###

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held at 19.30 on Teams on Wednesday 28 September 2022

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

**Apologies** Linda Fleet, 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**  All the topics John wishes to discuss are included in the agenda.
5. **Reports from Officers**
6. **General Secretary** (Sue Thorburn)

Nothing new to report

1. **Treasurer** (Linda Fleet)

**Bank Balance at 26.09.2022**

£9,563 - Barclays and Lloyds (£10,750 –2021)

£16,283 – Skipton (£16,225 – 2020)

**Competitions** Fees received for the Margaret Curtis and Club Pairs were £230.00. Less expenses this resulted in a loss of about £20. The UM for Club pairs has not yet been invoiced but assessed at about £8.

**UM** The Essex portion of UM has not been taken since the start of the pandemic. It was agreed to postpone a decision on this until a fuller picture of the resumption of bridge in Essex is available.

**Prizes** It was agreed no prizes would be awarded for the remainder of the season.

1. **Tournament Secretary** (Val Mollison)

**Competitions** Preparation for the Fletcher is underway. There are currently 2 clubs that have confirmed entry and 2 other possible. It is unlikely that there will be more than 7 teams so the smaller of the Barleylands rooms will be adequate. It was agreed the Fletcher and Cup for Clubs should start at 1.00pm

The blue point licence for the Sue Taylor has been applied for. John will publicise that this is now a F2F pairs competition. It will be a charity event at Mountnessing. The Swiss Pairs also needs good publicity. As it is an online open event it should attract entries from outside Essex although this may be limited because it is not green pointed.

It was agreed the Mixed Pairs should be a handicap event on RealBridge.

1. **Shareholders** (John McCoy)

There have been two votes this month. John will try to attend the AGM at the end of November.

1. **Programme Secretary (**Pat Johnson**)**

Nothing to report on this year’s calendar. Pat’s recommendation that there should be a radical review of Essex competitions was agreed. John will arrange a meeting in w/c 9 January 2023, probably 11 January. Val pointed out that we may be constrained by the EBU regulations covering qualification for the Pachabo and the Corwen

1. **Webmaster** (John McCoy)

John will continue to act as webmaster with Sue doing routine updates. The committee will give her details of anything which needs to appear on the website.

1. **Herts/Essex joint venture**. The July event was cancelled but the September event took place. There was limited interest from Essex players. Linda will confirm the final figure but any profit or loss will be small. Linda’s request to nominate someone to take over her liaison role has been deferred until after the review of Essex competitions. Continued involvement in the Herts/Essex events is part of the review particularly as it uses our two green point licences.
2. **Essex Bridge Academy** The academy has been launched and already has some interest from teachers. Attendance at the live launch meeting was disappointing but more interest has been shown in the online meeting on 10 October. Around £400 of the available funds has been spent on promotional material.
3. **Update from chairman of selectors**

**Squad selection** The draft criteria for admission to the Essex squads are attached. The new guidelines should be clearer and more encouraging than previously. Ian asked for comments from the committee before the document is published on the website. The policy does not conflict with ECBA Constitution.

If a fourth regular pair is not available for a match the C team captain is authorised to recruit a named substitute player. This is an ad hoc solution to an immediate issue and does not imply permanent inclusion in the squad.

**Training** The C team captain had reported the technical standard of the C squad is not as high as in other counties. Bernie Hunt will run a series of seminars for the C squad and aspiring pre-C players. This will probably start early 2023.

**Online player availability registration** Aworking version of the proposed on-line player availability registration form is planned to be operational February 2023. Commitment from players needs to be demonstrated. If they do not register and update availability it will be assumed they are not interested in playing.

**Codes of conduct** These will be updated but there is no urgency.

**Forthcoming competitions** Thedatesfor the Tollemache and Metropolitan Cup are confirmed and teams selected. Match-day captains will deal with any issues that arise with support from Ian if necessary. The Tollemache entry has been sent but confirmation of C team players for the Metropolitan Cup is needed before the entry can be sent.

1. **Update from the EBU**  Cath said the Eastbourne event had been successful. The next two events are online. New club and teacher searches are available but there seem to be a few teething problems with the teacher search.
2. **Leagues/Teams of 4**

**Teams of 4** There are 4 teams interested but only 3 teams willing to play in the same format. Val will continue to try to get teams interested but it was agreed that if it remains at 3 the event will be cancelled. This will have implications for qualification for the Pachabo which the EBU require to be from a knock-out event. **LATER** it has not been possible to get 4 teams willing to play in the same format so the competition is cancelled.

**Leagues** Marcia said there are 12 teams so has created 2 divisions. She has had advice from Bernie Hunt who was League secretary. The leagues need to be set up on he EBU website. The default format will be F2F but if both teams agree to play on line that is fine. Barleylands is available as a neutral venue to minimize travelling.

1. **Date of next meeting** The next meeting will be held on Teams 7.30pm on 1 February 2023. John then closed the meeting.

**Playing for Essex.**

Guidelines from the ECBA Selection Committee.

Essex participates in the Eastern Counties League where we compete in the A, B & C divisions and in the Metropolitan Cup, A B & C sections and in the Tollemache Trophy, the premier national inter-county team competition.

Members of the ECBA may apply to be considered for admission to one of the county squads. Application should be made to the Chair of the Selection Committee (email below) and should include a summary of your bridge experience and achievements. A guide to what the selectors would be looking for to admit a player (preferably a pair) to the Eastern Counties League C-Division squad is shown below. Results at club level would not normally be taken into account unless the stated club has an exceptionally high standard membership.

For direct admission to a higher squad, for example by an A/B standard player transferring from another county, a shorter qualification period of six months with participation in Essex events would be required.

Squads are reviewed as a whole annually, usually in January, but the Selection Committee can admit new applicants at any time, after due consideration. Any application or recommendation is considered by all the members of the Selection Committee. We also encourage players to aspire to a higher division. One route for players to achieve this is by developing a partnership with a higher division player.

**Admission Guide to Division C squad,**

Applicants should:

1. Have at least twelve months membership of the ECBA, be in good standing as a member of the EBU and have Essex as their county of allegiance.
2. Have participated in at least two Essex County Events in the previous year with results in the top third.
3. Provide evidence of results, for at least the preceding two years, in county and/or higher events. Consistently achieving top third placings at county level would be desirable.
4. Provide a record of Green and Blue master points won over the two years. (Applicants may also submit, if they wish, their NGS record over the same period; this is not a requirement for application.)
5. Be aware that extra weight is given to team events in the Selection Committee’s consideration.