

The York Bridge Club

Minutes of Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 24th November, 7pm

Held at Acomb Sports Club. Also offered Online using Zoom

Introduction

Stuart Kay, Chairman of the Limited Company, opened the meeting as chair. He explained the AGM is usually held earlier in the year, but it had been delayed in the hope it could be held in our new clubhouse. Sadly, delays to the construction of the building meant that was not possible.

Stuart explained the scope of the meeting and briefly outlined the agenda.

Trustees Report

2020/21 has been a strange given our Holgate Road premises were closed for the entire financial year due to coronavirus. In response the Bridge Club set up an online club so members could keep playing.

Teaching also went online during lockdown. We collaborated with YCBA and offered online classes for absolute beginners. This has resulted in an increase in the Club's membership. Our membership is now as high as it has been for the last 20 or 30 years. Despite this many of our members have not been playing bridge.

During 2020/21 the Bridge Club appointed 3 new Trustees. In conjunction with the other Trustees, they have worked hard to take the Club forward.

The Club management committee did not meet throughout 2020/21 (it held its first meeting on 1st November 2021 since the Club closed). Throughout the year Gill Richard represented the Club committee by attending Trustees meetings.

Sadly, Keith Sowerbutts (Trustee and Finance Director) passed away during the year. He died within 3 days of being appointed Honorary President of the Bridge Club.

Accounts and Financial Report for Year Ended 31 March 2021

Perversely, the financial position of the Bridge Club has been strong throughout 2020/21. Following Keith's passing Philip Ashton has taken over responsibility for producing the accounts. They are presented in a different format due to changes in income and expenditure flows during coronavirus, and commencement of building our new premises. The Bridge Club has implemented a new accounting system to improve financial control of the Club's assets & liabilities.

Below is a brief summary of Club finances during 2020/21 (accounts issued in advance to members).

- Table money fell by 75%.
- We received grants paid by the government during lockdowns.

- During 19/20 and 20/21 the Club received donations from members totalling £100k, including gift aid.
- Outgoings fell by around 50%.

On 24th December 2020 we sold our Holgate Road premises for £428k. This exceeded its book value by £153k and exceeded original cost by £283k. We agreed sale and leaseback arrangement with the purchaser with a peppercorn rent. We can continue using Holgate Road until 31 March 2022.

The Club agreed loans with members totalling £113k and do not have a mortgage on our new building.

In summary, our new premises are being funded by the proceeds of Holgate Road, loans and donations, VAT registration, and accumulated reserves (property reserve of £60k).

We are now VAT registered which enables the Club to reclaim VAT on the building costs.

During the year the Club took out an interest free bounce back loan funded by the government. This has now been repaid given that commercial interest rates apply after 12 months.

Stuart asked the meeting if anybody had any questions linked to the 2020/21 accounts. There were no questions. Stuart asked members to agree the accounts are formally adopted. Agreement was unanimous.

Brief Outlook for 2021/22.

Delays in completing the new premises have arisen due to supply chain issues in the building industry linked to coronavirus & Brexit. When we open the new premises, this will represent a unique opportunity we must take advantage of.

The cost of the building of £650k has increased by less than 2% at a time when building inflation has been around 30%.

Since registering for VAT the Club has absorbed the impact on table money of a 20% VAT charge. Inevitably, there will be upwards pressure on table money which could lead to price increases. We also now pay VAT on annual subscriptions, and we can no longer claim gift aid on subscriptions.

We need more people to play face to face (F2F) bridge at Holgate Road. When moving to Acomb we anticipate improved attendances which will be crucial to make the new clubhouse a success.

We are now delivering improver bridge classes at Holgate Road. In conjunction with YCBA we delivered online beginner classes which have now been running for 29 weeks. In September we also started F2F bridge classes for absolute beginners.

The Trustees have agreed a sessions strategy for the new clubhouse which followed a consultation with members.

The Club wants to go back to running a management committee. We will be looking for more volunteers to get involved. This will enable the Trustees to revert to their traditional role of agreeing strategy and policies for our Bridge Club. The management committee will be responsible for operational matters.

We want to be an inclusive Club to cater for all abilities of player. We intend to increase the social element compared with Holgate Road.

Acomb Sports Club will be refurbished, and all Bridge Club members will be automatically enrolled as social members.

Sadly, John Legg (honorary member), Philip Mason (former President of YCBA and Club member), and Tony Wood have passed away in recent months.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

Michael Sturge acted as Independent Examiner during 2020/21. He has agreed to fulfil the role again during 2021/22. Stuart thanked him for his excellent work and the meeting agreed unanimously that Michael be re-appointed.

Open Forum for Member Questions

Q1: Arthur Welling asked if we can have some social evenings when we move into our new premises.

A1. Stuart explained we want to develop a social ethos in the new clubhouse. This could be assisted by setting up a social committee to organise social events. But we will need volunteers to make this happen.

Q2. Beverley Blyth-Bristow asked whether we could run an event for Nora Penn and some of the other older members.

A2. Stuart agreed we should invite Nora and others back to the Bridge Club, if only on a social basis. Sadly, Nora's eyesight has further deteriorated so she can no longer play bridge.

3. Beverley also thanked Gill Rickard for the excellent work she has done keeping in touch with our older members throughout the last 2 years. This statement was fully endorsed by all members attending the AGM.

During the meeting Stuart thanked many of the volunteers, without which the Bridge Club could not have kept going. Phil Godfrey also expressed his thanks for the tireless work that Stuart has done to take the Club forward. This was endorsed by all members.

Any Other Business

No further matters were raised by members so the meeting was closed.