

National Committee (NC) meeting

Date: Sunday, 11 October 2009
Time: 2 - 5.30pm
Venue: Alleyne Room, Arts & Leisure Centre, Stevenage
Lytton Way, Stevenage, Herts SG1 1LZ

Present

Errol Blake (NC Chair), Hilary Hadley (NC Vice Chair), Debbie Bevan (NC Secretary), Jock Hopson (Director International Affairs), Patrick Breheny (Treasurer), Malcolm Smalley (Membership Secretary), Lesley Drewe (Jodo DRC), Chris Mansfield (Iaido DRC)

Others in Attendance

Paul Gray (PRO), Victor Cook (Iaido Bucho), Harry Jones (representing Andy Watson, Jodo Bucho), Derek Jones (representing Mike Davis, Kendo Bucho)

Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Donald Gordon (H&S).

Minutes

The minutes of the 19 July NC meeting were unanimously approved.

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

- Decision:** That the Bucho should not be allowed to vote at NC meetings
- Decision:** That funds surplus on 31 December 2009 be retained as a BKA contingency fund.
- Decision:** Bu should be allowed to benefit directly (ie retain profits) from their special events.
- Decision:** That £10,000 of the profits from the 2009 Ishido sensei 30th anniversary summer school/taikai should be ring-fenced and used for the 'Ishido Sensei Development Fund'.
- Action:** Lesley Drewe (LD) and Chris Mansfield (CM) to develop a policy for the administration of this fund: Aims, principles, eligibility etc.
- Decision:** Kendo DRC to debate issue of kendo levy to establish a consensus
- Action:** Patrick Brehenny (PB) to produce quarterly summarised financial reports for publication on the BKA website.
- Action:** Updated expenses policy - Debbie Bevan (DB) to email draft expenses policy to all NC members.
- Decision:** That a membership survey should be carried out (to be included with membership renewal documentation).

Action: Paul Gray (PG) to produce membership survey.

Topic: Usage of Duco's services was discussed, which was diminishing.

Action: Malcolm Smalley (MS) to check contract with Duco

Decision: IT sub-committee to be set up.

Action 1: PG to co-ordinate IT group and chair IT sub-committee.

Action 2: PG to give a hard copy of all passwords to the NC Chair.

Decision: Communications & marketing (written policy) to be an agenda item at next NC meeting. Documents to be emailed to NC and Bucho prior to NC meeting.

Action: DB to put on NC meeting agenda; PG to email documents to NC/Bucho.

Decision: Commissioned reports should be sent to the NC first who would arrange for the report to be put on the BKA website.

Decision: Re EKF - NC Chair will delegate his signature to 2 specific functional areas - Director of International Affairs and Membership Secretary (for eligibility to grade abroad matters).

Action: Errol Blake (EB) to write to EKF delegating his signature to the Director of International Affairs (DIA) and Membership Secretary.

Decision: BKA website information on eligibility to grade abroad applications to be updated.

Action: MS to update website re eligibility to grade abroad certificates.

Decision: EKF website to be used efficiently - advertising seminars etc.

Action: Email relevant events info to PG who will arrange for it to go on the EKF website.

Decision: 2010 AGM - If there is to be a tachi uchi no kurai practice at the AGM we will need a description to advertise the practice.

Action: DB to arrange/commission description.

Decision: AGM Venue - also look for suitable venues in the midlands.

Action: DB to look for venues in the midlands.

Discussion: Request by a person in Pakistan to assist with the establishment of kendo in that country.

Action: That we take no further action.

Discussion: A private company is marketing a USB key to teachers (memory4teachers). This key will contain information resources for teachers, including sports organisations, local clubs etc. If the BKA wished to become involved it would cost approximately £1,500 + vat.

Decision: That we take no further action.

Action: PG to send list of insurance FAQ to PB for forwarding to our brokers.

Decision: Next NC meeting would be held on Sunday 31 January 2010.

Decision: That the title of Bucho should be retained.

Decision: That officers of the BKA (apart from the DIA) should not use the title of 'Director'.

Decision: That BKA officers should use the titles as given in the BKA's constitution.

