

**The Minutes of the meeting of the Lothian & Borders Branch of
The Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association
On Sunday 29 September 2024**

S. Starr, Secretary
L. Riad
P. Starr, Chairman
P. Hazzard
W. Waugh
J. Gavin
M. Binder
M. O'Neill
W. Macintyre
T. Thompson
C. Allan
G. Allan
L. Moore
S. Grant
M. Cameron
E. Scott
I. Simpson

Peebles Ex-Servicemen's
Peoples Ford Boghall and Bathgate Caledonia
Penicuik & District
City of Edinburgh
Camelon & District
Camelon & District
Preston Lodge High School
George Watson's College
George Heriots School
Peoples Ford Boghall and Bathgate Caledonia
Livingston Caledonia
Stockbridge
Preston Lodge High School
City of Edinburgh
Camelon & District
Peebles Ex-Servicemen's
Peoples Ford Boghall and Bathgate Caledonia

Apologies

S. Orr, S. McQuillan, G. Dyet

Welcome

The President welcomed everyone to the meeting and thank everyone for a well ran season.

Minutes

The Minutes of the September Meeting Proposed by Camelon and District and seconded by Preston Lodge High School.

Treasurer's report:

The treasurer's report was presented and details are available by request.

The accounts will be closed on 30 September. L. Riad also asked if anyone comes forward to cash the voucher after this date, would it still be honoured. It was agreed that all vouchers would be honoured.

Secretary's report

S. Starr thanked everyone for their support and help during the season.

At the moment we are unable to confirm contest dates until the Majors are confirmed by headquarters. S. Starr explained that there has been no further correspondence from Edinburgh Academy after the proposal of moving this contest round the three other schools in Edinburgh. M. O'Neill had confirmed that there had been correspondence between Edinburgh Academy and George Watson's College.

L. Moore asked on what the likelihood of Dunbar and North Berwick returning to the circuit. S. Starr explained that there is a very high chance of North Berwick returning, but until we have dates for the Majors there has been no correspondence with Dunbar.

Director's report

P.Starr advised that the next meeting is scheduled for 5 October 2024.

Music Board Report

RSPBA Lothian & Borders Branch meeting – 30 September 2024 Music Board Report The Music Board met on the 21 April 2024 & 14 September, As our April Branch meeting was held shortly after the Music Board session, we had been awaiting the approval of the MB minutes to provide a report. These minutes have now been ratified by both the Music Board (MB) and the Board of Directors (BoD).

The September MB minutes will be presented to the BoD on October 5th by Sharon Smith, Director.

The summary below covers ratified matters and those awaiting further approval:

Standards and Grading Group

- The Grading Group sought MB approval to proceed with several gradings and re-gradings, as per the published procedures. Notifications were sent to Bands in April and September 2024.
- The rationale for grading decisions and the communications audit trail are maintained by the Convenor.
- There is a need to clarify registration rules between Affiliated Associations and the RSPBA, as it impacts grading decisions. Examples were provided by MB members highlighting how these rules affect the process. BoD are asked to resolve this matter.

Format Group:

The Format Group continue to work on several projects:

1. G2 WPBC Format:

- Progress has been made, with recommendations approved by the MB and passed to the BoD.

2. Solo Piping Development – World Solo Piping:

- This project originated from a recommendation by Iain Simpson of LB Branch. Following discussions, research led by L. Moore focused on gauging interest in a solo piping circuit.
- L. Moore, on behalf of the Format Group, conducted research into the RSPBA's solo piping approach. Feedback indicated strong interest in expanding solo competitions within the RSPBA, with national titles being a key request from Branch Reps.
- The MB has approved an approach that supports the Branch Network. We look forward to discussing this further at the next Branch meeting.

3. The Juvenile development project - please note this crucial point which has been reported at previous Branch meetings – the late Paul McAndrews as the MB Convenor in 2023 intimated that he would like the FG and MB to capture potential Format development ideas. This was Reported as part of the MB minute in January 2024.

Our Branch was informed of this at our February 24 meeting where the items captured to date were highlighted.

The FG also reported to MB their observations that the time scheduling of NJB, NJA and Juvenile at Major Championships is clashing with other grades. This important matter is now with MB Directors as an action point for the BoD. MB made positive reference on how this matter had previously been resolved.

FG will continue to progress its existing Juvenile development project and welcomes input from all relevant member Bands via the MB Reps in the usual way.

In addition, the MB Convenor is liaising with the BoD and FG on other matters (WPBC) which will be reported back at future meetings.

4. The BoD - Standing Orders Group have requested input from the FG and MB on a matter carried forward the March 2024 AGM.

5. As covered in our February Branch meeting, all were reminded that the MB and BoD approved a G1 two round contest back in 2023 to go live in 2025. The Previous MB minutes and FG minutes refer BoD/CEO AP 13TH/01/24 - To update the BoD Action list from the approved MB September 2023 minutes {Page 7 & Action Item page 9 Sept 01B} November minutes. This is to assist all Stakeholders with planning and executing the playing Format in preparation for the 2025 Major Championships. This is to take place at the contest scheduled where the Maximum 4/4/4 MSR is played and will be a two-round contest of MSR and Medley. Two sets of Adjudicators.

