

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Minutes for the GCBA committee meeting held at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Monday 3rd December 2018.

In attendance were Patrick Shields (President), Andrew Bull (Secretary), Jim Simons (Treasurer), Richard Harris, Paul Denning, Anne Swannell, Richard Butland (REC chair), Judy Sanis (Observer).

Finances

1. Jim reported that he has sent the accounts for 2017-18 to be audited, and has just received the auditor's comments. The auditor is satisfied with how the anomalies have been handled.
2. We had previously agreed to pay travel expenses for MCL away matches and for GCBA business at 25p per mile (the Treasury's approved marginal rate), and he will confirm this with the team captains for future matches.
3. He reported that Paul Clark is now established as a signatory for the Congress account, and that the dual approval process has been successfully trialled. Progress has also been made towards making Alan Wearmouth, Judy and Patrick the second signatories for the other accounts.
4. Jim and Patrick had discussed the financial arrangements between GCBA and CBC with Caroline Hartley of CBC. The basic charge for using the club will be roughly their minimum charge for the room being used, or half the (then current CBC) table money if this is greater, to be charged any time when table money is collected. For weekend events, there will be a flat charge of £85 for a full day, or £65 for shorter days (ending before the evening session), plus £15 for use of the kitchen; and 50p per head per break for coffee. Jim noted that in both cases, this was a slight rise in costs for GCBA, but it was agreed that this was reasonable.
5. There will be a flat monthly charge for GCBA's use of CBC equipment. The charge for general use of the building (e.g. for committee meetings, and as our postal address) is to be confirmed; it was agreed that Jim should be empowered to agree this on behalf of the GCBA.
6. We discussed the arrangements for individual matches played at the CBC, and concluded that these should be treated as private matches arranged by the players with the CBC, even if the matches were part of a GCBA competition.
7. We have been asked by the EBU what our charges for pay-to-play and direct subs will be for next year by the end of January. As any change to this must (constitutionally) be agreed at the AGM, these will have to remain the same for 2019-20, while we should discuss at the AGM if we want to change it for 2020-21. Jim noted that the direct subs are not a significant contribution to our finances, but that the pay-to-play takings are. Our rate of 5p is near the middle for counties; it was felt that we could decrease it slightly.
8. Patrick has asked one of the suggested people if they would be interested in taking over as Treasurer next year, and they had agreed to discuss this further. Another name was suggested at the meeting.

Feedback from Stroud

9. GCBA had given a donation to Stroud Bridge Club to support their attempt to start running sessions on Monday afternoons. Patrick reported that Nigel Pitel had let him know that these were now running successfully, and expressed his thanks to GCBA for their support.

Stanley Shield

10. A problem has arisen with the proposed schedule (as reported in the previous minutes), as Keith Stanley felt that the catering that the venue would be able to provide was inadequate, so a

GLoucestershire County Bridge Association

new schedule needs to be decided. Patrick will continue to act as the main point of contact, with Judy offering to help out where possible.

Membership Statistics

11. According to statistics provided by EBU, Gloucestershire has fewer clubs with 80 or more primary members than all but two other counties. There was some discussion as to whether this was a problem, as several clubs have regular players whose primary membership is at CBC. Paul suggested there might be other, more informative statistics to dig out.
12. Patrick noted that we are encouraged to help struggling clubs to get in contact with EBU for assistance. As ever, there was little evidence whether or not there are struggling clubs in Gloucestershire. It was suggested that we should inform clubs that we can do this in the next county newsletter, but it was agreed that it was mainly the responsibility of the clubs to ask for help if they felt they needed it.
13. It was noted that there are several non-affiliated clubs in the county, and we discussed whether we should try to sell the benefits of affiliation to them, while acknowledging that many of them seemed to be happy with the status quo.

Rank Xerox Trophy

14. It was agreed that we should increase the number of teams from a single club allowed to compete in the Rank Xerox Trophy from two to four, and could consider more if we did not exceed eight teams (of 8) taking part.

Midlands Counties Working Group

15. Patrick reported back on discussions which had taken place at this:
 - The dates for various Green Point events are allocated by EBU; this hasn't caused any problems for GCBA, but other counties reported that they had had problems with events being moved. It was felt that more transparency was needed in the way the EBU organises this.
 - The role of EBED was again discussed, with a suggestion that it should be revamped. As this will be discussed further at the next meeting, Patrick asked for any thoughts on the matter to be passed on to him.

EBU AGM

16. The EBU AGM took place in November. It has been confirmed that this will continue to take place annually, as will a "Counties Meeting" (which will replace the "Chairmen's Meeting", allowing for more general attendance).
17. Patrick noted that there is new blood involved in EBED, so we can hope that they will be more active in the future, and it would be good if we can engage with them.
18. In the South-West regional discussion, it was reported that the Basingstoke club, which is a combined bridge/chess club has had some success in encouraging young chess players to take up bridge. It was agreed that it could be beneficial for us to engage with other games or sports (or other activities) in this way, and that we could suggest this to CBC.