Discussion: Change in wording of Byelaw 2.5. Discussion to be delayed until next NC meeting.

Action: DB and DJ to liaise on wording.

Decision: Accepting new clubs for BKA registration - is there a system for approval - to be put on agenda for next NC meeting.

Action: DB to list as an agenda item for next meeting, PG (in discussion with MS) to put some recommendations together (for a system for approval) for next meeting.

Full Minutes (NB 8 NC members present and entitled to vote)

EB opened the meeting and welcomed the Jodo and Iaido DRC Chairs, Lesley Drewe and Chris Mansfield.

Agenda item 1

Apology for absence received from Donald Gordon.

Agenda item 2

The minutes of the previous NC meeting (19 July 2009) were unanimously approved.

Agenda item 3

Update on action points from NC meeting on 19 July 2009:

Arrange Kendo DRC meeting

Status: Meeting held on 18 October 2009.

Monitoring of number of requests for eligibility to grade letters

Status: 20 applications received so far.

Bank account signatories

Status: New signatory mandate in process of being set up.

List of FAQ about insurance cover

Status: List compiled and put to insurers - awaiting response.

Upper age limit of 75 years for insurance cover

Status: Current insurers will not insure >75 year olds. PB to ask our broker to look at alternative providers.

Medical information to be recorded on electronic database

Status: Electronic form updated.

Members to be allowed to join and renew throughout the calendar year

Status: Will be available for 2010 renewals.

Composition of panel to consider renshi applications.

Status: Kendo Bu wish to keep their existing system of a panel of 3 shogo holders from the kendo bu to consider applications. Iai and Jodo Bu will decide their own panel composition.

Should Bucho be allowed voting rights at NC meetings

Status: It was decided to discuss the issue at this point in the agenda. Noted that during the transitional period the NC were having to deal with matters that would subsequently pass to the Bu. The Bu are operating with as much autonomy as possible; the NC performs a monitoring function (of the Bu); to allow the Bucho to vote would undermine this function.

Proposal: That the Bucho be allowed to vote at NC meetings

Vote: 7 against, 1 abstention - NOT CARRIED

Set up a Child & Vulnerable Person working group

Status: 3 people willing to serve but no-one has volunteered to Chair the group - position to be advertised on the BKA website.

Adoption of Policy regarding members with medical issues

Status: Now on BKA website.

Financial reporting procedures

Status: PB to produce a pro forma.

Expenses policy

Status: Policy drafted, circulated to NC members for discussion.

Bu information for doctor's medical assessment

Status: Full medical policy completed.

Agenda item 4

Financial ring-fencing

It was noted that from 1 January 2010 each Bu would have its own 'pot of money', with some money being left in a collective 'pot'.

PB estimated that we should have about £45,000 in the bank at the beginning of 2010, and advised that at least £35,000 of this should be kept as a contingency fund. There was discussion as to whether the surplus should be divided amongst the Bu.

Proposal: That funds surplus on 31 December 2009 be retained as a BKA contingency fund.

Vote: 8 for - CARRIED.

There was discussion of each Bu keeping profits generated by their own events. It was noted that the last Kendo World Championships generated a profit, as had numerous iaido and jodo events. The profit generated from the laido/Jodo Summer Seminar, at which special events were held to celebrate Ishido sensei's over 30 years contribution to UK iaido and jodo, was discussed.

Proposal: Should Iai and Jodo Bu be allowed to benefit directly (ie retain the profit) from this special event.

Vote: 6 for, 2 against - CARRIED.

It was suggested that the profit from the laido/Jodo Summer seminar should be used to endow an 'Ishido Sensei Development Fund' to help develop these arts in the UK, in recognition of Ishido Sensei's 30 year contribution to the development of iai and jodo in the UK. It was estimated that there would be £12,500 profit.

Proposal: That £10,000 of the profits from the 2009 Ishido sensei 30th anniversary summer school/taikai should be ring-fenced and used for the 'Ishido Sensei Development Fund'.

Vote: 8 for - CARRIED.

Action: LD and CM to develop a policy for the administration of this fund: Aims, principles, eligibility etc.

