

## DRAFT : BULLET POINTS – STRATEGY DAY AT WEETWOOD HALL – 22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2026

10.30 am to 3.30pm

### ATTENDEES

David Guild, Nick Woolven, Lesley Millet, Mark Dunkley, Robin Jepson, Jim Edwards, Ron Millet, Pauline Hart-Stout, Stephen Cordingley, Ruth Kerr, Vanessa Jervis, Mark Ballantine, Alan Brosgill, Michael Jackson

#### A. INTRO SESSIONS

##### 1. Competitions update (Nick Woolven)

- NW stated that it should be put on record that he wished to thank everyone on the Tournament Committee for their efforts.
- Special mention was made of the success of initiatives for lower-ranking players (6-High, 9-High, Handicap Pairs and Café Bridge events) organised by MD/PH-S, and congresses organised by LM/RM.
- Confirmation of the effectiveness of the committee was the significant increase seen recently in entries for events.

##### 2. Financials (Lesley Millet)

- The Association is currently financially healthy with a bank balance of circa £60K although this shall diminish shortly with £7K to pay out on competitions.
- Work continues to maximise the availability of grants. There is however concern that not all clubs are aware of the availability of grants.  
It was agreed that a structured campaign is required to communicate effectively with all clubs to clarify the nature and availability of grants

**Action:** Grants Committee

##### 3. Youth (Lesley Millet)

- The need for a Youth Officer was stressed as being necessary to ensure that sufficient attention was given to youth bridge. PH-S agreed to approach Rowena White so see if she would accept the role of Youth Officer. **Action:** PH-S
- The success of the York Bridge Academy was highlighted, and it was indicated that Sheffield was intending to introduce a similar academy. **Action** DG to contact Sheffield BC to identify progress.
- Safeguarding is a complex issue in relation to activities in schools, scout groups etc. and this is an area where clear guidance is required. There is a need to liaise with Richard Croot at EBED to get guidance on safeguarding. **Action:** PH-S

#### 4. Marketing (Mark Dunkley)

- Strategy has been to target inclusivity for all abilities with special emphasis on events suitable for lower ranking players. This is a necessary action considering the reducing number of high-end players. The Tournaments Committee is following this approach.
- The EBU marketing team has highlighted that generic advertising is not especially successful, and that social media campaigning is more effective. We shall be working with the EBU on progressing this. **Action:** MD
- There is a need to improve the YCBA website and to get better use of Pianola. Website improvement is covered in Section F.

#### 5. Diversity, Inclusion & Equality Committee (DIEC) - Ruth Kerr

- The Diversity Policy has been issued to clubs, and the Committee shall work to ensure that learning resources and training material are made available to clubs. A YCBA podcast is scheduled on this topic.
- EBU guidance recommends equality monitoring and the DIEC shall look to introduce a pilot scheme to cover this.
- Consideration is being given to how to ensure that outreach work by YCBA members is carried out with due regard to all diversity requirements and a pilot scheme is being worked up.

#### 6. Membership (Stephen Cordingley)

- Overall membership has very gradually increased from 3531 (Jan 2024) to 3586 (Jan 2026). Significant new membership (277 last year) is almost equated by the loss of existing members
- All new members receive a YCBA Welcome Pack in the first month of their membership.
- A key objective this year will be to raise our YCBA profile with our members by producing more targeted communications. **Action:** MD
- There are 341 members where e-mail addresses are not known and a significant number where the stated e-mail addresses bounce back. This will be continue to be flagged up to clubs to reduce bounce backs. We also need a campaign to reduce the Unsubscribe level. **Action:** SC & MD

#### 7. Leagues (Mike Jackson)

- Leagues have operated effectively over the last year with no issues of any great concern.
- The relaunch of the Yorkshire Trophy as a Jack-High, knockout competition has been very successful, with the latest entry being 13 teams.
- MJ gave thanks to all those who have been involved in the organisation of league competitions for their contribution to the effectiveness of the league programme.

## 8. EBU (David Guild)

- EBU membership has remained essentially static in recent years.
- The EBU and EBED are working closely on common ground, and this will be continued.
- The recent EBU AGM indicated a more open approach to feedback from member associations. This is a good sign for future EBU relationships with counties and members.

