

## FINAL DRAFT

# SUSSEX COUNTY CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

A virtual meeting of the Management Committee of the SCCBA took place via Zoom at 10.30am on Friday 26 March 2021

### Present:

Mr M Pool (MP)	Chairman
Mr P Clinch (PC)	Vice-Chairman
Mr J Hardy (JH)	Hon Treasurer
Mr D Wheeler (DW)	Hon Secretary

and other elected members: Mr P Bates (PB), Mrs A Baxter (AB), Mrs A Galpin (AG), Mr D Galpin (DG), Mrs J Mayall (JM), Mr N Watts (NW), Mr M Wotton (MW) and Mr M Wright (MWr).

## AGENDA

### 1. Apologies

Mr O Powell (OP)

### 2. Minutes of the meeting of 29 January 2021

#### 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 2.2, 7.3, 16 and 17.4 had been completed.
- Actions from paragraphs 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 12.3 from 24 April 2020 meeting are carried forward for further discussion when the prospects for a resumption of normal playing conditions are clearer.
- Actions from paragraphs 7.1.2, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 and 14 from 25 September 2020 and 7.2 from 27 November 2020 will be picked up at the appropriate times

Other actions would be picked up under the relevant items below.

**Action: DW**

JM observed that the action on her at paragraph 17.3 had not been carried forward to the agenda. She confirmed that she had arranged for a BBO online directors' introductory training session to be delivered by Jonathan Lillycrop (EBU) and several MC members had attended. AG and MP had followed up by 'shadowing' experienced online directors on several occasions.

### 3. Chairman's Report

MP indicated that sometimes he had to use his report to announce sad news but on this occasion he had two pieces of good news and a plea for concerted MC action on succession planning. The good news is:

- First, he wished to congratulate the Sussex Tollemache team which had achieved a splendid second place in the final. After leading at the end of the first day, they only missed out on winning the event after a 'crunch' match on the last day against the eventual winners. This was a performance at least equal to the best ever. Every member of the team had contributed to this success and special thanks were due to Chris Jepson (CJ), Chairman of the Selectors, and to Andrew Southwell, the Non-Playing Captain.
- Second, he was delighted to announce that, following a detailed review of three strong nominations and a secret ballot, the Gladys Hakki panel had decided to award the 2021 trophy to Peter Clinch. His sustained commitment to the design and implementation of online county competitions throughout the pandemic period had been vital to their success. The huge amount of work involved had been delivered despite the additional pressures of substantial other responsibilities.

On succession planning, MP was conscious that several MC members had been serving for approaching 30 years and he was keen to try to recruit younger blood. He asked each MC member to identify through their club contacts as many potential committee members as possible. PB observed that he was one of the '30 year club' and, given his advanced years, he would be very happy to step aside if a younger replacement could be found.

**Action: All MC Members**

### 4. Treasurer's Report

JH had circulated a report for the period to March 2021. Bank balances remained healthy at £43,835 (£42,124 at 31 Dec 2020). MC Members had no questions on this report.

### 5. Selectors' Report

PC reported that CJ was currently seeking to select for two upcoming inter-county events.:

- The Home Counties League which was aimed at providing those players who are just below the Tollemache level with valuable experience. Four matches were being planned against Middlesex, Surrey, London and Essex. PC agreed to provide MW with details for the web site.

**Action: PC**

## FINAL DRAFT

- The Presidents Cup which would involve teams of eight players and would be held on RealBridge over the first weekend in July. There had been a relatively low level of interest in this event because of the need to commit a whole summer weekend. PC planned to convey to the organisers interest in a shorter event based on BBO.

**Action: PC**

Additionally, PC reported that OP had proposed that a post-Tolle debrief be held with all team members and this was expected to be arranged as soon as possible

### 6. Tournament Committee Report

#### 6.1 Online competitions

- Championship Teams – DG reported that the 2020/21 competition was now well under way online with a view to completion by the end of May. The 2019/20 final was also now under way (first 16 boards have been played) and would be completed in due course. Both competitions would be completed in time for the selection of the Sussex team for the Pachabo.
- Invitation Pairs – AG had invited 32 pairs to participate online. 18 pairs had thus far accepted and the competition would therefore proceed. 6 pairs had indicated that they were not playing online but AG would follow up with the remainder.
- Spring Congress – PC was now working towards 15/16 May as the weekend for our Blue-pointed Spring Congress. Swiss pairs and swiss teams would be held with the possible addition of either the mixed pairs or the charity sims.
- Green pointed events – PC reported that the EBU were insisting that these should take place on particular weekends. During the weekends concerned there would be 'competing' events held by four other counties. The resultant impact on entry levels would be likely to make the events unviable. PC proposed to approach the EBU again with a view to deferring our GP events until much later in the year when they could be held either face-to-face or online when the online calendar is less crowded. MC members agreed.
- Candles - PC had penciled in a date in June for an online event.
- Welcome series – A further event, under the title "Stepping Stone Pairs", had been held online by Jane Handley at Horsham BC. This had proved very popular and a further event was planned for early April.

#### 6.2 Inter-County Events

See paragraph 5 above.

#### 6.3 Tollemache Final.

See paragraph 3 above.

#### 6.4 Competition Rules

DW had circulated a revision of the Competition Rules to extend coverage to online competitions. MP, PC and MW had submitted comments and DW would apply the necessary further changes before issuing the revision to Tournament Organisers. The web site posting would also be updated.