Agenda Item 5

Fee setting for 2010

The issue of a kendo levy was discussed. The Kendo Bu has asked the NC to use its exceptional powers (in this first year of transition to the new constitution, the NC has been given exceptional powers to act in the interests of the Association) to grant an additional £10 levy for 2010. It was noted that if the NC agreed to the levy it would have to be an Agenda item for debate at the 2010 AGM. After this transitional year a Bu must present a case for a levy and seek Bu members' approval for any additional levy.

It was noted that the kendo levy had previously been used to pay for a coach. Derek Jones (DJ) explained that a 2010 levy would be used in some part to fund intensive squad training (which was open to all kendo members), and to keep seminar prices reasonable. It was suggested that instead of a levy, kendo members could be asked to make a donation when renewing their membership. It was agreed that the issue could be debated by the Kendo DRC at the meeting on 18 October 2009.

Proposal: Kendo DRC to debate issue of kendo levy to establish a consensus

Vote: 7 for, 1 abstention - CARRIED.

Bu budgets were discussed. It was noted that each BuEC can decide to distribute its income in whatever way it likes, within the provisions of the constitution. Monitoring of expenditure was discussed. According to the BKA constitution, quarterly reports of the summarised accounts (NC and Bu) have to be published to the membership by the Treasurer. PB said that with the new constitution and ring-fenced accounts from January 2010 and trying to control finances then it would be preferable to have a summary report on a monthly basis, this could possibly stretched to 2 months. PB noted that the Bu did not appear to have finance officers so he was concerned who would be doing the reporting to the Treasurer. In answer to a question, PB explained that gifts

given to sensei were not individually itemised in the reports. It was also noted that, according to the constitution (9.12) the BuEC shall manage the funds of the Bu to optimise the attainment of the policies of the Bu: the Bu should produce written policies.

PB explained that, currently, per member, £8-50 of the annual £40 membership fee was assigned to the Bu. It was decided that PB would inform the Bu, based on this year's figures, what they would be likely to receive from the membership fee. The Bu should be given 2 weeks to present budgets to the Treasurer.

NC costs were discussed. PB noted that these include AGM costs (room hire, copies of annual accounts etc.), audit fee, travel expenses, insurance, Director of International Affairs costs, stationary etc.

Action: PB to produce quarterly summarised financial reports for publication on the BKA website.

Agenda Item 6

Expenses policy

It was noted that the current expenses policy is based on a 'flat rate' principle. We are looking at changing this to an 'actual expenditure - within defined limits' system.

It was agreed that DB would ensure that all NC members had received a copy of the draft updated policy.

Action: DB to email draft expenses policy to all NC members.

Agenda Item 7

Membership update

Congratulations and thanks were offered to the membership team, particularly MS in developing the on-line membership system.

MS explained that membership was down by 4.6% this year and fewer established members had been lost. Hard copies of membership renewal forms would be sent out this year which would include a reminder about on-line membership. It is planned to put an article about on-line membership on the website home page.

MS explained that the online system had been launched to dojo 1 month ago and there had been about a 50% take up. It was launched to members last weekend and about 220 members had signed up to date. Security issues were discussed. MS noted that automatic daily backups were being taken of the database, these were sent to a different server and the backup was also emailed to MS automatically.

Regarding dojo registration renewals, MS said that these would be sent out by 2 November, therefore fees would need to be agreed by 26 October. The membership renewals need to be sent out by 1 December, they would therefore have to be printed by 24 November, or a few days earlier if a newsletter or chairman's address was to be included.

The use of Duco was discussed. MS explained that Duco had been doing some grading registration work for the Kendo Bu. However, a kendo Grading Officer was now in post so this should cease. MS explained that Duco had previously been used for sending out

membership renewals, this year MS would be using volunteers. It was agreed that MS would check the contractual arrangements with Duco. MS also suggested that a Membership Secretary Assistant be seconded which would also help when it came to MS to hand the job of Membership Secretary on.

Action: MS to check contract with Duco

It was noted that the membership renewal papers would include a letter from the Chair as part of 'News Online' (produced by Paul Gray). There was discussion of whether a membership survey should be included.

