



Minutes Executive Committee meeting

Istanbul 31st March 2009

These minutes have been approved by the EBLIDA Executive Committee.

Chair: Gerald Leitner, EBLIDA President

Participants: Toby Bainton (TB), Saara Ihamäki (SI), Gerald Leitner (GL), Barbara Lison (BL), Jill Martin (JM), Gloria Perez-Salmeron (GPS), Aldo Pirola (AP), Bas Savenije (BS), Joanne Yeomans (JY).

1. Opening and announcements

GL opened the meeting, welcoming the Executive Committee (ExCom) to Istanbul and extending a warm welcome to JY who was attending her first ExCom meeting as incoming Director.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Pernille Drost, Karin Åstrøm Iko and Antonio Pina Falcao. Andrew Cranfield also sent his apologies after experiencing last-minute travel problems.

3. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved with no comments.

4. Approval Draft Minutes Executive Meeting, Athens, November 2008.

The minutes of the Athens meeting were approved with no further comments.

5. EBLIDA Finances

5.1. Financial statement 2008

BS presented the end of year statement for 2008 to the ExCom. The presentation consisted of the Bower & Officier financial report and an overview spreadsheet prepared by BS to compare changes from the original and revised estimates for 2008 and the spending in 2007.

A surplus of EUR 12,000 is shown for 2008 and is accounted for by a saving of EUR 10,000 for temporary employees which were not required during 2008, and a reduction in the location costs which BS understood were due to the building being filled with more companies, thus reducing the EBLIDA share of overheads.

BS had agreed with Bower & Officier that the book-keeping would be performed twice a year which should slightly reduce their charge for 2009.



GL congratulated BS and AC on the clarity of this year's financial report and the improvement to the membership status figures which now take account of debtors and therefore present a more realistic picture. The rest of the ExCom added their congratulations, thanked BS for the clarity of the report and approved the end of year statement.

GL asked that the membership status be presented with the financial report at future meetings.

5.2.Revised budget 2009

BS then moved onto the 2009 budget revisions. The temporary staff costs foreseen for 2008 are now required instead in 2009 so the figure is increased accordingly. FileMaker training might be necessary for the new Office Manager so an allowance is made for this. GL had identified a number of problems on the web pages which might require the CMS to be redesigned so an increase is made to this cost. Elsewhere within the secretariat costs, small revisions are made in the light of the 2008 figures. GL would like to meet more regularly with the new Director and so a small increase is made to the travel allowance.

The overall total estimated expenditure for the revised 2009 budget therefore lies at EUR 137,025.

With regards estimated income, membership is expected to stay at the same level but bank interest rates have already dropped drastically due to global financial problems and so the income from this is revised, giving an overall estimated income of EUR 130,000. This gives a final deficit foreseen for 2009 of EUR 7000. BS pointed out that this deficit was justified by the staff costs saving made in 2008 and subsequent extra costs in 2009 and added that it did not represent a structural deficit.

The revised 2009 budget was approved by the ExCom and a revised spreadsheet will be sent out with the minutes of this meeting.

6. EBLIDA Membership Campaign

GL reported that EBLIDA is well on the way to achieving full membership coverage across EU countries. During 2008 six Library Associations from five new countries had joined through the new membership offer: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Luxembourg, and Slovenia. Cypress is expected to join shortly. The only two remaining countries not represented were Estonia and Poland.

SI had had contact with the Library Association in Estonia and would follow up on this but as there had been changes in personnel there, she was not fully confident it would lead to success. She suggested that a letter from the EBLIDA President to the new Director might be useful at this point. GL asked if any other members of the ExCom also had contacts in the country. GPS said she could try her leads and might have a contact close to the new Director. JY will ensure the action is co-ordinated with GPS, SI and GL.

BL had had formal and informal contact with some Polish colleagues but had so far only received negative responses. She will try again but in the meantime suggested that the



secretariat investigate Polish associations listed in the IFLA directory and try a new formal approach.

GPS asked if any approach had been made to Russia who had shown an interest in joining some activities. GL confirmed that there will be a representative at the Vienna conference and that holding discussions with non-EU states will naturally form the next step of the campaign.

