

FINAL DRAFT

SUSSEX COUNTY CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

A meeting of the Management Committee of the SCCBA took place via Zoom at 10.30am
on Friday 13 May 2022

Present:

Mr P Clinch (PC)	Chairman
Mr J Hardy (JH)	Hon Treasurer
Mr D Wheeler (DW)	Hon Secretary

and other elected members: Mrs A Baxter (AB), Mrs A Galpin (AG), Mr D Galpin (DG) and Mr M Wotton (MW). Also attending was the President Mr M Pool (MP).

AGENDA

1. Apologies

Mr P Allen (Lewes BC), Mrs H Kent (Crawley BC), Mrs J Mayall (JM), Mr O Powell (OP), Mr N Watts (NW) and Mr M Wright (MWR).

2. Minutes of the meeting of 11 February 2022

2.1 Accuracy

MC Members were content with the minutes as shown in the final draft.

2.2 Matters Arising

DW reported that:

- Actions from paragraphs 4.1, 7.1, 8.2 and 8.3 had been completed.
- Other actions from the previous meeting would be picked up under the relevant items below.

3. Chairman's Report

PC noted the generally mixed picture from post-pandemic recovery in clubs. At the Avenue, attendance at online sessions was down and face-to-face was up. DW commented that the absence of daily statistics on the incidence of the disease was leaving some unsure about returning to face-to-face bridge. AB added that at Worthing online attendance was also down and face-to-face was slowly recovering although not yet back to pre-pandemic levels. The Worthing Spring Festival was due to take place face-to-face later this month and that would provide a good indicator of continuing recovery. MW observed that Crawley were now back to pre-pandemic levels at face-to-face sessions. DW agreed to survey clubs to gain a clearer picture and to enable sharing of recovery strategies, tactics and experience.

Action: DW

4. Treasurer's Report

4.1 Accounts - JH had circulated a report for the period to 30 April 2022. The accounts showed a deficit of £552 but bank balances remained healthy. The deficit reflected the one-off charitable donation made to the Ukraine Relief DEC fund of £1000. No charitable donation had been made in 2021 following the cancellation of the related Sims event. UMS income from online events and f2f sessions (c£500 pm) remained sufficient to cover normal overheads which remained consistent with the previous year.

4.2 Prospects for 2022 – These were difficult to predict with confidence but JH expected outturn to be at least broadly similar to 2021. UMS income was increasing gradually although still some way from pre-pandemic levels.

4.3 Outcome of Ukraine charity events – Income from the GP and 9 High events and other donations gave a total donation of £10875 to the DEC.

5. Affiliated Club Issues

DW referred to a recent request from the EBU seeking help with encouraging greater use of the 'MyEBU' facility to keep records up-to-date and to add an email address where available. The latter enables more effective communications with members. AB had invested a considerable amount of her time in identifying Sussex members who had not yet recorded an email address in readiness for a request to clubs for their help. DW asked for views on whether clubs should simply be told that this information is available and invited to request it if they wished or whether he should write to each club providing the information anyway. MC members took the view that the information should be provided to each club.

Action: DW

6. Selectors' Report

PC reported that the team for the final Southern Counties League match was being selected by email exchanges. Sussex were leading currently and the strongest possible team was being assembled accordingly. A team (of eight) was also being selected for the 'Chairman's Cup', an online event being organised by Merseyside and Cheshire.

7. Tournament Committee Report

7.1 Sussex League and Championship Teams

DG reported that the 2022 Sussex League was well under way with 80% of teams having completed at least one match. The Championship Teams had reached the final and the Pachabo team would be entered soon. The Championship Teams Plate competition was about to begin, the draw having been made at a recent TC meeting.

7.2 Sussex Candles

This was set for 19 June and would be our first face-to-face event post pandemic. A mass email had been issued to encourage early entries. Subsequently, it had been noticed that the event 'clashed' with Fathers' Day but given the wide publicity, it would not be sensible to change the date even if the Henfield Hall booking could be moved. MC Members agreed.

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7.3 Teams of Eight

The entry of only two teams had been disappointing. In a very close contest Horsham had beaten the Avenue by just 2imps. The composition of our Garden Cities team was being discussed.

Action: PC

7.4 Invitation Pairs

AG had encountered some reluctance to return to face-to-face and it was proving difficult to identify sufficient venues and TDs. She had not ruled out reverting to playing online and would review the choice when the level of interest in the Candles became clear.

Action: AG

7.5 Tournament Calendar

PC indicated that he was keen to fully populate the website calendar for the coming tournament year in order to provide an information source equivalent to the Year Book. He was hoping to achieve this by the end of June.