Proposal: That a membership survey should be carried out (to be included with renewal documentation).

Vote: 5 for, 3 abstentions - CARRIED.

Action: PG to produce membership survey

Agenda Item 8

IT responsibilities - who does what?

Congratulations and thanks were offered to the website team. Several members are involved in the provision of IT facilities e.g. website construction, maintenance, updating, online membership system etc. It was agreed that PG would act as co-ordinator of the website team. The need for greater co-ordination and documentation of our IT provision e.g. a list of contacts details of who does what; website documentation (hosts, passwords, contracts signed, renewal dates etc) was discussed. It was noted that there were several system passwords - PG was asked to send a hardcopy of these to the Chair. It was suggested that PG should chair an IT sub-committee.

Decision: IT sub-committee to be set up.

Action 1: PG to co-ordinate IT group and chair IT sub-committee.

Action 2: PG to give a hard copy of all passwords to the NC Chair.

Agenda Item 9

Communications policy & website upgrade

The possible need for upgrading our IT hardware and software investment was discussed, as we are making greater demands on IT usage etc. It was agreed that communications and marketing would be discussed as an agenda item at the next NC meeting. PG to email relevant documents to NC members and Bucho prior to the meeting. It was also decided that we would discuss discontinuing the telephone hotline at the next NC meeting. It was noted that the NC must be informed of sponsorship deals. DJ asked how can we get other websites to link to the BKA website.

Decision: Communications & marketing (written policy) to be an agenda item at next NC meeting. Documents to be emailed to NC and Bucho prior to NC meeting.

Action: DB to put on NC meeting agenda; PG to email documents to NC/Bucho.

Agenda Item 10

International matters

Jock Hopson (JH) explained that there was no problem with EKF and IKF recognition of the BKA's current organisational structure. The Chair, DIA and the Membership Secretary were all conducting business as normal. EB explained that John Howell's report from the European Kendo Federation AGM at the 14th KWC had raised questions about functionality of certain NC member's roles. EB said that he had been in contact with the EKF Chair following the EKF's recent Board of Director's meeting. The EKF recognised that the NC Chair was equivalent to President and that the Chair could delegate specific functional areas to the DIA and the Membership Secretary. Eligibility to Grade abroad certificates already issued under MS's signature were valid. EB added that he would be writing to the EKF delegating his signature in these specific areas to the DIA and Membership Secretary. However, he was not delegating signatory rights to the Bucho. EB explained that the DIA is not eligible for election to the EKF's Board of Directors, but the NC Chair is.

MS was asked to update the BKA website regarding the information on eligibility to grade abroad certificates. MS explained that individual applicants would receive a certificate (if eligible) and an email with a list of eligible applicants would be sent to the event organisers.

JH said that we need to use the EKF website efficiently - advertise on its website. PG said that information could be emailed to him and he would get it onto the EKF website.

The protocol for publishing reports on the BKA website was discussed - it was agreed that reports which had been commissioned should be sent to the NC first, before being put on the website.

Proposal: Commissioned reports should be sent to the NC first who would arrange for the report to be put on the website.

Vote: 8 for - CARRIED.

Decision 1: Re EKF - NC Chair will delegate his signature to 2 specific functional areas - Director of International Affairs and Membership Secretary (for eligibility to grade abroad matters).

Action 1: EB to write to EKF delegating his signature to DIA and Membership Secretary.

Decision 2: BKA website information on eligibility to grade abroad applications to be updated.

Action 2: MS to update website re eligibility to grade abroad certificates.

Decision 3: Need to use the EKF website efficiently - advertising seminars etc.

Action 3: All - email relevant events info to PG who will arrange for it to go on the EKF website.

Agenda Item 11

Bu Reports/updates, Bu-related matters

It was noted that it was a requirement in the constitution that Bu EC meeting minutes should be published to the membership. There was discussion of what information should be in the minutes. EB suggested that the minutes should contain who attended, votes

taken etc. It was also noted that we would need the same information from the DRC meetings. Victor Cook provided an update note on the laido Bu's activities this year.