7. EBLIDA Knowledge and Information Centre – Status

GL and AC had met with Birgit Stumm, who is responsible for EU funded projects in Germany, and had discussed the application with her. Her opinion was that the idea was a good one but that there would not be enough time to prepare the bid in time for the February deadline and also recommended that the new Director be involved. The application was therefore postponed until the next call in February 2010. JY will contact Ms. Stumm after the Council meeting in May, to start work on this. GL asked the chairs of the Expert Groups to offer support during the second half of the year.

8. Reports from the Chairs of Expert Groups

8.1. Report from EGIL

TB reported that the last meeting of the EGIL took place in Helsinki, and had been successfully combined with a seminar with the local Library Association which had attracted sixty participants.

The European Commission (EC) and European Parliament (EP) still have a lot going on at the moment to which EGIL has to react. The EC policy paper “Copyright in the Knowledge Economy” was released in summer 2008. It attempts to harmonize the exceptions across the EU states, and was later redrafted to address concerns raised mainly by publishers who would prefer no harmonization. The voting on a Spanish ‘own-initiative’ report suggesting that the EP, in line with publishers, wants no such change was postponed following strong objections from EGIL which sent letters on EBLIDA’s behalf to all EP members. The disagreements mean it could be postponed indefinitely though with a new EP and new EC due, the future is unsure.

TB thanked JM for CILIP’s help in sending letters to the European Parliament.

The sound recordings copyright limit debate, though ongoing, affects few libraries and EGIL’s campaign support is consequently lower. However, EBLIDA clearly is not in favour of any extension to the copyright term in this case.

SI confirmed that the Helsinki seminar was particularly well received and well-attended, despite competing with good weather and the school holidays in Finland; feedback had been excellent.

BL reported that she had passed on to TB some STM contacts who disagreed with EBLIDA but who wanted to participate in discussions.

GPS reminded the ExCom of the new Spanish member in the EGIL and hoped that they would be watchful of future Spanish activity in the EP.



Approximately 10 members of EGIL are expected at the meeting in Vienna.

8.2. Report from JEGDO

BS reported on the difficulty of getting the group together and at the last meeting in London in September there had been only four members present. He will remind the group of the Vienna meeting and hope that there can be better attendance. The group will make progress on the gathering of relevant topics and documents and BS had already collected a sample to help others in the group better understand the aims.

A mission statement had been drafted and submitted to the secretariat in order to feed into the Expert Group guidelines (see item 8.6). In Vienna BS hoped a clear work-plan could be devised for the year. He is not sure if he will be able to continue as chair of the group following that meeting, due to his new responsibility as DG of the Netherlands National Library (KB) starting in June. If this leads to a new chair of the LIBER Digital Library Group then we will have to see whether they wish to continue with a joint group.

Planning for the joint workshop with LIBER in October is well underway. GL thanked BS for ensuring that the programme addressed the slightly different needs of EBLIDA as well as LIBER.

The future membership of the group is awaiting the structure changes within LIBER although BS recommends that the new LIBER Digital Library Group is not simply merged with JEGDO but that two representatives sit on each group and that the JEGDO remains a group of experts who are called upon when needed.

GL summarized the main points that need addressing: candidates for Chair of the group if BS has to leave, the relationship with LIBER, and the commitment of the group's members. BS confirmed that the group will obviously focus on the last point in Vienna, and GL asked BS to report to the Council on the future of the group and its relation with LIBER.

So far 5 participants are expected in Vienna.

8.3. Report from ILEG

JM reported that the meeting of ILEG scheduled for January had had to be postponed, and thus took place instead in February in Copenhagen with four members. During this meeting the mission statement was drafted and JM will circulate it to the ExCom. The discussion had focused on the Bologna process and the JISC toolkit and the group had proposed more discussions and closer involvement in future.

A member of ILEG had met with EUCLID and JM expected a report on this and further discussion in Vienna. No concrete plans have yet been made for a joint conference and JM said the group was satisfied with the current, non-formalised relationship between the two groups.

