

**The Minutes of the meeting of the Lothian & Borders Branch of
The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association
Held in Bellsquarry Hall, Livingston
On Sunday 25th September 2011**

Present: J.Hughes, Chairman..... Linlithgow
A.Dalziel, Vice Chairman Lothian & Borders Police
A.Hazzard, Secretary Bo'ness
LA Oubbaih Treasurer Linlithgow
W.Dalziel, Trophy Convenor Lothian & Borders Police
P.Hazzard, Minute Secretary Bo'ness
S.Hazzard Newtongrange
G.Purves Torphichen & Bathgate
N.Purves Torphichen & Bathgate
D.Brand Newtongrange
J. Brand Penicuik & District
M. O'Neill George Watson's College
I. Simpson..... George Watson's College Jnr

Apologies: C. McCluckie, LJ. McLaughlin, J. Barnes, B. McMorran, V. McMorran.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

The minutes of the meeting of 1st May 2011 were approved by Newtongrange and seconded by Penicuik.

Matters arising:

The playing requirement for Grade 4A bands will be discussed at the next Music Board meeting.

Secretary's report:

A letter fining a band for failing to let us know that they were withdrawing from the Peebles contest before the start of the grade has been sent out but there has been no reply so far.

Treasurer's report:

The Treasurer gave her report advised the meeting that there are still some payments from to come in from this season. Details are available from the secretary by request.

National Council report:

There has been no National Council Meeting.

Music Board report:

There has been no Music Board Meeting.

Trophy Convenor's report:

A total of £250 has been paid to the branch for trophies returned late. The Trophy Convenor also advised the meeting that some trophies are being returned in a shocking state from some bands with no attempt being made to clean the trophies. The meeting were reminded that the rules covering trophies state that trophies should be returned clean and in good condition. There was a discussion at this point as to whether or not we should impose a fine for trophies being returned in a poor condition.

The Trophy Convenor also requested that if bands wish to return large amounts of trophies in one batch then these should be returned to the Convenors home address and not returned at a contest as this could cause problems transporting large boxes of trophies home from contests.

Steward's report:

The Chief Steward said that stewards were late in reporting for duty at the end of the day at Peebles. Headquarters Stewards meeting will be on 15th October 2011

Education report:

We are still waiting on confirmation from some bands as to whether or not they have any members wishing to take part in any courses being run this year.

We are also having discussions with West Lothian Council to see if they can provide a possible venue for this year's courses.

Contests

Indoor Contest

Peebles High School has been provisionally booked for this year's indoor contest. There was a discussion on which date would be best for the indoor contest, two dates were given as suitable and it was decided to go ahead and arrange the contest for the 24th March 2012.

After discussion it was agreed that we may possibly re-introduce the Grade 1 competition to this event.

We may also introduce an Adult Tenor Drumming contest.

Entry forms for all Branch contests will be prepared for the October Meeting.

Major Championships

The Chairman asked for any feedback from this year's Major Championships.

It was stated that it was good to see the new banners at majors indicating arena numbers and also final tuning areas.

Cowal

Although there has been some rumour and speculation about this contest for next year the current contract is in place with the RSPBA up to and including 2013.

It was asked if some method of ensuring entry for band members who arrive in civvies being admitted to the ground, as some do not wish to wear their uniforms all day if perhaps not be playing for another 3 or 4 hours after arriving at the ground. It was suggested that wrist bands could be issued to playing band

members. The Chairman intimated that he would take this suggestion forward to national Council.

It was also pointed out that there were problems getting the trophies set out in time for the march past this year.

Worlds

It was asked if it would be possible for the Worlds trophies to be on display as they are at Cowal but we were advised that this could cause possible security problems.

There was some discussion about the positioning of some of the heats and we were advised that incorrect information was given out by one of the stewards as one of the arenas had been moved on the morning of the contest due to flooding.

Scottish - Dumbarton

It was said that there was a problem with the way bands were entering and leaving Arena 1 with the bands entering by the longest route and leaving by the shortest route. It was suggested that this could be better for the bands competing if the routes were reversed.

Europeans - Belfast

The park was much better laid out this year although there were still some issues getting grade 1 bands in and out of the arena.

It was also said that the venue should have been locked down during the contest as there were still vehicles moving about between the tuning park and the main arena, posing a potential health and safety risk.

It was also suggested that we could have used more pedestrian entrances to the park as we had much further to walk this year than last year to gain access

It was also suggested that if this contest was delayed by 30 minutes it would have made it much easier for bands flying in on the day of the contest.

British - Annan

This was better laid out this year although it was said the car parking area was not as good as expected.

2012 Contests

The dates were given for next years contests.

Majors:

Dumbarton	19 th May
Annan	30 th June
Belfast	28 th July
Worlds	11 th August
Cowal	25 th August

Branch Contests:

Dunbar	12 th May
Bathgate	26 th May
Edinburgh	3 rd June
Innerleithen	23 rd June
North Berwick	4 th August
Melrose	18 th August
Peebles	9 th September

There was some discussion on our branch contests.

It was agreed that having a separate Juvenile event at some contests may help attract more entries.

It was intimated that there had been an issue with a competitor at Peebles and that a complaint may be lodged with the Branch as a result. The Chairman advised that if the Branch did receive a complaint it would follow the existing complaints procedure.

It was asked if we could look at the final tuning areas at Peebles with a view to providing a separate tuning area nearer to the arenas.

Entries in general have been lower this year both at Majors and Branch contests but we also had problems with the high number of withdrawals at some branch contests.

The Branch is looking at establishing new contractual agreements with the promoters which would include fixing the price for the contest. This should simplify the invoicing procedures and assist the promoters in their budgeting.

AOCB

It was suggested that there are improvements made to the procedures for entering details for bands entering our branch contests to ensure there are no errors made.

It was said that the website is not always updated with the next branch event on the home page although this information could be available on the calendar page.

It was suggested that better communication from all parties would always help to improve the efficiency of the branch.

It was pointed out that the version of the Branch Constitution & Rules on the website did not have the updated ruling on the Branch Champion of Champions being the best 5 results from 7 contests. The Chairman reminded the meeting that this had been agreed at the 2010 AGM and that he will ensure the updated document is added to the website.

The date for this year's AGM has been set for 27th November.

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting.

Date of next meeting: Sunday 30th October at 18.00 in the Bellsquarry Village Hall.