

Minutes of Warrington Bridge Club Committee Meeting
Saturday 5th February 2022, 900am

Present: Jim Steele (chair), Mike Dennis (secretary), Janet Jagan (treasurer), Helen Wright, Malcolm Roberts.

1 Apologies: David Burrows, Angie Pinnington

2 Minutes of previous meeting, held 4th December 2021: accepted. No matters arising not on today's agenda.

3 BWS Matters (on-line bridge)

- a) The minutes of the last BWS Organizers Meeting held 11 December 2021 are on the Warrington Bridge Club website. The Committee were unanimously agreed on the value of retaining and nurturing on-line bridge as an ongoing part of Warrington Bridge Club activities.
- b) TD charges: our understanding is that the TD charge will be £40 per session, but if there are fewer than 8 tables, or fewer than 21 boards, the charge would be reduced to £25.
- c) Brierfield will be voting at their AGM on 1st March on whether to remain in BWS or not. If they do decide to opt out, we would be disappointed, as they have been a strong and integral part of BWS since the outset. However, we are prepared if necessary to welcome any Brierfield members as on-line members of Warrington, if they want to, so that they can continue seamlessly playing in BWS events.
- d) The Committee were generally supportive in principle of admitting one or more other Clubs into BWS, in order to boost table numbers and reduce our own share of fixed costs (such as TD charges).

4 Review of our activities since restarting F2F Bridge

- a) **On-line:** table numbers/ Warrington participation have picked up somewhat since the new year, and we are operating at a small profit from on-line. Jim shared a spreadsheet showing the current on-line activity, including income and costs.

b) F2F

- i. There has been some discontent expressed by some members about our venue. Sometimes it has been cold in the room (when Alford Hall have forgotten to put the heating on in advance); the walk from the car park is poorly lit; disabled parking spaces are often not available. These issues are being discussed with Alford management- they are keen to retain our custom, so are being very cooperative to resolve problems.
- ii. Monday evenings: attendance has dropped off to 4 or 5 tables since the Omicron Covid problem, but the session has always remained viable, and we will continue, and try to boost numbers as best we can – partly by addressing the issues in 4b)i above.
- iii. Thursday morning classes are continuing well, though attendance numbers are variable – usually 12 to 16. Some New Player members who cannot attend, for whatever personal reasons, are still making use of the lessons posted on the website.
- iv. Thursday afternoons have failed to take off. The Committee debated various options, and resolved to try out a different arrangement: a mix of Thursday evening duplicate pairs, Thursday afternoon advanced lessons & play, and Thursday afternoon teaching tables. For duplicate pairs sessions, we will no longer offer a hosting system, but instead provide a point of contact (the Club Secretary) by email/text/phone, for people to arrange a partner for any session where they don't have one. We agreed to firm up the new arrangements and post them on the website (**Action Jim- complete**) and to email all members. Jim agreed to draft an email for consideration by the Committee. (**Action Jim- complete**). We will also be more

proactive by ringing round to encourage people to come, and to find out what the issues are if they are deciding not to. **(Action Mike)** .

- v. Overall, we are just about covering our rental costs for Alford Hall, so the situation is not a problem for the Club financially.
- vi. Thursday mornings during summer 2022: our Thursday morning classes end in June, and will start again in the second week of September, with a new group. Over the summer period, when we are not providing any lessons, we will hold an open playing session each Thursday morning, at £2 per person. This will be open to all comers- Warrington Bridge Club members, and U3A Improvers and beginners.

c) **Priorities**

- i. People trained to use Club laptop for running sessions: OK at present, but might need to train one or two more to manage the proposed Thursday evening sessions.
- ii. People to help set up and clear away before/after sessions: this is generally OK, with most members happy to get stuck in and help.
- iii. Hosting: to be discontinued, and to be replaced by a point of contact for arranging a partner, by text/email/phone. Mike will take on this role.
- iv. Additional TD's: for the mechanics of running a session, we have got by OK with Janet/Hilary/Jim/Malcolm filling in as required, when our regular TD's have been unavailable. However, this is not satisfactory in terms of resolving any issues at the table, where formal training is required. We will look at availability of training sessions.
- v. Helpers for Thursday mornings: by and large OK, though for specific sessions when we know we will be short, we do ask around and some members are helping.

5 **Membership**

- a) **2022 Subscriptions:** this is now almost completely up to date, thanks to Janet. There are a few late payers, for known reasons. The membership list has been updated on the website, with the people not continuing their membership all recorded as such. We now have 52 full members, 36 New Player members, and 21 On-line members, a total of 109. This is a significant improvement since our low point in 2018/19, but we clearly have a long way to go.
- b) **Review of Membership Categories:** the Committee were entirely happy with the arrangements for Full Members and On-line members. For New Player Members, there was a debate about whether / how we should revise the arrangements. We resolved that we will retain the reduced joining/membership fee of £10, but that we will now time limit it to a maximum of one part year (the year of joining) and one further full year. After that, New Players will be asked to pay the full subscription. Membership fees have now been collected for 2022, so this will apply from 1st January 2023.
- c) **Alford hall membership:** the Club Secretary needs to provide Alford Hall with a list of names and addresses. Jim will provide a list of our current information (**Action Jim- complete**), and the Secretary will complete it where addresses are not recorded in our system, and provide the required information to the manager at Alford Hall. Members will be given an Alford Hall membership card from April 2022, the start of the Alford Hall year.

6 Club Finances

- a) Overall position: Janet reported that our financial position remains acceptable- no issues of note.
- b) Session charges: the Committee reviewed our charges, and agreed that £3 per person per session is about right to maintain our finances on an even keel and cover our costs, such as hire of Alford Hall. However, the Committee felt that the Thursday morning class were getting a very good deal, perhaps unfairly so in comparison to ordinary playing sessions, with all the effort that goes into preparing lessons, as well as getting free tea/coffee/ biscuits, etc. The Committee decided that we need to honour our present £2 charge for the present class, but from September 2022 all sessions would be charged at the same rate of £3 per person, including Thursday mornings.

7 2022 AGM

We agreed to hold it on-line on Zoom again this year, as we can expect a better attendance, and more time to address issues properly, than by holding it F2F before a Monday evening session.

We have chosen a date of Saturday 26th March 2022, 1030am.

Janet will prepare the accounts of 2021 and have them audited by our new auditor, Brian Drinkwater.

Action Janet Jagan

Our constitution requires 28 days' notice for the AGM, so we will need to have the documentation ready by 26th February. Excerpt from Constitution:

A list shall be placed on the Club notice board at least 28 days before the AGM of the current officers who are prepared to stand for re-election together with those members of the club who are prepared to serve and have been appropriately nominated.

8 Education

- a) As already mentioned, attendance of Thursday mornings is rather variable, but we do have different people missing/attending each week, so our overall numbers involved are healthy. It is an important activity for the future of the Club, and we will continue putting in the effort.
- b) Thursday mornings over the summer – see 4 b) vi above – open playing sessions at £2 per person.
- c) Joint sessions with U3A Improvers: the joint Gentle Duplicate on 20th January was very well received. We have another one scheduled for 24th February.
- d) Starting advanced classes -see 4b) iv above. The first two will be Thursday afternoons 10th March and 12th May (14th April is missed out, as it's the Easter break). We still need to decide on who delivers these, but Jim is prepared to do it if there is no-one else.

9 AOB

None.

10 Date of Next Meeting

Saturday 5th March 2022. Please note the time 0930.

The meeting will be mainly to prepare for the AGM.