



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE ENGLISH BRIDGE EDUCATION &
DEVELOPMENT TRUSTEES**
Sunday 19 October 2025 at 3.00pm until 5.05pm

Held virtually on Zoom

Attendees

Ian Sidgwick – Chair (IS)
William Bourne – Treasurer (WB)
Tony Cherrett – Trustee (TC)
Richard Croot – CEO (RC)
Lynne Ballinger – Trustee (LB)
Nicky Bainbridge – Trustee (NB)

Minutes by WB

1. HOUSEKEEPING

IS opened the meeting promptly at 3pm and welcomed the new Board members. It was noted that there is no formal induction process, and we discussed further under item 7.

Andrea Knox (new Board member) gave her apologies.

Minutes from meeting held on 26th July 2025 were agreed and accepted. WB volunteered to take minutes for this meeting.

Conflicts of interest - IS declared a potential conflict as he is an EBU Board member (item 5).

2. New Tricks Request, Sue Johnson (taken after item 3)

Sue Johnson from New Tricks and the head of her development team, Leo joined us to answer questions about the proposal that EBED should fund a new teaching website designed by her team. The Board asked questions about the budget, ownership, alternative solutions, the danger of technological obsolescence, time scales, and safeguarding.

Leo responded that the Budget had been carefully considered, and that payments would only be made after milestones agreed with RC. The site would be designed on Wordpress, which is a mainstream website design platform and unlikely to become obsolete.

SJ said that the website would be joint owned, and to prevent key person risk, if something happened to her, ownership would revert to EBED. The time scale is 6 months, including design.

The team have worked together but will work on this project freelance to cut costs. There will be a contract with Leo who will be the main point of contact. NB raised the dangers in this e.g. contravening IR35 legislation and EBED would have less recourse in case of non-delivery.

The Board requested a formal statement of requirements. This would set out the objectives and the main bones of the project, and act as a baseline to assess the results against. RC and Sue Johnson agreed to provide a one pager on the same lines as the 500 Schools project.

At this point Sue Johnson and Leo left and the Board continued to discuss. There was recognition of the potential for the website, but also some concerns about the detail. In particular TC thought this project should come as part of the Target 500 project, and we should specify that more clearly first. RC showed the meeting the current Target 500 project plan.

The Board agreed that RC and SJ would write a statement of requirements ahead of our next meeting and provide other information so that we can make a decision over the next few weeks.

3. Meeting Schedule (taken ahead of item 2)

We agreed in principle to meet ten times a year, four times face to face. The regular Zoom meetings at 9.15 on the first Monday of the month will continue when there are no face to face meetings. The next face to face meeting is scheduled for 15th February in Swindon. We pencilled in the following one for either 4th or 8th June.

4. CEO Report

RC presented a report on his activities including:

- data on the camps: the summer camp ran substantially over budget because of the expense of hiring the venue exclusively. The autumn camp will be close to breaking even and show an increase in numbers over the previous year. There are more younger children coming with their parents, and fewer squad members.

- revenue generally is holding up well, but TC asked about sales this autumn. The Board had various views why only 25% of students are registered with the EBU – we agreed to look further into this.

- communications, and especially the work done on social media both by EBED and also jointly with the EBU

- Target 500 schools. The focus will be on secondary schools and sixth form colleges. The new EBED team have been active through new channels (e.g. London Maths conference, a project with a Manchester academy teaching trainee trainers, and the Maths Watch Ad is generating new leads). There are currently 46 school clubs, and there is a pipeline to take it to double in numbers over the next 12 months.

- universities has made less progress than hoped, but two new clubs have been started up at Bristol and Oxford. We have also reached out to existing clubs to offer support.

- we discussed the arrow cards project. The Board saw more potential with schools as a quick way for students to learn on their own, but were concerned whether teachers would use them. The Board recommended starting by printing arrow cards for those teaching at schools.

The Board recognised the progress achieved and thanked RC and his team for the energy and activity they have shown to make all this happen.

5. Communications

The Board discussed follow-ups from the off-site meeting held in August. We agreed that we still lacked real expertise in communications, while noting that Richard's staff have been much more active on social media than had been the case historically. The Board agreed to ask whether EBED could pay for some of the EBU's club and counties development officer's salary in return for some of her time. It was noted that we would need to ensure she had clear direction to avoid being pulled in too many directions, but the EBU and EBED's objectives are for the most part fully aligned. IS agreed to speak to the EBU Treasurer about this.

6. Career Teachers Franchising Project

TC presented the idea of EBED supporting teachers make a living out of bridge. The Board

noted that most successful sports have a cadre of professional teachers. However, some thought that post COVID and given bridge's low profile, it might be difficult.

The Board discussed who might be suitable, perhaps university graduates, or returning mothers. TC suggested advertising. WB asked how much support might be needed and TC replied a maximum of £5000 per teacher.

The Board authorised a spend of £1000 to see whether we could identify suitable candidates.

7. Governance

WB noted that the new Trustees have not yet been posted on either EBED or the Charity Commission's website and asked for clarity who was responsible for reporting to the Charity Commission in particular. We agreed that RC should be responsible, and he undertook to upload the report and accounts by the end of November.

The Board agreed to create a Governance sub committee to look at the Constitution, the Code of Conduct, and the description of the Trustee roles, and bring their recommendations back to the next committee. It should also look at the induction process for new Trustees. Suggested members are AK (subject to her agreement), WB, IS, and RC. WB undertook to ask AK.

8. Further Safeguarding Policy Developments

RC gave a verbal update, which the Board noted. He will bring back specific items for approval at the next meeting.

9. Teaching Vouchers

The Board discussed this idea, which had arisen from the EBU's Communication Officer. We could see some potential, but thought that it would need significant infrastructure behind it to make it work, which might take time. For that reason the Board was not inclined to support the idea.

10. Finance

WB gave a verbal update to say that this year was ahead of budget, mainly because of investment gains. Short management accounts are provided to the Trustees every month, and more detailed ones every quarter.

WB stressed that as a charity we have to justify not spending the funds we receive. He currently has £150,000 allocated for projects, and the balance is invested to provide steady income while maintaining the real value of the assets, currently around £29,000 a year, against the case that the trend to online reduces EBED's income from books.

He updated the Board on progress with the final tranche of the Faulkner bequest, which we can expect within the next few months.

OUTSTANDING ACTION POINTS

Item 2 – firm up date and place of the June face to face meeting – **IS**

Item 3 - provide statement of requirements on the New Tricks project - **RC**

Item 5 - speak to EBU about using their resources to help us with communications – **IS**

Item 6 – identify suitable candidates to pilot bridge as a career - **RC, TC**

Item 7 - add new Trustees to EBED and Charities Commission websites – **RC**

- Upload report for year to March 25 to Charities Commission – **RC**

- Set up Governance Committee and recommend changes to constitution, code of conduct, trustee role description, induction process – **WB, IS**