

FEES PROPOSAL 2018/9

The 2016 AGM agreed that the EBU should aim to generate a small surplus over a 4-year cycle on its business-as-usual income and expenditure to enable it to invest in one-off activity (eg new IT, improved equipment, etc). We noted that our costs (mainly wages) will over time rise in line with wages in the economy, which tend to rise at RPI+1% over the longer term (but less at the moment), so over the same period, taking account of efficiencies and economies, we should expect fees to rise at around or just below RPI.

We are currently looking at a loss of over £100k over the next 4 years, and, as included in the Annual Report, we have put together a financial recovery plan aimed at tackling that deficit. Inflation is currently forecast to be around 3.3% by April 2018.

In addition we currently give a £2 per rebate for each UM-related direct debit, but over 85% of Clubs now do this and we should require everyone (unless for very good reason) to follow suit or, as a second choice, pay by what has now become a business standard regular variable payment method, which cuts down administration for both parties. We made a commitment at the last AGM to consider rebalancing the affiliation fee and the UM charge and so it is proposed to use a removal of the DD rebate to facilitate a cut in the affiliation fee. The effect on Clubs will be different as smaller Clubs tend to pay less frequently, whilst the larger Clubs might pay monthly.

There is also an issue of rebates to those individuals who play more than 150 sessions each year, which is complex to administer. The direct cost of this scheme last year was c£7500, with about 650 people receiving rebates, the majority less than £10 but there were 10 amounts over £50. The Board's intent is to give notice that the scheme will cease from April 2018, as a contribution to the recovery plan, but would welcome views first at this AGM.

Excluding the issue of rebates, the proposed fees from 1 April 2018 are set out below. The basic increase in UM works out at 2.7% and the net overall increase around 2.9%. We are still currently constrained on the proposals that we can put forward to round penny increases, but even once the new software has bedded down it seems more difficult than was anticipated to price in fractions of a penny (rounding final total invoices), so we may not be able to rely on this going forward.

Membership Subscription: 38p (Last year: 37p)

Direct Membership UK: £30 (£29)

Direct Membership O/S: £37 (£34)

Club affiliation fee, via County: £25 (£36); £50 (£72) for clubs who play less than 26 UM sessions per year

Licensed Club and County Events: £2.12 (£2.08)

Licensed Charity Events (including multi-venue): £1.88 (£1.84)

Non-charity multi-venue simultaneous events: £5.96 (£5.84) per venue

Blue Point events: £2.68 (£2.60)

County green-pointed events; £7.84 (£7.64)

Beginner/improver events: £0.72 (£0.72)

Events run by non-affiliated organisations (eg holidays): £2.52 (£2.44)

NOTE 1: Existing prices are in brackets.

NOTE 2: The particular extra increase in direct overseas membership continues to reflect the increased cost of mailing English Bridge to those members.

NOTE 3: University Affiliation fees would remain unchanged at £5; there is no charge for affiliation fee for schools.

NOTE 4: The rebate for payment by direct debit will be removed, and direct debit will become the standard method of payment, with online transfer a back-up for those Clubs unable to set up a direct debit.

Jerry Cope

Treasurer