Agenda Item 12

2010 BKA AGM

The pre-AGM practice was discussed. It was suggested that as well as Bu-specific practice it would be good to hold a practice that members of all 3 Bu could participate in. It was suggested that tachi uchi no kurai would be a possibility. Other arts (tanjo, jitte) were also suggested, possibly as demonstrations.

The venue of the AGM was discussed. While Stevenage was a possibility, it was agreed that it would be better to have the meeting as close to the midlands as possible.

Decision 1: If there is to be a tachi uchi no kurai practice at the AGM we will need a description to advertise the practice.

Action 1: DB to arrange/commission description.

Decision 2: AGM Venue - also look for suitable venues in the midlands.

Action 2: DB to look for venues in the midlands.

DJ suggested 8 May 2010 as a possible date for the AGM.

Agenda Item 13

Compliance Group, Review of H&S, Child & Vulnerable Persons policies

EB explained that he had accepted temporary chairmanship of this group, but would like someone else to take on the role. It was decided that the position of Chair of the Compliance Group would be advertised on the BKA website.

Agenda Item 14

Chairman's report

EB explained that he had been approached by the British Aikido Association (BAA), asking that we consider entering into some kind of association. It was noted that the BAA belongs to the British Aikido Board and focuses on the competitive sports approach to aikido (Tomiki). The BAA has about 90 clubs, 1500 members, of whom about 600-700 are juniors. The possible benefits of such an association were discussed, such as a possibly holding joint courses, sharing a national team physio, discounts on insurance etc.

Proposal: That we should take no further action on this matter.

Vote: 8 for - CARRIED.

EB had received a request by a person in Pakistan to assist with the establishment of kendo in that country. The pros and cons of agreeing to this request were discussed. It was thought that this matter could be referred to the Kendo Bu for their consideration.

Proposal: That we take no further action on this matter.

Vote: 7 for, 1 abstention - CARRIED.

EB explained that the BKA had been approached by a private company marketing a USB key to teachers (memory4teachers). This key will contain information resources for teachers, including sports organisations, local clubs etc. If the BKA wished to become involved it would cost approximately £1,500 + vat.

Proposal: That we take no further action on this matter.

Vote: 8 for - CARRIED.

Regarding school and dojo startup - it was decided that each Bu should decide its own policy when needed.

Insurance FAQs - EB explained that he had constructed a list of possible insurance FAQs - which he emailed to everyone requesting additional questions to be added. PG said that he had some further questions to add to the list. It was agreed that PG would co-ordinate and send the completed list to PB to forward to our insurance brokers for answers to each FAQ. The results would then be posted on the BKA website.

Action: PG to send list of insurance FAQ to PB for forwarding to our brokers.

EB informed the meeting that he will be sending letters of thanks to the UK kendo squad (competitors and management) regarding the 14th World Kendo Championships.

Agenda Item 15

Further NC meeting dates

It was agreed that the next NC meeting would be held on Sunday 31 January 2010.

Agenda Item 16

AoB

The issue of whether the title of Bucho should be changed to Director was discussed. It was thought that as we practice Japanese arts, and the title of Bucho is readily understood within budo, the title 'Bucho' should be retained.

Proposal: That the title of Bucho should be retained.

Vote: 8 for - CARRIED

Proposal: That officers of the BKA (apart from the DIA) should not use the title of 'Director'.

Vote: 8 for - CARRIED.

Proposal: That BKA officers should use the titles as given in the BKA's constitution.

Vote: 8 for - CARRIED.

Change in wording of Byelaw 2.5. Discussion to be delayed until next NC meeting. DB and DJ to liaise on wording.

Action: DB and DJ to liaise on wording.

Accepting new clubs for BKA registration was discussed - is there a system for approval? It was decided that this should be an agenda item for the next NC meeting: EB to put some recommendations together for the meeting.

Decision: Accepting new clubs for BKA registration - is there a system for approval - to be put on agenda for next NC meeting.

Action: DB to list as an agenda item for next meeting, PG (in discussion with MS) to put some recommendations together (for a system for approval) for next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5.42pm

Minutes taken by Debbie Bevan