



**Present:** David Perry (President), J Mason, C Taylor, G Roberts, B Smith, E Alcock, M Howard, P Chapman, M Kett, D Eastwell, T Dunton, F Shields, M Attfield, S Pope, R Summers, J Ottaway

**Apologies:** B Wymer, R Andrews, A Mobbs, M Todd, J Catchpole, M Elliott, F Clement, I Wones

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David Perry welcomed all members present, and then requested a minute silence in memory of members, friends and colleagues passed since the last meeting, specifically Charlie Boon (Norfolk BC) Liberty Trophy and O60s Team Manager and Life Member.

**Minutes of the last Executive meeting:** It was proposed by Mike Kett, and seconded by Ed Alcock, and agreed by all members present that the minutes of the Executive Meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at Wymondham Dell IBC (circulated to all clubs) should be signed as a true and accurate record.

**Matters arising:** There were no matters arising.

### **Correspondence:**

Key items which have arisen since the last Executive meeting and AGM.

#### EIBA Correspondence

1. Various in relation to county entries in Liberty, O60s, U25s and U18s
2. 23/10 – EIBA Trial nominations from the association
  - U25s
    - Josh Finch (Gallow)
  - Senior
    - Dan Seabourne (Norfolk BC)
    - Aaron Johnson (Norfolk BC)
    - Sam King (Gallow)
    - Richard Summers (Norfolk BC)
3. 17/1 – Receipt of first notice of AGM to be held 18<sup>th</sup> May 2024
4. 21/1 – Request for return of O60 Inter County Trophy, which was returned in person to EIBA HQ by David Perry on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January.
5. 31/1 – Notification to Carl Higgins of our withdrawal from the U18 Double Triples.

I have also received, via Peter Chapman, the details of approved aids which we will review to consider if we need to include in our own rules.

#### County Correspondence

1. Various administrative emails and exchanges with clubs on the clarification of rules, general questions and changes to club contacts.
2. Various administrative emails and exchanges between the county officers to support the running of the association.



3. Multiple emails related to the live streaming of games (e.g. Liberty) confirming the support and agreement of the association.
4. September 2023 – email exchanges with clubs related to the position of respots and a tweak to our rules to accommodate the differing positions from the T and inconsistency with the EIBA 1.5m placement.
5. 12/10/23 – confirmation to John Rednall of his inclusion in the Executive Council under our Rules & Objects 5.12 as an EIBA Director of an affiliated club.

### **Treasurers Report:**

Nothing to report at this point of the season, although we will make a loss overall simply based on the travel/match costs incurred by the success of the teams in the Liberty Trophy and U25 Double Rink, although this is obviously a great achievement for the Association.

David Perry  
Hon. Treasurer

### **Competition Secretaries Report (presented by Hon. Secretary):**

This season's competitions are progressing well with no major issues. I have read with interest the survey feedback but in my opinion, I think we are nearly there but for some minor changes to consider.

I do not feel it is practical to revert to the old approach we had to the competitions and end of season playoffs for all the reasons we have discussed previously.

#### Recommendation

1. First round play by date brought forward to end of October then 2nd round 3rd week in February thus leaving Nov, Dec, Jan, clearer for nationals and the tight schedule and Potters.
2. No dead ends but introduce respots as feel these have been a plus in county leagues.
3. Consider a new entry based singles as sets play along the same lines as the U25.

I would like to thank all competitors for their cooperation in helping the officials to bring our comps into the modern world and giving them a permanent future.

Barney Wymer  
Competition Secretary

### **EIBA National Competition results 2023/24:**

1. Liberty Trophy

28/10 Norfolk 140 – Suffolk 105  
16/12 Norfolk 124 – Cambridgeshire 102



13/1 (QF) Norfolk 119 – Northamptonshire 98

Semi-final against Durham to be played Saturday 2nd March at Erewash IBC.

2. U25 Inter County Double Rink

17/12 Norfolk 44 – Suffolk 42

Quarter-final against Northamptonshire to be played next Sunday 11th February at Spalding.

3. O60s Inter County

21/11 Norfolk 116 – Suffolk 117

8.d U18 Inter County

Regrettably due a lack of support, and commitment from our younger players the U25 Manager has been unable to secure a team. This is the second year this has arisen and further entry into the competition needs to be considered. Perhaps a more localised initiative would be more practical and better supported.

As a reminder we will elect our team managers for 2024/25 at the next Executive meeting in June and notices will be shared with clubs shortly to seek nominations.

Chris Taylor  
Hon. Secretary

### **Norfolk Bowls Association update:**

John Ottaway kindly provided an update to the meeting.

