



RSPBA North West England Branch

AGM and GM 26th November 2017 at Padgate Community Centre.

A quorum **was** attained within one half hour after the 13:00 start time of the meeting.

Present Officials

- P Brown Secretary
- C Eyre President, Treasurer & Webmaster
- P Brown Director RSPBA
- K Thacker Vice- Chairman
- T Brown Music Board representative
- J Thomson Chairman

Bands in attendance:-

- Warrington
- Wirral
- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue
- Manchester Phoenix
- West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue
- Liverpool Scottish Regimental Association

Apologies:-

- St Andrews Bolton

A quorum was attained, and the meeting started with the AGM @ 13:15

Opening

The chairman welcomed those attending the meeting and thanked them for the continued support they give to their bands and the branch throughout the year. He stated it would have been nice to see some representatives from the remainder of the Branch bands.

The minutes of the 2016 AGM have already been accepted by the branch members at the January 2017 GM. These approved minutes were used as a template for progressing the meeting.

Treasurers Report

As reported at the General Meetings throughout 2017 the branch is in a stable financial position considering the events run throughout the year.

The accounts were accepted at the 29th October 2017 General Meeting, showing a loss for the year of £106 and a respectable closing balance of £2344.

The branch secretary has forwarded a copy of the accounts to headquarters for their records.

A discussion took place regarding the branch Levy; should it be compulsory, was an increase needed, if Levy the right term as other branches have an education fee. In considering the various arguments it was decided that the Levy would remain set at the current £40 and this would be used to offset the competitions and workshops run by the branch

Music Board Report

The Music Board (MB) has again met four times (January, April, September and October) throughout 2017 since the branches last Annual General Meeting (AGM). Each Branch is entitled to nominate a Piping and Drumming representative (subject to holding the necessary qualification), the four English Branches are sparsely represented now with just three representatives in post out of the eight available seats on the board.

The Standards Group has worked hard throughout the year actioning grade requests, appeals as well as monitoring transfer. This year revised the 14 days wait between transferring between bands to 42 days for higher to lower transfers. Grading decisions are ratified by the Board of Directors sitting on the Music Board, with the decisions being posted to the RSPBA Web immediately following the meeting. Band registrations have been checked by the BoD at both major and minor contests.

The Tunes Group is a sub-committee of the Music Board that maintains the Prescribed Tunes List(s), for which details are available on the RSPBA Web site. The main page now provides background on how to choose tunes for variety and the use of "Tonality". Separate pages now list 2/4 Marches Strathspeys and Reels. There is also information on how you can request a tune be added to the lists. The group are currently working on the sample scores for the tunes requested to be added to the list for 2018, all the tunes are currently listed but may not be linked to a score.

Music Board members have commented on matters raised at branch meeting regarding competition format, as well as education (delivery and what is available). Details are captured in the Music Board and are reported to the branches via their representatives (or the Bod).

Members of the Music Board have also been looking at the format of the World Solo Drumming championship, this year two players qualified into the adult semi-final by winning at one of four Branch run qualifying heats, there were no crib sheets produced by the adjudicators in the adult final.

The Music Board are also looking at a review of competition format and the grading structure, as well as band member registrations.

If you have any thoughts on any competition format or education let your Music Board or BoD know, so the ideas can be thrown into the melting pot.

As mentioned there is still a shortage of Music Board members particularly drummers, please consider volunteering your time and talent.

Board of Directors Report

The work of the Board of Directors has been reported to the branch membership at each of the General Meetings held throughout the year, the branch is surviving but we need to encourage bands to join the Branch / RSPBA.

The branch Indoor competitions were successful and went off as planned, many thanks to those who participated, with special thanks to the Competition and Trophy Secretary for all the hard work that goes on behind the scenes.

The workshop was a success for those who attended. It was reported that holding this the day after a competition was not desirable. It might be that the branch simply facilitates Bands requesting education at their site (and expense), so any advise can be targeted to a specific need.

Major Championships 2017

This was the second visit to St. James playing fields for the British Championships at Paisley. The events team from Renfrewshire Council made many improvements from the previous year. This was in the main due to visits to venues holding the European Championships at Grant Park in Forres and the Scottish Championships at Levensgrove Park in Dumbarton. The re-positioning of the band bus parking adjacent to the entrance and exit of the field proved very successful. The layout of the complete field was completely revised from the previous year after liaison meetings between RSPBA and Renfrewshire Council

The United Kingdom, European and Scottish Championships were held in Stormont Estate, Belfast, Grant Park, Forres and Levensgrove Park, Dumbarton. All well tried and proven venues, where we were blessed with fair weather. The Worlds on Friday was however a wet and windy occasion and extremely difficult conditions for all. The Worlds on Saturday were a different day altogether with reasonably good weather conditions. An additional Arena was introduced to cater for the Novice Juvenile A & B contests and on completion was handed back to the promoter at 13.30 hours for the start of the traditional heavy events. The only negative feedback was the tuning facilities for Arenas 1&3. The decision to license the complete Glasgow Green was again appreciated by both competitors and pay customers alike. The large screen located at the Pencil was again popular with bandsman looking for finalists for all Adult grades with the exception of Grade 1. All in all deemed a very successful Worlds.

