Minutes of committee meeting of Somerset Contract Bridge Association

on the 22nd March 2021 via Zoom

In attendance:

Tony Russ (Chair)

Ceri Pierce

Frank Coltman

Richard Feetenby

Paul Burgess

Colin Simcox

Andy Ridgers

Simon Brooke

In attendance: Bob Warrender

Apologies Sheree Pavey, Eric Cummings

1. Minutes approved
2. **Programme**

Frank had previously circulated a draft programme and took the opportunity to go through with those present and make minor changes. Included in the programme were events that might be possible face to face. The first such event was anticipated to be the Paul Jones event on 22nd August 2021.

Tony pointed out that he envisaged that given the tremendous success of the daily online events these would continue indefinitely and run alongside the forthcoming programme

There then followed detailed discussions as to the anticipated return to face to face bridge covering issues such as :-

Proof of vaccinations,

The very real desire of players to return but not at any cost (ref: responses to scba survey)

Face coverings,

Cleaning,

Bidding boxes,

Social distancing,

Provision of refreshments

Payments; and

Likely increases in entry fees.

All these had to be considered in light of the continuing pandemic and the space available at Woolavington Village Hall.

All agreed that face to face bridge would be a welcome return whilst acknowledging that the logistics were complex. It was anticipated that the work involved by the directors and those setting up was going to increase.

The most popular event, the County league was likely to be especially problematic in that the event attracts large numbers. The issue generated a lot of discussion mostly around the logistics of organising this. Many participants enjoy the league because of the social aspect. The parking has often been an issue and for safety reasons (in terms of covid) it seemed unlikely that the event would be able to accommodate everybody on one evening. It was concluded that the event could be face to face for divisions one and two and online for the remaining divisions or taking place over two separate nights, again division 1 and 2 on one night and remainder on another evening.

In terms of payment of fees, Richard has considered the possibility of participants paying a sum that covers a series of events deducted as and when they play. Ceri wondered if that would be a lot of extra work. Richard said that he was able to download data detailing who had played which enabled him to keep running totals. Other software for collecting fees was discussed but payment via BACs seemed to be the preferred option. This did mean that cash would not be available on the day for caterers and instead payments would be made via BACs.

Frank pointed out that as there were going to be 2 separate events for the league the costs may increase and suggested a 20% increase in entry fees be considered.

A short discussion then took place as to how funds would be distributed to clubs when face to face bridge returns. Tony referenced an earlier meeting he had chaired with representatives of the various clubs when he had made clear that clubs could apply to the SCBA for funds.

**Western League**

Andy gave a briefing of the Western League which took place on Real Bridge. Despite some initial teething problems in the first event, it now seemed to be running very smoothly. Another event is due to take place in April. Overall, it would seem the event is popular .A meeting of county representatives will be meeting soon and it was anticipated that the event would continue online.

**Congress**

Currently booked to take place on the 1st to 3rd October 2021. A deposit has been paid (carried over from last year). Whether the event would actually go ahead remains to be seen and whether participants would be willing to travel by October and attend an indoor event that attracts 00s . An enquiry had already been made as to hotel accommodation for those participants wanting to stay over and another event is scheduled for that weekend and hotels were booked out or filling up very quickly.

The EBU were planning on holding the Eastbourne summer congress face to face and the success of that event would be a guide to the success of the West of England Congress.

**AGM**

Tony raised the question as to whether we go ahead with the AGM online in May or live in September. The consensus was that the May date would be preferable following on from year end.

**AOB**

Tony asked if anyone had any objections to the results of the recent survey being posted on the website. There were no objections.