

# **Worcester Bridge Club**

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

Held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 24th February 2016 at British Legion Club Claines

### **1. Apologies:**

The following members offered their apologies: Lorna Fellows, Sally Kelly, Tony Collingham, Alison Thompson, Jan Francis-Smythe, Pam Pearce, Mel Downing, Richard Arrowsmith, Ada Philips, Eleanor Greaves, Rosie Cannon, Barbara Ramsden.

### **2. Minutes of the AGM held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015:**

There were no corrections to these minutes. Jane Morton proposed that the minutes should be accepted. Tim Keates seconded this proposal and it was agreed unanimously by all the members present.

### **3. Chairman's Report:**

Lots of people put an amazing amount of effort into making this club a success so that we can enjoy bridge on a Wednesday evening so I want to say thank you

- Committee members – Pam, Dick, Mike, Tim, Cathy, Jane, Andy and Rufus. It's a unpaid job and all spend a lot of time organising things on members' behalf
- Outside the committee, setting up Matt, Terry for being front of house
- Scorers – Paul Hammond, Mike, Paul Tapster, Andy, Matt
- Directors – Paul, Sue, Jimmy, Paul T, Helen, Dick, Andy O'Hare
- Everyone who has acted as host. Would encourage more people to do so and thanks to Tim for running the rota
- Rufus for running the Try Duplicate which has been very successful
- And Dave our Steward

Congratulations to all those who have had successes throughout year (and there have been numerous), just want to pick out a few

- Vic Laver & Eric Myers winning the Richard Lewis trophy
- Worcester team winning the Garden Cities qualifier, the regional final and making the national final
- A very recent success – Marian, Jane, Susan and Pam winning the Newent bowl last weekend

Highlight for me of the year has been continuing success of intermediate bridge, our table numbers are growing and so are we as a club (in fact think this is the highest number of members that we have ever had). We are starting to see some crossover and hope in time that people will take the step into the main club. Thanks to those people – Andy O'Hare, Mike V, Terry & Lorna - who are happy to play in that section to balance the numbers. Big thanks to Rufus for success of Try Duplicate which in a way has led to this.

We have invested this year and started to use Pianola, a bridge club management system, which makes life easier for running the club. We haven't switched on all the features yet but will be doing later in the year.

There was sad news at Christmas when we heard that Roger Bowles had had a tragic accident. Although Roger was fairly new to the club he was a very regular and extremely successful member. An outstanding player, he was very generous in his advice to others and had just asked what more he could do to help the club. We are very pleased that Shirley, Roger's wife, is here to collect his trophies tonight.

I wanted to give an update on the Worcestershire Bridge own venue project. The county bridge association has for some years been looking at the possibility of having a dedicated bridge facility centre in the county. They have now identified a promising possibility which is the Old Elizabethans Cricket Club at Perdiswell. The aim of the project is to provide good quality bridge playing conditions and a centre of excellence to develop and promote the game to the local community. In order to make the project viable it needs to be supported by a number of local bridge clubs. Worcester Bridge Club has been approached to see whether we are in favour of supporting the project. The committee discussed the approach and agreed that in principle we support the County's objective and could see that this would be a good move for Worcester BC itself in that it would allow the club to expand playing numbers in an excellent purpose built facility and run additional sessions with daytime, weekend and teaching. We have a very good relationship with the Royal British Legion (and really appreciate Dave), are content with our arrangement and had no plans to leave. However, if any new premises were more suitable in bridge terms, had all that we required and were in the right location we agreed that this would be a move that we could recommend to our members.

This project is some time away (at least a year) and currently a business case is being prepared. We will have chance to influence this and assuming the business case is successful then a detailed proposal will be put to our members to allow them to vote on the issue.

John Sansom, who is the project manager, will be happy to answer any questions you may have on this issue. These will be taken under any other business.

News – Andrew Robson will be returning in Oct 2016 with two seminars.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report:**

Dick talked through the accounts and said that it was pleasing to report that 2015 had been a good year financially with a surplus of £2,363 compared with only £116 in 2015. The increase was principally due to

- Increase in members and tables, including two extra evenings – £470
- Increase in table money of 50p from March – £1,100
- No expenditure on equipment in this year, whilst £667 spent in 2014 on bridge pads
- Donation in 2014 of £250 to British Legion as part of 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration not repeated
- Less £150 from starting to use of Pianola for admin and communication with members

Dennis Loynes had audited the accounts and he was thanked for this service. The Committee did not propose any changes in membership fees or table money at this AGM.