1. Planning for the 2024 Season is proceeding.
2. Our AGM was held on 3rd December 2023

Officer positions have been filled apart from JVP where a nomination is still being sought.

Various motions were passed principally:

- Jermy Cup change to 3x triples
  - Dress code clarified to permit Club clothing.
  - Motion to change League to 18 ends failed
3. Bowls England are undertaking a review of National Competitions & Championships which will be presented to the BE AGM on 24th February.



There are some quite radical recommendations, and it will be for the 35 County Associations to consider. Final details are still awaited, and we will have to move quickly with our considerations once these are received.

4. A review of our website is being undertaken. Having identified a potential web developer, circumstances have changed, and we will need to reconsider. how we proceed
5. Other than the above all other matters are of a usual day to day basis.

### **Results of County Surveys:**

The meeting discussed the feedback shared in advance of the meeting, and published on the county website, from the online surveys related to county leagues, competitions, and the design for a new county kit.

### **County League**

From the 53 responses received there is a clear indication that the current format of matches played on a Saturday, with a home and away fixture basis is the preferred structure, although several respondents have raised the question of midweek games.

Similarly, there is broad approval for the current format of the matches, namely fours, but some differing views on the length of the game (ends and or time limit), and the continued use of respots.

There is support for considering the introduction of a County League Cup but details of the format and specifically when these would be played needs to be considered and a number of options were discussed.

However, the very useful insight is in the additional comments made by respondents covering a wide range of topics on alternative options, travel , division structures, etc. which may help us in looking at options moving forward.

The number of responses is disappointing when you consider the number players who take part in the league. Equally the number of younger players who have responded is low, but this must be taken in the context that we do not have a clear view of the players age groups within the association.

### **County Competitions**

There is a preference to retain the current approach of qualification as club champions with the playoffs in the following season, but within the comments there is a small number who would like to revert to the old basis where playoffs are completed at the end of the season.

Following some discussion on this the fundamental challenge comes back to the reason why the change was introduced to overcome the end of season congestion and clashes with national finals and clubs having to allocate neutral venue rink space for playoffs which then prevented them from maximising their



own internal matches / leagues and often rinks would be released back to club at short notice as the draws progressed.

A factor which is not mentioned but has perhaps had an impact this season is the increase in EIBA competitions and what seems to be additional area games and shortened round dates which has resulted in fixture congestion, compounded by the county fixtures even though there are very few matches to be played and the round dates are published early in the season.

The Competition Secretary has reported he considers we should retain the current approach but with a number of recommendations going forward and the introduction of a new entry-based Sets Singles competition.

A compromise approach was put forward, to complete the county competitions during October/November of the following season. This would still retain the club qualification approach but would look to get them completed early in the season rather than throughout the following season at a time when there was less pressure from the nationals and when players may welcome the competition. This would be put to the Competition Secretary to consider as a proposal.

## **County Shirt**

From the 34 responses received the significant majority support the new design and the proposal outlined for introduction.

The intention to have black below the waist, other than for the County Friendly teams, has been put forward to allow individuals to purchase their own preferred kit from a recognised bowls supplier (e.g. Henselite) and removes the need for the association to hold stock of more than just shirts. However, it was raised independent of the survey that we consider red below the waist as an alternative option, but this was not felt to be appropriate by the meeting.

A key point to consider is the cost involved, and initial enquires should enable us to secure shirts for between £20-£30 each, which aligns broadly to the feedback in the survey. This cost could be offset or reduced if we can negotiate bulk deals and/or secure sponsorship.

However, in the case of any sponsorship it is recommended this excludes logos on the shirts as if/when the sponsorship ceases this may cause issues in shirt registration and alignment to the EIBA dress code rules. Therefore, we would ideally limit any sponsorship to be via the website, via the leagues including results/tables and in relation to the championships, and perhaps advertising boards or banners at clubs.

It was suggested that we may be able to adopt a similar approach to other sports where sponsors logos are attached to shirt by velcro giving us the flexibility for change and we will investigate if this is feasible.

The Executive agreed that we should look to progress this and specifically seek sponsorship to help offset the costs for members and/or the association.



### **League Secretaries Report and format of 2023/24 leagues:**

The League Secretary recommended that the county leagues should remain unchanged for 2024/25. On this basis the season would commence 5/10 and end 12/4 with a Christmas break between 14/12 and 4/1.

The County Competition finals are anticipated to take place 26/27 April 2025 subject to any changes previously discussed.

Entry forms for all the county leagues will be issued shortly and are to be returned by the end of March to allow the fixtures to be scheduled and reviewed.

A query was raised by Barry Smith (Dereham) if we could introduce a consistent 2pm start time for Saturday afternoon games. This was discussed with the point raised that some clubs have matches before the county league which prevent starting before 2:30pm. However, there was the option for Dereham to raise this as a motion for consideration at the AGM.