The World Solo Drumming and International Tenor Drumming Championships were once again in the Glasgow Caledonia Campus where the new auditorium was again the venue for the Final of the Adult Finals. Once again live streaming was provided with demand increasing by 89% over the previous year. There were 7274 live views, of which 4367 watched via Worlds Website and 2907 via Youtube. The Geography of the sessions covered twenty two countries outwith the UK.

Major Championships 2018 and beyond

This year saw the second of our three year deals with Paisley, Belfast, Forres and Dumbarton. All four contracts have a further year to run. This year saw the second year of our six year deal with Glasgow for the Worlds. The Glasgow deal has a further four Years to run.

The Board of Directors agreed to approach interested promoters for the next three year contracts covering the years 2019/20/21. Invitations were sent out during August with a closing date of noon 21st September, 2017. Interest was shown by a number of promoters but at that point in time only one bid met the financial securities to meet the RSPBA requirements. To this end Renfrewshire Council have been rewarded with the British Championships for 2019/20/21. Venue has still to be confirmed. The present agreement we have with West Dunbartonshire Council is a rolling agreement that either party may withdraw from the contract by giving two years notice of intent. We are however very confident that we will come to an agreement, which will incorporate an annual inflation element in the financial bid.

This therefore leaves us with both the European & United Kingdom Championships available for acceptable future bids. We have a number of extremely interested parties who all require financial budget guarantees in order to be successful. To this ends updated bids will be accepted by May,2018. We still have a further three years to run with Andante Percussion for the world Solo Drumming Championships. Our contract with the BBC was renewed in 2017 and has a further year to run.

Premises Update

As you will all be aware the future refurbishment of Headquarters took a back seat after the severe fire on Friday, 10th March this year. Temporary repairs have now been completed to ensure wind and water tight during the forthcoming winter. Our Insurance company have offered a settlement of approximately £123K towards the complete renewal of the entire roof area. The Board of Directors met in the Abbotsford Hotel , Dumbarton on the Friday prior to the Scottish Championships and unanimously agreed that the refurbishment would cover two floors only. Further meetings have been held with Architects to agree final requirements and it is now anticipated that the work will commence in June 2018 and complete by March 2019. Arrangements to decant the entire building have still to be finalised. The proposals will include complete refurbishment of the existing building and will include disabled access to first floor.

Association Finances

It is anticipated that the Association will show a working surplus in excess of £80k to year end 31st December, 2017. This together with the balance and investments carried forward from the previous year will show an anticipated total of £850K going forward. At the Board of Directors meeting on 7th October, 2017 the following was agreed:-

1. Championship Entry Fees & Prize Money	No Change
2. Officials Fees and Expenses	No Change
3. Staff Salaries	Increased
4. Staff Pensions	Ongoing

Band Registration Checks

During the past few seasons checks of current registration lists have been carried out at both Minor and Major contests after the selected bands have completed their performances. Over the period when checks have been carried has seen a major reduction of errors now sitting at 2%.

Summer School

A highly successful Summer School was again held in the Gaelic School in Anderson Glasgow, at the beginning of August. Over 35 students attended from all over the UK. Again Drum Majors attended at the latter part of the week receiving guidance from Drum Major

Adjudicator John Noble. My congratulations to our Education Officer Pat Whelan, together with John Nevans, and his highly professional team of Instructors.

Scottish Qualification Awards/ Disclosure Scotland

A total of 262 certificates were awarded in 2016. It is anticipated that a total of 306 certificates will be awarded by 31st December, 2017. Examinations were carried at the following locations :- Dublin, Northern Ireland, RSPBA, Johannesburg, Dundee, Perth & Angus , Robert Gordons College, George Watsons College and Johnstone.

It was decided by the Board of Directors that all Instructors /Assessors should be disclosed prior to carrying out any duties on behalf of the RSPBA.

On a closing note the G Hamill will be standing down as chairman of both the RSPBA and the Glasgow & West of Scotland Branch in 2018.

Branch Officials

No nominations for consideration for the branch official posts coming up for renewal were received. The current post holders were asked if they were willing to continue in post. The table below shows the proposer and seconder, and all others present were like minded.

All other Branch Officials were ratified in post.
Proposed: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue
Seconded: Manchester Phoenix
All others were like minded.

The branch secretary is to forward details of the branch officials to headquarters for their records.

