

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Minutes for the GCBA committee meeting held at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Monday 5th November 2018.

In attendance were Patrick Shields (President), Andrew Bull (Secretary), Richard Harris, Paul Denning, Anne Swannell, Richard Butland (REC chair), Roger Williams (CBC Rep), Judy Sanis (Observer).

Status of the accounts

1. Jim Simons, who was suffering the effects of a virus, sent his apologies for missing the meeting. He had sent out a copy of the accounts for the year so far, along with a draft of the notes he is making for the benefit of future Treasurers.
2. We are still looking for candidates to take over from Jim next year. Judy suggested one candidate who had experience of the role with CBC, and Patrick agreed to ask him. Patrick will also ensure that the suggestion from last month will be followed up.
3. Jim noted that we need to be sure why we are introducing the dual-signature rule for cheques - is it to avoid errors, or to prevent fraud? It was felt that while the first of these is more likely to be relevant, we also need to be seen to be honest and that the dual-signature rule would help with this. It was also noted that, for the rule to be relevant, both signatories need to know what's going on in GCBA; otherwise they will merely be rubber-stamping decisions and the rule won't provide any real benefit.

Competitions

4. The Everett Cup had been held, with a new format - an early start, with two breaks, and on a Saturday. The turn-out was good, thanks to a lot of hard work by Allan Sanis, and feedback from new attendees was very positive. It was agreed to stick to this format next year. Natalie Davenport and Norah Allen had played at short notice, due to another pair dropping out, and had been thanked for doing so.
5. The Cotswold Cup is scheduled for an afternoon start on a Sunday, though this could be changed if we felt people would prefer the Everett timetable. The Bredon Vale, a shorter event, is scheduled for a later start on a Sunday.

Stanley Shield

6. This will be held on Friday 1st February at Hatherley Manor. The estimated cost is £5350 for 20 tables, plus approximately £1000 more for 30 tables (or approximately £2000 more for 40). The start time is 2pm, with a 3-course meal provided at about 4:30pm, to finish at 8pm.
7. Cheltenham Bridge Club are providing the equipment. Sarah Amos has agreed to direct, and will stress the importance of Best Behaviour at Bridge at the start; there will also be posters to remind people of this.
8. Keith Stanley is keen that this event is promoted to all Gloucestershire bridge players. Patrick and Judy will discuss how to advertise the event shortly.

Midlands Counties Working Group

9. We continued the discussion from last month on items which had been discussed there:
 - The role of EBED: Patrick has asked the local bridge teachers how they feel EBED could help them, and is awaiting responses. Key stages in development are teaching beginners, encouraging new players to try Gentle Bridge, and then moving them on to regular club play

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(and beyond). It was agreed that EBED should be passing on the methods of successful clubs such as Cheltenham to other clubs. Roger suggested that they need to focus more on bringing new players into Gentle/club bridge. Patrick noted that some of the EBED teaching materials used a very different system from the one used by the Cheltenham teachers (and similarly for the materials used by "Mr Bridge" teachers).

- Safeguarding of young/vulnerable players: Richard Butland had spoken to his wife about this (in her role as the Welfare and Safeguarding Officer for the Gloucestershire Lawn Tennis Association), and she had encountered one issue which had been dealt with satisfactorily until the national body had insisted on re-investigating it. It was agreed that, where possible, we should deal with matters locally, and the closed matters should stay closed. Patrick suggested that the EBU only have the overriding powers to deal with bridge-related issues.

EBU

10. The EBU AGM will take place in a few weeks, and they have recently produced and issued their Annual Report. One of the items on the agenda at the AGM will be the election of new directors. We generally agreed that we were in favour of three of the five candidates.
11. We need at some point to engage with the clubs in Gloucestershire regarding how we represent the EBU members in the county. Patrick noted that while EBU is driven by the affiliated clubs, EBED also work with unaffiliated clubs; however, it isn't clear whether the unaffiliated clubs are large enough that we should be keen to persuade them to affiliate.
12. The EBU have made efforts to help clubs suffering from falling membership - this has generally been successful only when the clubs have realised they are in danger of folding and have been engaged with the process. It isn't clear whether there are Gloucestershire clubs in this situation.

Other business

13. It was agreed that holding a committee meeting at the start of each month had been working well. and that there was no need to have the extra meeting that had been scheduled to take place soon.
14. Patrick reported that we now have area on the website dedicated to the work of the Representative Events. Judy and Richard Butland agreed to be responsible for this, and Patrick will supply Richard with the relevant password.
15. Some members of Cheltenham BC have suggested taking down some of the honours boards which currently take up most of the space on the walls of the club. Some felt that people appreciate seeing their names on the boards; however, some of the older boards could probably be replaced by the more compact style as used in the basement.