

FINAL

SUSSEX COUNTY CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SUSSEX COUNTY CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION HELD AT THE UCKFIELD CIVIC CENTRE ON SUNDAY 12TH APRIL 2015

Present:

Mr M Pool
Mr A Ryder
Mr R J Wheeler
Mr D Galpin

President
Chairman
Honorary Secretary
Honorary Treasurer

and 31 members, as shown in the record of attendance. Apologies were received from May Langmaid, Peter Bates and Gerry Stanford.

1. Approval of minutes of AGM held on 6th April 2014

The minutes were approved as a correct record of the meeting subject to the replacement of "lulu" with "Lulu" in paragraph 4.10 final bullet. The Secretary indicated that the Chairman would be asked to sign the final version at the first opportunity.

Action – Dick Wheeler

2. Matters arising from the minutes

2.1 Actions under paragraphs 1 and 2 had been completed

2.2 There were no other matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report

3.1 The Chairman thanked Members for attending the AGM and ensuring a quorum for the decisions to be taken. He had been unable to attend the 2014 AGM as he was playing in the National Pairs Final. This year the date of the final had been moved to the following weekend, but in order to be sure that he was available for this year's AGM he hadn't qualified!

3.2 Last year the Chairman had wanted to expand the Youth Bridge initiative instigated by Joy Mayall during her tenure. He had managed to obtain a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery to support this expansion. Unfortunately, this had not gone as well as hoped and, despite some encouraging meetings with some of the bigger Sussex clubs and local schools and a major advertising campaign, it had just not piqued the interest of the youngsters of Sussex. In particular, he had been extremely disappointed with the reaction, or lack of reaction, of many schools in the county, who, despite not actually having to do anything other than advertise the bridge lessons on offer, had in the vast majority of cases not even replied to his invitation. Undaunted though, the Chairman indicated that he would be seeking to have a purge in the current school holidays and would be writing to all the clubs involved for their help.

3.3 Continuing on the theme of youth bridge, the Chairman said that it was very good to see the county's participation in the Loughborough Junior teach in organised by Dave & Jill Armstrong once again attended by more Sussex Juniors than any other county. He offered his congratulations to all the juniors that took part but needed to make particular mention of Stephen Kennedy who had won Sussex Best Junior of 2014. Congratulations should also go to Chris Derrick who, with partner Shahzaad Natt, had won the EBU Brighton U-25 Pairs and to Chris's brother Jonathan who, together with Stephen Kennedy, had won the U-19s Pairs.

3.4 Moving on to inter-county competitions, It had been encouraging to see the County having some success in this year's Metropolitan Cup with both the A & B teams winning their sections and the C teams finishing 2nd & 4th. The A & B teams will go on to represent the County at this year's final. The Tollemache team however didn't fare as well and the Chairman was looking into ways hopefully to improve future performances there.

3.5 The Chairman observed that, before he took on his role, he was blissfully unaware of just how much work was required to run a county bridge association, but in his first year he had come to realise just how much is required. Therefore he expressed his thanks to all the members of the committee and everyone else involved to make Sussex work. With Committee members, sub-committee members, other appointments and tournament organisers, there were too many to mention everyone individually in the time left before the afternoon play session. However, the Chairman expressed his particular thanks to Martin Pool, the Association President, David Galpin the Treasurer, Mervyn Wotton the Webmaster, Hazel Beveridge the Membership Secretary, Dick Wheeler the Secretary and Gerry Stanford who had played a leading role in the youth bridge initiative working group. They had been extra special within a group of very special hard working people, prepared to give up their time for no reward other than the benefit of all Sussex Members.

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3.6 In conclusion, the Chairman asked Members present to remember that a lot of work is put in to enable them to play the great game of bridge in Sussex and exhorted them to enjoy it, have a good time and respect not only their opponents but also their partners!

3.7 William Bourne asked in relation to the Youth Bridge Initiative whether, given the limited take-up through approaching schools directly, the Management Committee (MC) had considered other approaches when deciding how best to encourage more young players to take up bridge. He referenced:

- the successful initiative in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Berkshire, which is building momentum through a core of enthusiastic volunteers;
- the success of Sussex Junior Chess in attracting young players; and,
- the Loughborough Junior Teach-in, which should be a model if Sussex is to hold events.

3.8 The Chairman said that the initial focus had been on trying to create partnerships with schools and local bridge clubs and a substantial advertising campaign had been funded involving briefings being set to all significant media outlets, including radio and television. Whilst the early indications from schools had been very encouraging, turning that initial sympathy into agreements to proceed with tuition had proved very difficult. Small groups of children were being taught at the Avenue BC and at Christ's Hospital school but elsewhere plans had not come to fruition. He was very disappointed by this but not daunted and he intended to focus now on encouraging leading clubs to work towards creating youth sections with all associated set-up costs being funded from the Lottery allocation.

3.9 The Secretary invited Mr Bourne to expand on his ideas by e-mail after the meeting and to check whether he might be available to attend the next MC meeting on 8 May. Mr Bourne agreed to do so.

