

Reading Bridge Club

Minutes of the 76th Annual General Meeting held

at 7.30pm on Wednesday 26 June 2024 at 35 Jesse Terrace

The meeting was chaired by Pat Dowdeswell; 31 members attended in person

1. Apologies for Absence

Dianne Brown, Mike Nunn, Dianne & Carey Sayer, Mick Green, Linsey Joyce, Sara Ribbins, Lynda & Stephen Mattinson, Alan Richardson, Rita Lenney, Greg Boys, Pam Hanson, Mike Perkins, Joyce Baldock, James Bond

2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the 75th Annual General Meeting held on 1 June 2023 were approved (proposed by Giorgio Jeronimidis and seconded by David Barnes).

3. Matters Arising

The action from the 2023 AGM was completed.

4. Annual report for 2023/24

The annual report is included as Annex 1 to these minutes. There have been a number of factors which have delayed the sale of 35 Jesse Terrace but these have now been resolved. Signed contracts are expected to be exchanged shortly.

5. Presentation of the annual accounts

The annual accounts for 2023/24 which have been examined by John Chamberlain are included as annex 2 to these minutes. The accounts were accepted by the meeting (proposed by Simon Fixter and seconded by Mary Watson). The club subscription for 2024/25 remains at £10 and is due now (deadline June 30th).

6. Election of Officers and Committee

Eight of the present Officers and Committee were elected unopposed: Pat Dowdeswell (President), Chris Hall (Secretary), Mel Thomas (Treasurer), Christine Cook, Martina Zwielfhofer, Simon Fixter, Giorgio Jeronimidis, Gill Smith. Sam Botfield did not stand for re-election.

Simon Fixter thanked Sam for his service on the committee.

7. Appointment of Examiner of Accounts

John Chamberlain was re-appointed. Pat Dowdeswell thanked him for his long years of service in this capacity.

8. Plans for the future of Reading Bridge Club

Once the sale of 35 Jesse Terrace has completed and all expenses and corporation tax paid, an EGM will be held to agree any distribution of surplus capital. To inform that decision the committee sought the views of members at this AGM over the future of Reading Bridge Club.

Four options were identified: (1) winding up the club, (2) merging the club with Loddon Vale Bridge Club, (3) continuing as at present as two separate clubs holding joint online RealBridge games, and (4) attempting to restart face-to-face sessions in rented premises either alone or jointly with Loddon Vale.

A number of other local clubs are successfully running face-to-face sessions; it was agreed that the winning formula is a pleasant location with good parking. If we attempted to follow this route we would need to retain a capital buffer to cover the risks of a poor turnout which did not improve with time. Rented rooms have become more expensive and around eight to ten tables would be required to cover costs even if table money was substantially increased. The general view by those attending is that most members prefer online bridge these days and that any attempt to restart face-to-face bridge would not be successful.

Of the other options (2) and (3) were preferred. Mary Watson, who was chair of Loddon Vale until recently, thought that a merger would be welcomed by the members of that club. She also confirmed that most members of Loddon Vale Bridge Club prefer playing online rather than face-to-face.

9. AOB

There was none.