

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF LANCASHIRE CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

7pm TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER 2023 via Google Meet

Questions & Answers

1 Why is the EC proposing LCBA should become a charity?

LCBA is currently an unincorporated association which is not a legal entity, it's simply a collection of individuals with a common purpose. This means members of the EC can be individually accountable, rather than the organisation as a whole. This is not a satisfactory position in today's complex world and the EC believes the LCBA needs to become incorporated as a legal entity. The EC recommends that a charitable incorporated organisation, rather than a limited company offers the best route for incorporation for the following reasons:

- a) It very publicly reflects that the Association is not-for-profit and exists only to promote duplicate bridge for public benefit.
- b) It should help secure external grants and funding e.g., a Lottery Grant.
- c) It will open the opportunity for Gift Aid.
- d) External oversight from the charity commission will bring re-assurance to everyone concerned, that the Association is properly run.

2 Who will be the voting members of the charity?

- a) The affiliated clubs will have a number of votes, between one and five, dependent on how many playing members they have. We estimate currently that would amount to about 30 votes in total.
- b) The Trustees (max 12).

3 Why is the EC proposing this voting structure?

a) To improve democratic representation. At the last 5 AGMs we have averaged an attendance of just 15 people, the majority of whom were EC members. We have a player membership of about 1500 people so this meant only 1% of the available votes could be cast – a huge democratic deficit. We are hopeful that the new structure will result in at least 50% of the votes being cast at an AGM.

b) The structure of bridge in England is EBU (National) >> County >> Club >> Player. The proposed voting structure matches the EBU's, in going to the next level down for its voting members. Club representatives are likely to know their membership well and thus be well able to represent the views of their constituency.

c) LCBA has little or no control over its membership, it gets 'given' over 95% of its members from the clubs via the EBU and relies on the clubs to add and remove members. We currently have:

- ~2300 records on our BridgeWebs database; OF WHICH
- ~ 1800 are LCBA members according to the EBU;
- ~ 60 have provided no email address;
- ~ 44 are anonymous;
- ~ 300 have blocked emails from LCBA (unsubscribe, junk, bounced etc).

We are therefore unable to meet the legal requirements of a charity (or limited company) to keep an accurate register of its voting members. If we wish to be incorporated, we need a much more manageable voting structure.

4 What main constitutional rights will player members have?

The right to:

- Submit a resolution for consideration by a general meeting.
- Attend and speak at a general meeting.
- Through their clubs, appoint a delegate to represent them.

5 What matters at an AGM will be binding on the Trustees?

- The appointment of the three Officers and Trustees.

- Any changes to the constitution.
- Approval of the annual report and accounts.
- Any proposal to wind up the charity.

6 Why is the EC proposing 12 Trustees?

This is the maximum recommended by the Charity Commission and allows us to expand the current 10 members of the EC, if we can find volunteers.

7 How long can Officers and Trustees serve?

Officers and Trustees are elected for a period of 3 years and may stand again for re-election. A trustee may only serve as Chairman for a maximum of 6 years in any 10.

8 What would happen if the charity folded for any reason?

The constitution says *the remaining assets must be applied for charitable purposes the same as, or similar to, those of the CIO.*