Action – William Bourne

3.10 Geoffrey Wolfarth asked whether use of the Lottery funding was limited to young people and over a specific timescale. The Chairman confirmed that use of the funding allocation was restricted to young people and over the twelve months from mid October 2014 onwards. William Bourne added that the time limitation meant that any further action intended to redress the poor take-up would need to be taken quickly.

4. Honorary Treasurer's Report

4.1 Adoption of the Audited Annual Accounts. The Treasurer reported that the certified income and expenditure account (distributed at the meeting) showed a surplus of £88 before depreciation and a loss of £1197 after depreciation. The year's outturn had therefore been broadly to budget before depreciation. Depreciation was not expected to have a significant impact on the financial performance in 2015. The Treasurer added that the charitable donation made primarily from the proceeds of the Charity Sim Pairs had been rounded up as in previous years. The Treasurer invited questions. None were made. It was proposed by Joy Mayall and seconded by Norman Hardy that the accounts be adopted. By show of hands this was approved by an overwhelming majority.

4.2 Appointment of Independent Examiner. The Treasurer announced that Mr James Bugden had decided not to seek re-appointment as an independent examiner to certify the County's accounts for a further year. On behalf of the Association, the Treasurer expressed sincere thanks to Mr Bugden for his service as Auditor and Independent Examiner over all of the thirteen years he had served as Treasurer. The meeting concurred by acclamation. The Secretary sought the agreement of Members present to the appointment of a new Independent Examiner being delegated to the MC. Members agreed.

Action – Dick Wheeler

4.3 Subscriptions for the Years 2015/16 and 2016/17. The Honorary Treasurer confirmed that the County P2P rate would remain at 7p for the year 2015/16 as approved at the 2014 AGM. He added that he was also pleased to be able to report that as current financial performance was broadly on budget, he did not believe that it would be necessary to increase the P2P rate next year. On a show of hands, John Williams's proposal, seconded by Martin Pool, that the P2P rate for 2016/17 should be a maximum of 7p, was carried by an overwhelming majority.

4.4 Approval of membership T&C

The draft membership terms and conditions for 2014/15 had been circulated to Members present. The Treasurer indicated that the only change from those of 2014/15 was that the MC had decided to drop the additional subscription previously charged for direct members. The number involved was very small and the financial impact low and the change would remove an anomaly arising from the introduction of the new constitution. It was proposed by Mandie Campbell and seconded by Bob Whiting that the T&C be approved. By show of hands this was carried by an overwhelming majority.

4.5 In conclusion, the Treasurer reported that whilst he was willing to stand for election as Treasurer for one more year, at the end of 2015/16, after 14 years in office, he would resign from that post. He hoped that the period of notice given would allow the MC sufficient time to find a replacement. Members present applauded the Treasurer's invaluable contribution to the effective management of the Association's affairs over such a long period of time.

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5. Election of Officers

5.1 Chairman

The Secretary indicated that there was only one nomination for this post and he invited members present to agree to the election of Andy Ryder. Members present agreed.

5.2 Vice Chairman

The secretary reported that there had been no nominations for this post. The MC would be invited to consider the need to fill the post at its first meeting.

Action – Dick Wheeler

5.3 Honorary Secretary

There being only one candidate nominated, the Secretary invited members present to agree to the election of Dick Wheeler. Members present agreed.

5.4 Honorary Treasurer

There being only one candidate nominated, the Secretary invited members present to agree to the election of David Galpin. Members present agreed.

6. Election of a Maximum of Ten Committee Members

There being only seven candidates (of the maximum of the ten allowed by the constitution) nominated for these posts, the Secretary invited members present to agree to their election. Members present agreed and the following were elected:

Mr P Bates, Mrs H Beveridge, Mrs A Galpin, Mr G Stanford, Mrs R Wolfarth, Mr M Wotton and Mr M Wright.

7. Members' Resolutions

The Secretary reported that no Members' resolutions had been submitted.

8. Award of Gladys Hakki Trophy.

The Chairman announced that he was delighted to present the Gladys Hakki Trophy to Bob Whiting. He had made an outstanding contribution to Sussex bridge over very many years and the award was richly deserved.

9. Any Other Business.

9.1 On behalf of the Association, the President expressed his thanks to the Chairman for his effort and commitment throughout the year. Members present agreed by acclamation.

9.2 The Chairman invited any other business and there being none he moved on to announce that the following trophies had been won by:

- Martin Pool & Mick Carrington, Gerry Stanford & Dave Franklin, Graham & Berry Hedley and Andrew Morris & Duncan Curtis on behalf of Horsham BC, winners of the Teams of Eight.
- Dave Franklin, & Martin Pool and Chris Jepson & Nigel Urban, winners of the Spring Congress Multiple Teams.
- Chris Jepson and Neil Watts, overall winners of the Spring Congress Mixed Pairs.
- Graham & Berry Hedley, winners of the fitch prize in the Spring Congress Mixed Pairs.

The meeting closed at 12.05.