

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

## Minutes for the GCBA committee meeting held at Cheltenham Bridge Club on Monday 6th December 2020.

In attendance were Patrick Shields (President), Andrew Bull (Secretary), Mike Wignall (Treasurer), Ian Sidgwick and Roger Williams.

### Finance and Legal issues

1. Some of the donation has been received, and the hotel bill for the Stanley Shield has been paid, and the arrangements for collecting and transporting the tables from CBC have been made. It was suggested that we could try to use the event for publicity in the local press, but it was agreed that the Cotswold Cup charity event would be more likely to be accepted.
2. Alan Sanis has been very successful in getting sponsors for the Cotswold Cup, with the food and wine being provided. He will also again be encouraging people to take part, and we agreed that the committee members would do our bit to help with this.
3. We discussed the implications for GCBA if CBC changes its status to Charitable Incorporated Association, as is planned. It was agreed that, as we are happy with the current arrangements, we would let CBC inform us of any necessary changes. It was noted that Oxfordshire CBA have also become a CIO (though this suggestion has since been disputed), and Patrick agreed to consult at the Midlands Counties meeting regarding the benefits of doing so (and discovered that the only CBAs to do so are Hampshire and Norfolk ).

### Clubs in the county

4. The survey sent out to clubs in the county has proved successful, with a sizable number of replies (about 16). Points noted included:
  - More non-duplicate is played at clubs than we realised.
  - Some clubs have limited technology (possibly because they don't want it).
  - Most of the clubs have an average NGS rating of under 50% (the county average for all players is about 48%). While this is not in itself a problem, we should be trying to ensure that players have the opportunity to improve if they want to. One suggestion was to have a session where a group of people used a bridge tuition DVD, as Warwickshire had done recently.
5. Similarly, it is clear that many clubs, and some whole areas of the county, have little or no teaching of bridge. As CBC has several successful teachers, it was suggested that we could pay for travel expenses for them to teach elsewhere in the county; however, it was felt that most of them are probably fully occupied with the teaching they already give. The County is willing to support anyone who wished to train to be a bridge teacher.
6. Roger agreed to contact Worcestershire and Herefordshire regarding the idea of extending our survey to include clubs near to Gloucestershire.
7. There has been little feedback from the clubs about problems they are facing and if/how GCBA could help them, but it was felt we should pursue this further, possibly focusing on a single part of the county. Ian agreed to sound out the clubs in the North Cotswold area with a view to holding a face-to-face meeting for multiple clubs to gather ideas.
8. The survey doesn't reveal whether clubs had the space to accommodate new players, though all clubs will at some point need to bring in new players to maintain their current numbers.

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9. It was agreed that we should be facilitating progress from learner, to Gentle Bridge player, to club regular, to GCBA player. One suggestion was the previously discussed idea of regional newsletters to inform players of the available transition options.
10. Some of the county events (Cotswold Cup, Everett Cup, Bredon Vale Trophy), while popular, have most of their participants from CBC, even though these events are advertised to the clubs' designated points of contact. It was suggested that more might get involved were we to hold more events with entry restricted to "non-experts" (based on NGS and/or Master Point ratings). It was also felt that we should encourage inter-club play among their lower rated players.
11. On this point, Patrick had observed that the EBU licensing handbook implies that Master Point events are for affiliated clubs only, noting that we have had unaffiliated clubs taking part in the Rank Xerox and Bredon Vale trophies before now. There was discussion regarding whether people could become EBU members as members of a nominal GCBA club for this purpose. It was generally felt that we did not wish to discriminate against non-affiliated clubs with Master Points restrictions.