The proposal to retain the current league format was made by the league secretary, seconded by Michael Howard, and agreed unanimously by the voting members present.

David Perry  
Hon. League Secretary

### **AGM Proposals**

The following were presented as potential proposals which may be considered at the AGM, and all clubs were asked to consider these along with their own proposals to be submitted.

a. Rule changes to Competitions based on experience from 2023/24

Rationale – introduce to all competitions “respo” reusing the rules in place for the county league and U25 singles. Introduce a new sets-based singles open to all male members of fully affiliated clubs on the same basis (e.g. entry not qualification) as the U25 singles.

b. Rules & Objects 3.a amend this rule in relation to playing surface dimensions to comply with those laid out by the EIBA at the current time.

Rationale – the existing rules references Laws of the Sport of Bowls and these dimensions differ from those laid down by the EIBA and we are aware that a number of clubs comply with the EIBA dimensions but not the Laws of Sport which would, without change, preclude them from affiliation.

Proposal for revised wording of 3.a

That such clubs play on greens whose playing surface dimensions comply with those laid out by the English Indoor Bowling Association Ltd.



c. Rules & Objects 5.c and 9.J delete sections related to Selection Committee.

Rationale – the continuation of a Selection Committee for the Inter County Friendlies and Presidents Invitation games is seen as unnecessary and can be achieved by close working between the President and Match Secretary.

d. Dress code changes to County League (3.1.1 to 3.1.4), O60s Double Rink League (3.1.1 to 3.1.4) and Competition (10.1) rules

Rationale – amend wording to permit black trousers in addition to grey as it is becoming more common for black to be worn.

e. Introduction of a County League Cup

Rationale – to provide additional competitive inter club bowls, and consistent with the feedback from the recent online survey, introduce a new knock out competition based on the format of the Denny Cup with rinks at home and away playing simultaneously.

f. Changes required to ensure alignment to the recent EIBA published “Approved Equipment and Aids”.

Rationale – to ensure consistency with the guidance issued by our governing body

### **Nominations for June Executive and July AGM**

1. June Executive

The June Executive covers the appointment of the team managers for 2024/25 for the roles of

- Liberty Trophy Manager
- O60s Manager
- U25 Manager

Posters will be sent to all clubs before 16/2 seeking nominations, by 31<sup>st</sup> May, and clubs and the website will be updated with information including job descriptions.

2. AGM

The AGM will cover the appointment of all officers of the association, and it is hoped that the officers already in role will seek re-election, but nominations will be sought from clubs in the normal manner and to capture members before the indoor season ends posters will be shared with clubs before 16/2.

3. President 2024/25

The Senior Vice President, Bill Windsor, has had a number of discussions with the Hon. Secretary and President in relation to his second term in office and it



had at this point been anticipated he would, at his own request, address the meeting. However, in his absence information was shared with council.

In summary it is understood Bill still wishes to serve as President in 2024/25 but his ability to commit to some of the unwritten but expected accountabilities and responsibilities will be constrained as he has difficulty in getting to away games unless transport is available or arranged.

This raises a number of points which need to be considered and whilst Bill's wish to serve is recognised, as was the excellent execution of the role in his first term 2022/23, we have to consider if it is viable given the potential impact on others, for the association having what may be effectively a part-time President if he is unable to commit to travel beyond the county without assistance.

It was felt that perhaps Bill should, given the situation, his age and health over the past 18 months, reconsider his position and completing a second term in office.

The clubs were asked to provide feedback to the Hon. Secretary and then for the Hon. Secretary and President to arrange a meeting with Bill to discuss this matter.

### **Any other business / Open forum**

- a. Executive Council Meetings – it was asked if the Executive Council would rather meet during the day or specifically just move the February meeting to daytime. There was mixed reaction to this, and no firm decision or proposal reached so we will keep the matter under review.
- b. Presidents Invitation (PI) games 2024/25 – only one club has an anniversary in 2024/25 and therefore it is proposed to offer all clubs the option of a PI game as these have been well supported and offer the Ladies Association members a chance to participate in games as they no longer have inter county friendlies.
- c. EIBA Service of Merit – nominations are requested, and after consulting with the clubs in advance of the meeting, there was full support for the association to put forward David Perry for consideration and he had accepted the nomination. The relevant paperwork will be completed and submitted by 29<sup>th</sup> February.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8:00pm

### **Next meetings**

- Council Meeting: Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2024, Wymondham Dell IBC starting 7:00pm
- Annual General Meeting: Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2024, Wymondham Dell IBC starting 10:00am