JM explained that ILEG was struggling with too few active members but that she and AC had been trying to remedy this by contacting possible new members. She advised the committee that it should be patient during the set-up of new groups as they need time to evolve. The kind of people needed must have a strategic view of the issues but these people do not

necessarily already exist and so time is needed for them to learn about the topic and the wider issues, and to develop their own strategic view on it. She recommended that the other groups take this into consideration when planning their work.

ILEG expects 5 participants in the Vienna meeting.

8.4. Report from EGCIS

BL reported on the last meeting of the group in September. EBLIDA had been invited to become a member of the EC's Platform on Access to Culture and the group believed this would be a good idea so were writing a response. Some draft guidelines were now available and the group will discuss it further at the Vienna meeting. Although libraries are not specifically mentioned there is a lot in it for libraries and the policy recommendations are perhaps interesting for the ILEG and the KIC. BL agreed to send this draft out to the ExCom.

BL reported to the ExCom that the EC had made a call for groups to execute a European literary award and that the bid had been won by the Federation of European Booksellers and a publisher group.

AC had been making investigations into becoming a "Friend of the European Parliament" and would report more fully on this in Vienna.

8.5. Report from the expert group on education and lifelong learning

GL had asked JY to research this topic in more detail ready to chair this new group for its first meeting in Vienna in May. JY reported that she had received names of four people who were interested in joining this group and it was hoped they would attend this first meeting to discuss how to move forward. As JM had noted (in 8.3) the group would need time to learn about the strategic issues related to the topic and give members a chance to develop their expertise in the area.

8.6. Guidelines for expert groups

The draft mission statements of JEGDO, EGCIS and ILEG were circulated in the meeting. BS explained that the statement for the JEGDO had been formulated by taking a general part identified from the other two groups' statements, and adding to it three specific points related to the JEGDO.

BL and TB agreed that their group saw its role as being an advisory body to the ExCom. From time to time an urgent response might be required which precluded discussion, but in general the groups were there to advise the ExCom and President on what action EBLIDA should take. BS agreed but said that JEGDO had had discussions about being more proactive in its relations with the EC. BL and JM agreed that their statements could be worked into something similar with three general points and then some points more specific for their group and BL proposed that this should be the formula for all groups.

GL proposed that EBLIDA has a single paper describing the general aims of the groups with the more specific mission statements attached, and that this paper is merged with the current regulations document. JY will prepare together with the President a draft of this new document in collaboration with the chairs and send this out to the ExCom two weeks before Vienna for discussion there.

SI reported that she had been asked to feed to the ExCom some comments about the Expert Groups. Some people believed that too many people were involved and that the groups were not being effective. She thinks, however, that these clear mission statements might help to allay these fears. JM reminded everyone that the groups needed time to mature and so suggested waiting before making any changes. BS suggested that the groups might benefit from having two subgroups within them – one to do the research and develop into experts and the other who could really be considered experts who would simply advise. GL agreed that this would be an ideal situation but asked how a group could start up in this way. The chairs all agreed it was difficult to get people to do the work required to develop into experts and that perhaps having staff support through the KIC would help to bring information together and analyse it. AP noted that the ideal process would be to start by collecting information, then moving onto a stage of analysis and monitoring, then finally writing the plan for active work.

GL suggested that a clear work plan for each group for the next two years detailing how many times it would meet per year, the goals for the group, what would be achieved in each of these meetings, and what would happen in-between, could help to clarify everything. The chairs thought that writing such a plan would be difficult in time for Vienna, but would try.

9. EBLIDA Annual Work Report 2008

The Committee gave their comments on the annual report and asked AC to include some extra points. GL invited further suggestions before it is finalised for the Council meeting. A revised version would therefore be sent by April 10th allowing a week for the ExCom to make any further comments.

10. EBLIDA Annual Work Plan 2009

Some suggestions were made by the committee for small additions to the plan and JY will rewrite these sections and resend the document by April 10th. Otherwise the plan was agreed. JM suggested that JY should prepare a biography for the Council Meeting to introduce her to all members.