Action: PC

7.6 Tournament Organisation

DW had presented some ideas for a refreshed structure and these would be discussed at the next TC meeting in July.

Action: DW

7.7 EBU Competitions Group

PC is a member of this group and it had a remit to conduct an 'across the board' review of EBU events. There were significant differences of opinion regarding the mix of face-to-face and online in light of continuing reluctance to return to face-to-face. The Eastbourne Summer Festival had been reduced from two weekends to one in anticipation of continuing lower levels of interest. An advertising template was being produced and PC would pass this to MW in due course. The group were using a spreadsheet to chart the results of the review and PC would share this with the TC.

Action: PC

JH left the meeting at this point to fulfil another commitment.

8. **Secretary's Report**

8.1 AGM 2022 – Post meeting thoughts

DW had reflected on the continuing trend of low levels of attendance despite the use of a 'reminder' to all members on the email list. He wondered whether a further reminder to clubs two or three weeks before the meeting, inviting attendance by club delegates might broaden the attendance. MC Members agreed.

Action: DW

8.2 Appointments 2022/23

DW had circulated the proposed appointments list for the coming year. MC Members were content to approve them as listed.

8.3 Vice Presidents

DW confirmed that the constitution allowed for up to five VPs with appointments being subject to approval at a general meeting. Following the passing of May Langmaid, the Officers would consider recommendation(s) to the MC for endorsement and approval at the AGM 2023.

8.4 Succession planning

DW reported recent Officers' discussions had identified a number of possibilities which were being explored. He reiterated his request for all MC members to explore possible candidates amongst those currently filling similar roles at their home clubs.

Action: All MC members

8.6 Use of Social Media

DW reminded MC members of the previous discussion on this topic some years ago. The MC had concluded then that use of social media was unlikely to add sufficient value to our primary communications channel – the website – to justify the additional effort involved in maintaining consistency across a second channel. MC Members maintained that view, particularly given the likely difficulty in finding the necessary additional resource.

9. **EBU Matters**

PC reported that he was a member of a group planning the next Chairmen's meeting under the theme 'The Role of Counties in Boosting Bridge'. He had submitted his ideas and would welcome further input from MC Members.

10. **Membership Secretary's Report**

AB reported that the current membership total was 2764, 50 fewer than reported at the previous meeting. The email address list now totalled 2386, a decrease of 31. It remained to be seen whether these losses would be recovered during the remainder of 2022 as confidence in the safety of face-to-face bridge returns. AB observed that there continued to be inconsistencies in the EBU records, most of which arise from failures to use 'MyEBU' to communicate changes. Clubs can now make changes on behalf of members if they are given authority. DW is planning an email to club contacts encouraging those without registered email addresses to register if possible (see paragraph 5 above). He would include reference to the potential for delegation.

Action: DW

11. **Webmaster and Master Point Secretary's Report**

MW reported that:

- The recent Ukraine Relief project had required substantial amounts of his time.
- A 'beta' version of *BridgeWebs* was being trialled. This had eliminated the duplicate entries problem but was not yet fully debugged.
- Testing was under way for entry arrangements for the JBC 2022.
- Data from his regular updates of clubs' return to face-to-face bridge and evolving session arrangements would be turned into a composite document which could be sent to clubs (by DW) to invite updates from time to time.

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12. Conduct and Discipline

JM had indicated that there was nothing to report on this occasion.

13. Youth Bridge

13.1 JBC 2022

WB had circulated a progress report regarding the next JBC in October. DW invited questions. None were forthcoming.

13.2 Minibridge in Schools

DW reported no further progress from Ian Wright's consultations with schools and mini-bridge teachers. IW would reopen discussions with schools in September.

Action: IW

13. Education

DW had conducted a survey of bridge teachers before the AGM and 250+ students were at various stages of their learning. A couple of teachers had retired but this had been offset to some extent by expansion elsewhere. One teacher, working entirely online, had been able to broaden his geographical coverage in this way.

14. Charities Co-ordinator's Report

DW noted the TC's decision to further defer the charity Sims event to early 2023. As previously agreed, the nominated charity carried forward from the event cancelled at the beginning of 2021 would be the recipient of the proceeds from the 2023 event.

15. Equipment and Trophy Co-ordinator's Report

MWr had indicated that there was nothing to report on this occasion.

16. Next Meeting

Via Zoom at 10.30am on Friday 5 August 2022.

17. Any Other Business

DW reported that Patcham BC had consulted him about job descriptions for Club Secretary and Membership Secretary. He had been able to supply examples for adaptation as required.

The meeting closed at 11.30am.