



Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 19.30 on Teams on Wednesday 29 June 2022

Present Linda Fleet, Cath Fox, Pat Johnson, Marcia Levan-Harris, John McCoy, Paul Mollison, Val Mollison, Ian Moss, Sue Thorburn

Apologies Ashley Sawyer

1. **Welcome** John McCoy welcomed those present.
2. **Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 6 April 2022** These had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed that the minutes were a correct record of the meeting. A copy was signed on behalf of the chairman.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes not already included in the agenda** No matters arising.
4. **Introduction from Chairman** John thanked the new committee for their involvement. He felt there was a good mix of new and old faces. He feels there is a serious threat to bridge in Essex and a lot of work is needed to maintain participation particularly in Face to Face bridge. Thus, a proactive committee is needed.
5. **Reports from Officers**

a. General Secretary (Sue Thorburn)

Apart from providing general support for the chairman and committee, Sue is working on updating information on teaching and unaffiliated clubs.

There is a new affiliated club, Fyfield, they have been contacted for details of their secretary and chairman.

b. Treasurer (Linda Fleet)

Bank Balance at 27.06.2022

£10,000 - Barclays and Lloyds (£10,563 –2021)

£16,283 – Skipton (£16,225 – 2021)

Competitions Margaret Curtis Pairs had 7 tables resulting in a surplus of £45.

Bank accounts Sue asked if there was any mileage in moving to a single signatory for low value payments. Linda feels more comfortable retaining dual signatories. She

would like to be able to run the Barclays account online. Sue has run an online club account with Barclays and will get some information to pass to Linda.

c. Tournament Secretary (Val Mollison)

Competitions The AGM pairs and Margret Curtis have taken place as planned. The club pairs is organised and clubs have been contacted.

ECL matches Some work is needed to set up teams of 8 matches on RealBridge but this should be complete before the next matches in the autumn.

d. Shareholders (Linda Fleet)

Nothing to report

e. Webmaster

Petra has resigned from the committee. At the moment John is acting as webmaster and has made a number of improvements to the website. The committee expressed their appreciation. He will restore links once the Essex competitions are finalized.

f. Calendar (Pat Johnson)

All work on the calendar is complete

6. **Herts/Essex joint venture.** Gary Conrad has sold his business providing tables cloths and boards and Srimath Agalawatte has procured the equipment to replace it.

There are 7 entries for the Pairs and 4 for the Teams events on 30/31 July. Despite the low numbers, the event will take place as the EBU requires a F2F event before the online event in September. Linda felt it was too late to move to a smaller venue in 2022 but would raise the possibility of moving the 2023 event with Herts who do most of the administration. She is happy to continue as the Essex representative for another year but would like to step down after that.

It was accepted that, should the need arise, Essex would take their share of any loss.

7. **Committee roles and responsibilities Education Officer** Ashley will take on the Education Officer role. As bridge teaching will be a spotlight he will need support from others. A second person is needed for the lottery grant application and the Treasurer seems most appropriate. Linda is happy to take this on; she said there were already ring-fenced funds of £1800 for youth bridge.

League Secretary The League secretary role has been covered by Val since Bernie left the committee. It involves the administration of the Essex leagues and teams matches. Marcia offered to take this on. She and Val will agree the breakdown of responsibilities between this and the Tournament Secretary role.

Publicity officer Essex Bridge needs to be widely promoted. Ideally this should be done by someone with media contacts. Cath said she did not have such contacts but was willing to take on the role. John suggested they could share the work and they will discuss specific options eg a sharper website (not Bridgewebs) and use of social media.

8. **Teaching bridge** Bridge teaching is to be a major focus with an Essex Bridge Academy publicising and monitoring teaching. Teaching could possibly be organized in Essex libraries. There will be an application for a lottery grant. It was pointed out that support and assessment of teaching needs to be carefully managed to avoid causing resentment. There also needs to be support for a pathway from lessons to club play.
9. **Bridge in schools** More volunteers will be needed for this. Ashley will consult Valdie Potter who is the best source of information and has some materials for teaching bridge. There is considerable enthusiasm in those schools that took part pre-pandemic.
10. **Essex competitions** The programme has been published and the F2F/online issue will be dealt with on a case by case basis. The existing format could change but EBU rules complicate matters as they require at least 50% are F2F.

Charity events are popular; Marcia and Pat will look at the options for a blue pointed competition with a meal possibly using the Sue Taylor slot. If this is run F2F the Swiss pairs can be online.

No prizes will be awarded until numbers in F2F competitions increase. The practice of presenting certificates rather than trophies will be continued. The existing stock of trophies will be evaluated and disposed of as appropriate.

11. **League and knock-out -rules for online v F2F** There had been issues as some people refused to play F2F and vice versa. It was agreed that the home team should decide with F2F the default but that requests for online should be respected if there is a good argument eg travel distance or ill health. Ian will produce a form of words setting out the rules.
12. **Support for clubs** John had a meeting with chairmen and other club representatives. He also had a series of visits to clubs planned.
13. **Update from chairman of selectors**

ECL Given previous issues, Cambridge University will probably not play this season. Matches against adjacent counties will be F2F, others online.

Home Counties league Essex players had not demonstrated much interest in the past so Essex will no longer play in this competition.

Squad selection Ian and John will work on determining objective and transparent criteria for selecting squads. The final decision on teams to play must be the

responsibility of the selection committee. A simplified method of establishing availability for matches will be introduced.

Squad captains Brian Davies would like to step down. On a trial basis the A and B squads will be merged in a single pool.

14. **Update from the EBU** Cath outline the latest EBU news. This is circulated monthly to county secretaries and chairmen and is on the EBU website. John is involved in running the chairman's meeting.
15. **Appointment of shareholders** John and Ashley have agreed to act as shareholders. Sue will notify the EBU and check previous shareholders have returned their certificates
16. **Review of constitution** The constitution needs minor updates. This is low priority. Sue will circulate a draft for comments before the next meeting.
17. **Date of next meeting** The next meeting will be held on Teams at 7.30pm on 28 September 2022. John then closed the meeting.