#### 6.5 Other TC issues

MW referred to his previous comments regarding the renaming of online versions of face-to-face competitions. This made management of the historical records on the web site difficult. MW agreed to set out his concerns and proposals for resolving them in a paper for TC consideration with a view to agreeing recommendations to the MC.

**Action: MW**

### 7. Secretary's Report

**7.1 Coronavirus - Prospects for resumption of 'normal' bridge** – DW observed that the Government's road map now suggested that the earliest we could target for a restart of face-to-face bridge was July and even then it was not yet clear whether guidance on mask wearing, social distancing and hand hygiene would continue beyond that point, placing limits on the configuration of events and the financial viability of them. Vaccination passports might also have a role to play. DW felt that prospects should be reviewed again in May. MC members agreed.

**Action: DW**

**7.2 Year Book 2021/22** – Working backwards from this projection suggested it would be premature now to commence preparations for a 2021/22 year book by seeking input from clubs. DW commented that as the number of members who had not registered an email address was now relatively small, it might be time to review the value of the substantial investment required to create, print and issue the Year Book. JM observed that the information contained became out of date fairly quickly after publication and the web site was the only accurate source of information for much of the year. Other MC members felt that the Year Book remained an important link with all members. PB suggested that a Year Book be produced this year containing a questionnaire about the future value of it. DW agreed to produce a paper on this for the next meeting.

**Action: DW**

**7.3 AGM 2021** – DW had circulated the proposed Membership T&C for 2021/22 for MC approval before presentation to the AGM. The proposed T&C were unchanged from those in 2020/21 with the county UMS rate remaining at 7p. MC members approved the proposals. DW and JM had prepared detailed plans for managing attendance, controlling contributions to the Zoom meeting and conducting the votes required. Those attending would be given related advice. DW rehearsed the quorum required by the

## FINAL DRAFT

constitution (10) and asked MC members present to confirm that they would be attending. All confirmed this, ensuring that at least a quorum + 2 would be achieved.

**Action: DW/JM**

**7.4 Future MC meetings** – DW reported that the Officers and the TC had agreed that, given the savings in time and travel costs, all future meetings should be held via Zoom. MC members agreed that all future MC meetings should also be held via Zoom.

**Action: DW**

### 8. EBU Matters

There was nothing to report on this occasion.

### 9. Membership Secretary's Report

AB reported that the membership total as of two days ago was 2965, a reduction of 88 since the last report (29 January). This seemed likely to be related to the closure of the Adur Valley clubs as their failure to renew their affiliation would not have come through the EBU until now. The email address list now totalled 2523. DW observed that if the member total remained below 3000 on 1 April, it would not be necessary to appoint a fourth EBU shareholder as mentioned at the last meeting.

### 10. Webmaster and Master Point Secretary's Report

**10.1** MW reported that use of web-site forms to register interest in on-line events had continued to produce occasional duplicate/triplicate/... entries. MW had identified use of the iPad Safari browser as being responsible for forms being re-submitted without user confirmation. There is nothing that BridgeWebs can do to prevent this and all that MW can do is to add a warning message to the forms page. MW would continue to identify and delete duplicates.

**10.2** To save time and effort by the director and to increase accuracy, MW had developed a process that he can use to convert a BridgeWebs spreadsheet (containing user details obtained from registration forms) into two corresponding text files used with BBO. MC members expressed their appreciation for this improvement.

### 11. Conduct and Discipline

**11.1** DW reported that he had recently received notifications from the EBU regarding four member suspensions. JM observed that the processes for investigation and, where appropriate, prosecution of c&d allegations had been improved and expanded. MC members discussed the processes involved and the not inconsiderable amount of work required, particularly on the part of the duos that carried out the detailed independent analysis of hands required to gather evidence.

**11.2** DG reported that, further to his report to the last MC meeting, the complainant had taken further legal action with a view to overturning the court order.

*Post meeting note – DG has advised that a new hearing has been set for 21 May at Brighton County Court. He hopes that he will know the outcome of this hearing before the next MC meeting on 28 May.*

### 12. Youth Bridge

DW reported that the Officers had agreed with William Bourne (WB) that analysis of the prospects for a successful JBC in July, so soon after the expected lifting of legal restrictions, did not encourage optimism. Accordingly, discussions with the venue (Bowles Rock) had led to agreement to postpone the event until October. The related deposit had been carried forward. WB was now consulting the other counties and previous attendees to gauge the level of interest in the revised date and a further report would be made at the next meeting.

**Action: WB/DW**

### 13. Education

DW reported that he was conducting a review of teaching activity over the period of the pandemic and the prospects for restarted activity post Covid. He would report the results at the next meeting.

**Action: DW**

### 14. Charities Co-ordinator's Report

DW reported that he had received only one nomination for the 2021 donation (from Seaford BC) in favour of the St. James Trust. PC reported that he had established how an online sim pairs could be delivered via heats at virtual clubs held on the same day.

**Action: DW/PC**

### 15. Equipment and Trophy Co-ordinator's Report

MWr had nothing to report on this occasion. PC reported that he did not know the whereabouts of two sim pairs trophies. He would email MWr with the details.

**Action: PC/MWr**

### 16. Next Meeting

Via Zoom at 10.30am on Friday 28 May 2021.

**Action: DW**

### 17. Any Other Business

- PC reported that the Team of Eight event (taking place tomorrow) would be the first county event held on the RealBridge platform.
- MW enquired whether following the amendments to the Competition Rules, the Tournament Organiser Guidelines should also be reviewed. DW agreed to present proposals to the next TC meeting.

**Action: DW**

**The meeting closed at 11.48am.**