

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNTY BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held at Cheltenham Bridge Club
Thursday 30th November 2017 @ 6.00 p.m.

Present:

J. Simons	President	P. Shields	Vice President
J. Hastie	Treasurer		Secretary
R. Harris	Committee member	A. Swannell	Committee member
P. Denning	Committee member		Committee member
	Committee member		Committee member
	CBC Representative		

1. Apologies for absence:

David Simons, Peter Swales & Ashok Kwatra

2. Approval of the minutes of the 28th September 2017.

Minutes were approved.

3. Matters arising:

No matters arising.

4. President's report

Report on EBU Shareholder meeting attached.

5. Report of Treasurer

- a). The accounts do not balance. Jim to help James to sort this out.
- b). The P2P fee will remain unchanged.
- c). Gloucester BC are interested in purchasing some Bridgemates or similar systems. The GCBA are happy to 50% fund this if Gloucester can provide a detailed proposal (business case).
- d). Jim will talk to Ro Kaye about the Bridge+more systems with a view to possibly purchasing two systems which could be used for teams matches.

6. Strategy

The committee agreed with the main thrust of the strategy – that with less than 20% of the regular bridge players in the county (as evidenced by the EBU's UM figures) playing in County events, the effort of the County Organisation needs to shift from a focus on the 20% to a focus on the 80%, and that to do this we need to populate the committee with people from that 80%.

We examined the proposed objectives and commented as follows

- O1.1 on Cleverly League : this is well underway but if we had a committee member from each of the areas hosting regional divisions, it would be enormously helpful in chasing along matches.

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- O1.2 on making GCBA events more accessible : this is what the Tournament Sub-Committee must now focus on. Events which replicate club nights are not deemed attractive by the majority of the candidate population.
- O1.3 on Best Behaviour at Bridge : this has to start from the top down, and County Training is one starting point. PS has introduced the issues at TD roundtables, and Malcolm Green is keen/comfortable that a campaign on BB@B proceeds.
- O2.2 : on holding friendly matches, it was suggested that we do this with clear distinct levels of experience in the different teams, on the model of the England-Ireland friendlies.
- O2.3 : on County Team members visiting clubs, it was agreed that PS should approach the team and get them to sign up.
- O3.2 : it was agreed that the GCBA would provide matched funding when an affiliated club puts forward a well argued business case, identifying what is planned, why it is “Good for Bridge”, and what it costs.
- O5.1 and O5.2 : will be taken forward by Mark Rogers in the new year.

Action on all other objectives is well underway

7. Report of Chief Tournament Director

Results:

Bredon Vale:	Gloucester BC
Men’s Pairs:	Paul Denning & Rahim
Ladies Pairs:	Mary Jones & Cynthia Moore
Mixed Pairs:	Ashok Kwatra & Laura Polito
Fritch:	Joe & Wendy Angseesing
Everett Cup:	David & Ruth Martel, Alan & Judy Sanis

8. The Stanley Plate

There was a general discussion about this with a number of questions raised. Patrick will talk to Keith about the event.

9. CBC representative

The lift will be installed by the end of January.

10. Date of next meetings: Thursday 1st February 2018 at 6.00pm

11. AOB

- a). There will be a change of passwords for the website, EBU account etc.
- b). In 2018 the mid-week EBU Summer meeting will be run by holding a series of events at clubs.
- c). Events may be held at clubs to raise money for sending EBU junior teams to China for the World Youth Team Championships.
- d). We have held eight Youth Bridge sessions so far with six regulars. We have been invited to make a visit to Charlton Kings. The County need a Safeguarding Officer. Ro Kaye to be asked.

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Report of EBU Shareholder AGM 22 November 2017

The ordinary resolution to give the Laws and Ethics Committee jurisdiction over bridge-related activities “in any medium including social media” proved uncontentious and was passed very nearly *nem con*.

The special resolution to give the General Manager voting rights in committees did not have such an easy ride. It turns out that the proposal was based on the fact that Gordon Rainsford, the new GM, is a world expert on the Laws, and the Board wanted to give him voting rights on the L&E Committee. Several people pointed out that changing the articles of association looks like the wrong way to take advantage of his expertise, unless it was felt that the GM should, as a matter of principle, and whoever he or she is, have these voting rights. There was a difference of opinion between those with experience in the private sector who generally thought he should, and those with experience in the public and charity sectors who generally thought otherwise. The tipping point for me, however, was when Gordon Smith pointed out that this would give the GM voting rights on the Regional County Working Groups, whereas his recommendation on the WGs was that he should not. I voted against, as did a small majority (and as a change to the articles of association, it would have needed a 75% majority in favour). It turned out that previous changes to the articles had not been registered with Companies House, as they should have been. They now will be.

There were two discussions about English Bridge on line, one prompted by my question, which I shall bring together. The editorial board, having taken county news out of the printed edition and put it only online, had decided that after all, county websites were the better place for this sort of news, because their research revealed that people only read their own county's. The online edition attracts some 2,500 readers, but interestingly, the popularity declines in pretty much a straight line way from the first page to the last, regardless of the type of content. So very few people got as far as the county news anyway.

There was a brief mention of, but no details about, a project being jointly run by the EBU and Yorkshire to grow membership. Ron Millett of Yorkshire said he would be happy to respond to email queries about the project.

The EBU was ahead of budget last year, and is this year too, although that is partly down to luck. The online shop has improved its performance though. An amusing sideline is that Jeremy Dhondy has persuaded the Portland Club that the time had come for them to abandon its claim for royalties on the International Laws of Duplicate Bridge whenever they are re-issued. They have been charging the EBU, but no other National authorities, presumable for ever.

Andrew Petrie gave a very brief presentation on EBED, nothing more than was in the report I circulated. They are looking for some new trustees (it is a charity), so if anyone is interested, or knows someone who might be, please step forward.

The proposed fees were approved with no discussion. The 1p increase in P2P is below inflation, and the club affiliation fee is being substantially reduced. The board is considering abandoning the rebate to players to play more than 150 sessions a year because of the administrative burden. Somewhat surprisingly, to me, almost everyone was in favour if this, so I am sure it will happen.

There was a discussion, which I didn't altogether follow, about forthcoming changes to the Data Protection regime, and how it might affect the EBU, counties and clubs. Counties are not regarded as part of the EBU for this purpose and must get their own act in order. Gordon Rainsford will be providing some information in January, and a link to a self assessment tool to enable us to decide whether we have anything to do.

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On the MCWG question on the next EBU 5-year strategy, Jeremy said that the board will be having an initial discussion on January, and that Jerry Cope will have the lead. As to how the counties will be involved, that answer was through the WGs. The point has been registered that we want to be involved.

On the MCWG question about value for money for the less competitive players, the answer was mostly waffle, but Jerry Cope in particular sat up and took notice when I expanded on the question by saying that it seems anomalous that the county P2P was less than the club one, so that the less competitive players contribute the most P2P to the EBU. I believe that sunk in too.

Jim Simons