6. The new International Solo Drumming Circuit has almost completed with thanks extended to all hosts - RSPBA Branches and Affiliated Associations. NB- All Branches and Affiliated Associations who are seeking to host in 2025, please write to RSPBA CEO with your requested date.

7. The MB Convenor said she noted the request from the MB for the BoD to review the approach for Championship March pasts.

8. The MB Directors reminded the MB that a Convenor from within the elected Group is still required. It was also highlighted that at the April MB Meeting a proposal was made to assist this matter with a re-structure. For example, Convenor, Vice Convenor, to compliment the current Grading, Format and Tunes Group leads. This would help to reduce the current burden on the Convenor with a more even distribution of responsibilities.

Next meeting 16 November 2024.

M. O'Neill asked the discussion on the March Past developed. L. Moore advised he wasn't at the meeting M. O'Neill asked that the directors to think about a Finale instead of a March Past. After a discussion with the meeting there was a suggestion of each centre band taking on a group to March Past the Chieftain. W. Macintyre advised this is something that could be looked at Branch Level also, as he felt the length of time at Peebles was excessive. S. Starr explained that due to the cancellation of North Berwick the Confined event was also handed out at Peebles and this made it slightly longer.

Education

The Pipe Band College last met on Saturday 20 September and was well attended. Matters discussed as follows:

- Jim Campbell presented a Powerpoint outlining the work that has been done in terms of assessor training and PDQB Assessment delivery. Key points are:

- 2 new piping assessors have been approved to join the bank of assessors
- Total number of assessments delivered from beginning of December 2023 is 297
- A further 126 assessments are booked in for December 2024
- A request to have the Principal of Drumming attend PDQB meetings to help sort outstanding issues related to drumming exams is still awaiting formal ratification from BoD so we ask that the Board take this forward at the next BoD meeting
- The PDQB board and SQA have approved a number of changes to the PDQB syllabus from 1st September 2025 onwards and the changes will be communicated to members several months prior.

- We are now almost 12 months into a review of the PBC with no-one having been interviewed to our knowledge and no decisions being made to date, we feel justified in asking that the review be abandoned and the college be allowed to get on with its work unhindered by the sword of Damocles hanging over it.

The lack of communication is making it very difficult to make any positive progress in the Education of our members. In order to make progress in this matter the College feel that the Principals should have an opportunity to meet the directors, so that business can proceed efficiently and allow all of the directors to understand the work that is being done.

- John Nevans presented a report on the Summer School which appears to have been a success
- The Principal of Piping put forward a detailed discussion document around our future budget requirements in relation to number of bands currently registered in the Association. Research required for this document suggests that a falling membership requires urgent action to reverse and he feels education could assist greatly in achieving this. It was also the Unanimous view of the PBC that he be extended an invitation to attend the forthcoming BOD Meeting held on the 5th October to present and ensure that the PBC Budget Proposals are fully explained in detail
- The BoD are asked to reconsider the people who developed the CPBM courses to some form of recognition for their efforts in producing this ground breaking development in our Education system and aiding the future development of our bands. This matter has been sitting with the BoD for some time now without conclusion.

The Pipe Band College has 5 key offers in terms of Education to the Branches.

Pipe Band Musicianship Workshops – focus on instrument set-up – Tuning Approaches - Tune Choice – The Performance Ensemble & Delivery approach.

“A Teaching Approach Model” – PDQB Assessment Expectations and Teaching Tips. Fundamentally , a “Train the Trainer” approach. Also an opportunity to advise instructors on PDQB Syllabus changes 1 Sep 25.

Summer School principle delivered in Branches - “The Summer School on the Road”.

PDQB Classes/Piping & Drumming Tuition – Set up opportunities to deliver a regular one to one or small group teaching opportunities in targeted areas missing school delivery opportunities.

Resource Activity – Build a Library of Teaching Aids and Presentations – documents and Videos to enhance Workshop and Online education Delivery.

Work will be carried out to empower the Geographical Reps to promote and deliver these educational activities within their Branches.

Next PBC Meeting is Saturday 9 November

M. O’Neill asked how the changes to the syllabus will be advised to the Education Establishments. L. Moore explained that the PDQB will be updated and distributed.

AOCB

Indoors

S. Starr explained that current venue is unable to facilitate this years contest. S. Starr has contacted Bathgate Academy and as of yet we are waiting on a response.

There was also a discussion had in regards to the support of the Full band contests. It was agreed to hold for this years contest.

S. Starr also asked for people to help assist on the day, this may allow us to charge a entry as currently we do not have enough people available to help with this.

L. Riad explained that the 2024 event ran at a loss. T. Thompson also suggested contacting Inveralmond and Armadale High Schools.

J Gavin suggested holding two separate events. S. Starr explained that this is a great idea but would ultimately double the cost for the branch.

M. O'Neill advised that there has also been another WSD event being held on 5 April.

Our new date will be 29 March 2025

Meetings

S. Starr suggested that we go back to in person meetings. This was agreed by the majority. S. Starr to reach out to Belsquarry Village Hall to see if we can use the venue.

S. Starr will confirm if the next meeting is in person or online.

The meeting was closed at 18.55

Next online meeting will be 27 October 2024

DRAFT