11. Report from EBLIDA/IFLA Meeting, March 2009

GL, AC and JY met with Jennefer Nicholson, the Secretary General of IFLA in March. They discussed the previous cooperation agreement which was detailed in an informal document written by Peter Lor. GL would like to sign a more formal MoU based on this and will send a copy of the original document to the ExCom for further discussion in Vienna.

AC and JY followed this up by meeting with Stuart Hamilton to discuss a possible joint conference which they proposed might be held in The Netherlands, possibly around February. The committee asked that either it be held in the later part of 2010 or that it be moved to another location so that it didn't interfere with the Council Meeting in May (nor the IFLA Board meeting in April).

12. Report from EBLIDA/FEP Meeting, March 2009

TB reported on the meeting which was held in Paris and discussed digitization problems and orphan works. Publishers were unhappy with EBLIDA's reaction to the Medina Ortega report and so they tried to focus on what they might work on together instead of on their differences. The meetings will continue once a year instead of twice.

13. Joint LIBER/EBLIDA Conference

BS reported on progress on preparations for this conference on digitization which will take place at the KB in The Hague from 19-21 October 2009. Two presentations were included from public libraries and the full programme should be out shortly. GL thanked BS for ensuring that the conference represented both LIBER and EBLIDA.

14. Next EBLIDA ExCom Meeting

The next meeting will be held in Vienna on May 6th from 14:00-18:00. The main items for the agenda will be the finance and membership status, the Expert Groups, and the preparation of the working groups for the Council Meeting.

15. Annual Council Meeting, Vienna, May 2009

GL gave an overview of the preparations that had been made and asked the committee to continue making publicity. He asked the chairs of the Expert Groups to prepare a short PowerPoint presentation and paper for the meeting in which the aims were presented and the progress so far.

BS asked about the plans to look at the constitution and explained the legal advice he had received on how to do this. GL said he would like to announce the procedure to the Council and get their agreement on following this procedure for the next Council Meeting in 2010.

TB asked how many nominations had been received for the ExCom positions. GL went through the nominations he believed were expected and the committee asked AC to check that a full complement of names was received in time.

16. Annual Council Meeting 2010

The organisation of the Council Meeting and an associated conference requires some commitment of time and money from the host institution. GL asked if any members had volunteered to be a host in 2010. BL said that Germany was prepared but that a country geographically further from Austria might be better this time, with Germany hosting in 2011. SI explained that next year is the 150th birthday of the Helsinki Public Library and although this might make it difficult to take on another event, it would also be a time of celebrations and could be possible to combine with an EBLIDA event.

There are now two suggestions for the associated conference: a cultural theme entitled "Libraries – their roles for Culture and the information society in Europe"; and a theme related to Open Access and copyright with the title "Legalize it!"

It was agreed that if Finland decide they can't host the meeting in 2010, GL will approach colleagues in a Scandinavian country.

17. Any other business

GL explained that currently all committee documents were publicly available on the web and suggested that it was perhaps better to keep some private. It was agreed that the annual report and strategy documents would remain open but that the work plan and all other committee documents be put into a private space for members only and that this rule be applied to all previous documents.

BL proposed that an EBLIDA dinner be organised during the Milan IFLA conference, along the lines of the dinner organised in Quebec. AP agreed to organise this and a date will be discussed in Vienna when the programme and other commitments are known in more detail.

BL proposed that EBLIDA consider giving an award for innovation along the lines of the European Literary Award (mentioned in 8.4) which would be given to an individual and might consist of a package to enable something rather than a money prize. JM agreed that these kinds of awards are good publicity for the awarding body and of benefit to the winner, but pointed out that they are also a lot of work to organise. AP confirmed that his involvement with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation award was a huge amount of work. The committee agreed that BL should investigate the possibility further and report at the next meeting.

18. Closure of meeting

GL thanked the committee for coming to Istanbul, and also thanked our Turkish colleagues who had so kindly arranged a room for the meeting and assisted with logistical and social arrangements. The committee were also invited to speak to a group of Turkish Librarians on the following day, 1st April, about future collaborations and involvement.

