had no problem with the carry forward being shown, what he was saying was that it was shown in the wrong place, because it was inappropriate to treat it as income during the current year. He had no difficulty with one-off expenditure on approved items being funded from the previous year's profits. The Committee had already agreed that Lesley Gale did not need to bring to the table for individual approval items to be purchased costing less than £250. The Chairman also confirmed that it was open to Lesley Gale at any

time to come forward with suggestions for the application of unspent profit on the Magazine from previous years.

In summary, Eddie Jones proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion approving the content of the Magazine budget for 2002/3 but asking Lesley Gale to recast its format of presentation in time for the next meeting, as the Chairman had suggested.

Carried

Bev Fairhurst then left the meeting, and there followed a discussion, initiated by Lesley Gale, about Bev Fairhurst's job and the remuneration for it. Lesley Gale explained that this had grown significantly since Bev Fairhurst had joined the Magazine, and that she (Lesley Gale) was proposing an increase in salary for Bev Fairhurst commensurate with this. The Committee noted that this had not happened at its behest. Eddie Jones asked Lesley Gale kindly to prepare for the next meeting a breakdown of the £51K shown in the 2002/3 Magazine production expenses under the heading of 'Editorial'. After further discussion, the Chairman asked Lesley Gale to report back to the next meeting with (i) the original and current job descriptions for Bev Fairhurst's post; and (ii) a clear written explanation of how the enhanced job description dovetailed with Lesley Gale's own job as Editor. With the budget breakdown requested by Eddie Jones, and the information on the relative roles of the two people working on the Magazine requested by the Chairman, the Committee should have available to it the information necessary to facilitate an informed discussion at its next meeting.

Action: Lesley Gale

The budget for the current year included an increase in the contract fee per issue from £7,980 to £8,636, that is an increase of £656 per issue for the six issues of the annual contract period, making a total increase of £3,936. Paul Applegate proposed, and Eddie Jones seconded, a motion that this increase should be approved, subject to the figures to being justified at the next meeting as per the previous paragraph.

Carried

Lesley Gale asked whether any salary increase that may be agreed for Bev Fairhurst could be backdated to the start of work on the December issue. The Chairman said the Committee would not be in a position to answer this question until its next meeting. Bev Fairhurst then re-joined the meeting.

29/02 Renewal of annual contract for Editorial Services

The annual contract between the BPA and Lesley Gale for Editorial Services for *Skydive Magazine* was now due for renewal. A copy of the existing contract had been circulated with the agenda. After discussion, Eddie Jones proposed, and Paul Applegate seconded, a motion that the contract be renewed for the period from October 2002 to October 2003 (covering six issues from December 2002 to October 2003) subject to the following agreed variations to the wording: (a) paragraph 6 - notice of termination of the contract by either party to be extended from the 'next issue' to the 'next but one issue' [as requested by Lesley Gale]; and (b) paragraph 7 - the wording 'by annual readership survey' to be replaced by 'by readership survey' [as requested by the Chairman].

Carried

30/02 Criteria for inclusion in Club News

Pursuant to minute 21 from the last meeting, Lesley Gale had circulated in advance copies of correspondence from *Team Pumpkin* members expressing their concern that the Committee had decided the team was no longer eligible for inclusion in *Club News*. The Chairman, who had also received such representations direct, believed that there had been a misunderstanding in that. Although the Committee had decided to confine *Club News* to Affiliated Clubs and Centres, it was happy for news of *Team Pumpkin*, *POPS* and other newsworthy organisations of interest to BPA Members to be covered elsewhere in the Magazine. He did not therefore believe that the Committee's decision had been conveyed to *Team Pumpkin* in its true context, the team having instead being incorrectly told that it was being omitted from *Club News* to make space. As such, the adverse reaction from the team was understandable although not actually warranted in the

light of what the Committee decided - that news from *Team Pumpkin* was to be moved, not removed. He had therefore personally explained the true position to representatives of *Team Pumpkin* and had helped to assuage their concerns.

Lesley Gale suggested that the criteria for inclusion in *Club News* - which she reminded the Committee had never existed until its last meeting - should be broadened slightly from 'BPA Affiliated Clubs & Centres' to 'BPA Affiliated Clubs & Centres and British non-commercial entities that exist to promote skydiving'. However, concern was expressed by Tony Butler that this would turn *Club News* into *Skydiving News*, and the idea of changing the name of the section was then discussed. Various other possible solutions were then considered, including dividing up *Club News* into a *Club News* section followed by a *Skydiving News* section for *Pumpkins*, *POPS*, etc, but Bev Fairhurst did not support this because she feared it would reduce the editorial flexibility of the section. Lesley Gale noted that items on Empuriabrava tended to be more 'newsy' and could therefore usually find a home in *JM's Newsround*.

After an extensive brainstorming session, but without a clear consensus having yet been reached, the Chairman noted that Committee's time had overrun. The Chairman therefore summarised by saying he had received representations from three Drop Zones on the eligibility for inclusion in *Club News*, and it was important to get the decision right rather than to rush through a decision at this meeting when there were clearly so many factors to be considered. He therefore decided to carry over this item to the agenda of the next meeting.

Action: Next meeting

31/02 Dates of next meeting

Tuesday 3 December 2002 at 1400 at the BPA Office.

The meeting closed at 1640.