Post		In Post until	
President	C Eyre	Dec 2020	26 th Nov 2017 AGM Prop: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Sec: Manchester Phoenix
Chairman	J Thomson	Dec 2020	26 th Nov 2017 AGM Prop: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Sec: Manchester Phoenix
Vice-Chairman	K Thacker	Dec 2020	26 th Nov 2017 AGM Prop: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Sec: Manchester Phoenix
Secretary	P Brown	Dec 2020	26 th Nov 2017 AGM Prop: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Sec: Manchester Phoenix
Treasurer	C Eyre	Dec 2020	26 th Nov 2017 AGM Prop: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Sec: Manchester Phoenix
Music Board	T Brown	Dec 2019	4 th Dec 2016 AGM Prop: Chorley, Croft and Culcheth Sec: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue
Director	P Brown	Dec 2019	4 th Dec 2016 AGM Prop: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Sec: Wirral

Trophy Steward, Web Site Design and Competition Secretary	C Eyre	Dec 2019	4 th Dec 2016 AGM Prop: Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Sec: Chorley, Croft and Culcheth
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AOCB

No AOCB on the AGM raised.

AGM closed at 13:55 and the meeting progressed into the GM at 14:00 after a short break.

Welcome

Covered by the AGM

The GM Minutes of the 29th October were circulated. The minutes were accepted in full on a:
Proposal by Wirral
Seconded by Warrington
All others were like minded.

Matters Arising

No news has been received regarding the health of Kevin Reilly.

Treasurers Report

Update as per AGM.

Directors Report

Update as per AGM.

Only one rule change has been agreed to go to the AGM at this stage, and this is coming from the adjudicators to allow conferring between band performances. This was run as a pilot last year. The consensus adjudication pilot has run its course and will not be progressed further with regards to amending placings.

Other rule changes will be communicated as they become known.

The review of RSPBA band registration and fees is ongoing. The focus is on how we allow the Band Secretary to easily view their roster using the web in the first instance.

Finally, we will imminently, subject to BoD approval, be adding the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) process and procedures to the website. These should allow the bands and branches to develop their own from these documents.

Music Board Report

The Music Board Tunes Group are at the early stages at looking at drumming scores.

2015 Branch Competitions.

Those present discussed the branch competitions.

The events are open to all branches, to increase the viability of the events and vary the competition. Within each section of the open competition, confined branch results will also be announced.

The entry forms are available on the NWE Branch Website.

The venue will be St Joseph's, Birkenhead pending other premises becoming available at a reasonable cost.

103 Regiment will be asked for their support in assisting to steward the events.

Adjudicators have been contacted and have agreed for the Solos and Trios. We are still working on those for the Minibands, however this date may clash with the adjudicators training day.

The dates have been notified to headquarters.

The proposed dates are:-

- Solo Piping: Saturday 17th February (St Joseph's, Birkenhead)
Adjudicator - Harry Stevenson
- Trio Piping: Saturday 3rd March (St Joseph's, Birkenhead)
Adjudicator - Cameron Edgar
- Solo Drumming, Quartets and Minibands: Saturday 7th April (St Joseph's, Birkenhead). *PMs can decide on entry to Quartets and/or Mini Bands.*
Adjudicators to be contacted: Jim Ward and Ciaran Mordaunt

Workshops

It has been agreed that any workshops will not be run in conjunction with any of the Indoor Contests.

Tentative enquires have been made to piggy back on an activity planned to be delivered to the Lothian and Borders branch have reached a stale mate, as the branch / bands are not set up for educational journey.

I am keen that any future educational input from the Association isn't a one off single subject event but a platform for continual growth and as a member of the outreach team I would want the workshop to be the trigger for Bands in your area to access the scheme and the experience of the instructors who man it to stimulate interest in the Bands and drive the challenges. I would like to see a weekend workshop with time to address issues for each Band and to set an agenda for progress looking at what it means to enter the competing scene and where the benefits lie in being assessed by an external examiner (Adjudicator).

It was asked if education activity must be centrally delivered. The response was no, it can be delivered by local resources if it meets the needs of the requestor.

Following discussion, it was proposed we will now look to the possibility of obtaining an Ensemble Adjudicator with a drumming preference, to attend GMFRS premises on the 24th or 25th Feb 2017, to comment on / review the GMFR and Phoenix bands sets for the 2018 season, and possibly provide some insight into the development of drum scores for the Grade 4 bands (Wirral). This way costs incurred can be split between the branch and bands.

A Drum Majors workshop will be arranged when the weather improves, with basic instruction being provided by Calum Brown (our local resource).

AOCB

Happy Christmas And New Year to ALL.

Any one available to help WYFRS play at a concert on the 3rd December contact Theresa.

Please bring Raffle prizes (recycled Christmas presents) to the next meeting – all donations gratefully received.

Next GM meeting will be 7th January 2017 @ 13:00

Closed @ 14:40

P L Brown
Secretary
NWE Branch