There was one question on the accounts, one member asked who the creditors were. Dick explained that this was the EBU with P2P fees. With no other questions his report was accepted, proposed and seconded by Maureen Ledger and Ian Leake.

## **5. Proposed new constitution for agreement**

Dick ran through the changes that committee proposed which were a tidying up exercise and to bring the constitution in line with the EBU model constitution. Sue Lane asked how the committee planned to cope with the increasing numbers and how they would limit entry if too many people wanted to play on a normal club night. Joyce replied that numbers are monitored, and tables can be moved to fit more in. If necessary we might have to move tables earlier if numbers continue to rise. Dick asked the members if they could approve the changes in the constitution. Jane Rutter proposed that the changes should be accepted with Mark Askwith seconding this and it was agreed by a substantial majority of the members present.

## **6. Proposed byelaws for consultation including proposal from Jimmy Ledger**

The changes to the club's Bye Laws, proposed by the committee, were then read out to the members by Dick.

Jimmy Ledger was then invited to put explain his proposal on changing the Bye Laws of the club regarding eligibility of players to represent the club in external competitions. He wanted the club to allow any bona fide member to represent the club rather than have an attendance requirement. He said that in the past some regular members had been prevented from playing and that this had been unfair.

Mike Willoughby spoke as a past Chairman and current Vice Chairman of Worcestershire Contract Bridge Association. He felt that clubs should select active members for representative events as the EBU advises. He commented that Jimmy's proposed changes didn't go far enough and supported the committee's view. David Thomas commented that he felt that the new byelaws should not apply to new events that the County was trying to promote e.g. the interclub teams and Mike Willoughby agreed with this.

There was then a general discussion with various members putting their views forward with all speaking being in favour of the changes. Nick Forward asked when the changes would come in and Joyce replied that after the AGM the committee would consider views and confirm the byelaws, these would then apply to this year's Garden Cities qualifier. Mike Vetch confirmed that the committee had given discretion in the past.

Eventually, Terry Collins suggested as it appeared we all thought the same way we should have a vote and move on. Joyce pointed out that the committee's view and Jimmy's proposal were different so we did need to vote on his proposal. At this point Jimmy said as the Committee had changed their view broadly in line with his he would withdraw his proposal.

## **7. Election of Officers and Committee Members**

The members who have volunteered to stand for 2016 are:

Chairman	Joyce Skelton
Treasurer	Dick Rutter
Secretary	Pam Pearce
Committee Member	Andy Cullen

Committee Member	Rufus Ulyet
Committee Member	Tim Keates
Committee Member	Jane Morton
Committee Member	Mark Askwith
Committee Member	Mike Vetch
Committee member	Kathy MacLaren

Cathy Geer has stood down and was thanked for all her work by the Chairman and members present. The committee was elected on bloc, proposed by John Dowbiggin and seconded by Sue Lane. Joyce also thanked those people who had volunteered to help on tasks outside of the committee and said that she would be in touch.

## **8. Appointment of the Auditor:**

The Chairman thanked Dennis Loynes for auditing the accounts of 2015 and suggested that he be appointed the auditor for the coming year. This was unanimously agreed by the members present.

## **8. Any other business**

Sue Lane wanted clarification as to how many partners you needed to play with to be eligible for the individual competition, Joyce replied three.

## **9. Presentation of the trophies**

The Chairman presented the trophies to all the winners who were present:-

Pairs Championship	Simon Harrison & Roger Bowles
Championship Pairs Final	David Thomas & Sue Lane
Teams	Mel Downing, David Thomas, Simon Harrison & Roger Bowles
Mixed Pairs	Sue Evans and Dennis Loynes
Individual trophy	Roger Bowles
Men's Pairs	Simon Harrison & Roger Bowles
Ladies' Pairs	Sue Lane and Sue Evans
Intermediate Cup	Bob Castell
Try Duplicate Cup	Steve Bull

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.45pm.