## B. OFFICER/BOARD AND COMMITTEE CHAIR TENURES (Nick Woolven)

This topic sought to identify potential improvements to the current non-rotating roles of chair and other key positions. It is believed that a limited tenure system with new appointees being supported by the outgoing role holder, will lead to a greater likelihood of interest from members in participating in such roles. After discussion the following key decision were made.

- The Tournament Committee would be a guinea pig for a trial for a 3-year tenure for the chair, whereby succession would be through a vice-chair confirmed by a vote of the Committee, and who ideally will have been a member of the Committee.
- The Committee will also co-opt members to work closely with the Committee to ease successions.

**Action:** Tournament Committee

## C. YCBA ORGANISATION STRUCTURE (Mark Dunkley)

This topic examined the potential financial liability against individuals in relation to commercial or insurance concerns and whether potential liability could be mitigated through changing the legal status of the YCBA from an unincorporated entity to a limited company by guarantee or similar alternative. After discussion the following key points were agreed.

- Overall risk is deemed to be low. To agree any change in status would need to weigh up whether the degree of risk mitigation outweighs the various costs and red tape formalities introduced by such change.
- It was decided to seek legal clarification (potentially from EBU legal resources) to evaluate the risks and benefits and guidance on the best way forward. The maximum budget for this work is £500. **Action:** RJ and VJ
- With respect to ensuring that the YCBA meets the requirements of our insurance cover, the following actions, advised by our insurers and circulated in a document prior to the meeting, were agreed:-
  - 1 - a) list all officers and board members, committee chairs & committee members, TDs etc on the website. (*already done*)
  - 1 - b) update every change promptly and review annually.
  - 2 - A list of temporary and ad hoc functions be listed on the website.
  - 3 - Any temporary appointments and ad hoc appointments be confirmed formally by email and noted in the subsequent set of minutes.
  - 4 - Resolution from the management board confirming the above and that the YCBA & EBU insurance policies shall extend to all those defined above.

**Action:** RM

Stemming from the above, discussion on potential risks identified that individuals working with organisations (especially schools) are at high risk for being subject to insurance claims. In addition to ensuring accurate recording of ad hoc appointments, the following was agreed.

- Individuals working in such situation should be educated in DIE requirements and should have a standard procedural document explaining how they need to ensure requirements are met. The EBU have recently published a Volunteers Handbook that can be used as a source guide.

**Action:** DIEC to investigate and issue guidelines on both.

#### D. YCBA ROLES (Ruth Kerr)

This topic examined the effectiveness of the make-up of the YCBA board and committees. Potential concerns with workloads, continuity and succession planning were highlighted in a report circulated prior to the meeting. Some of these issues were covered earlier in the meeting. Additional key points are as follow.

- Formal identification of roles and responsibilities is advantageous and the EBU template will be used as guidance as to how this may best be achieved. Current role holders will be requested to provide information so that this task can be progressed. **Action:** RK
- Attention is required to reduce the workload for the Treasurer, with the potential for a Vice-Treasurer role being created or the Treasurer and Competitions not to be covered by the same person. **Action:** Board to find candidate
- To date, it has not proved possible to find a suitable individual to take on the role of representing ethnic minority issues. Work will continue to seek a suitable appointment. Until then, this shall be covered by the DIEC. **Action:** All to seek candidate
- With respect to tournament directors, it was noted that there is a need to ensure that they are fully familiar with all DIE guidance, and that additionally, advice is required as to how their insurance liability can best be mitigated. **Action:** DIEC
- All Board and Committees to receive online DIE training **Action:** RK

#### E. WEBSITE REVIEW (David Guild)

This topic reviewed the YCBA website. The current website was developed seven years ago, and it is believed that it is now due an overhaul. There was extensive discussion on potential improvements. The following key action was resolved

- A list of improvements was noted by DG and he shall seek to implement these through the contractor who developed the latest website. Budget maximum is £1,500.

**Action:** DG

F. SECURITY (PIANOLA) - (David Guild)

Pianola is to introduce two-stage verification when accessing membership records. It was agreed that we will implement this additional safeguard which but there was concern that the App was failing where a person was already registered for a different organisation to YCBA.

**Action:** DG to resolve with Pianola before actioning the change for YCBA

G. AOB

There was no AOB

The meeting closed at 3.30pm.

Mark Ballantine  
24<sup>th</sup> January 2026