



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
of the Young Chelsea Bridge Club  
held at the London MindSports Centre  
at 6.30 pm on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

**Present:** David Ewart (Chairman); Andrew Clery (Treasurer), Chris Duckworth (Minutes), Brian Callaghan, John Dean, Paula Leslie, David Muller, India Natt, Rosie White (MC members); Ian Payn (Club Manager); Sarah Bell, Ollie Burgess, Gilly Cardiff, Gad Chadha, Simon Cochemé, Richard Creamer, Carrie Eden, Mike Eden, Clive Freedman, Tim Gauld, Chantal Girardin, Alex Hannon, Ingar Hansen, Richard, Haydon, Gitte Hecht-Johansen, Mark Lehto, Victor Lesk, Brian McGuire, David Newman, Ashwin Patel, Francois Picard, Gordon Rainsford, Jan-An Saab, Debbie Sandford, Carla Sidney-Woollett, Kath Stynes, Lorna Vestey, John Vos, Tony Whately-Smith

**1. Registration of Proxies**

The following members were present by proxy: Christine Bickerstaff, Sally Brock, Kathryn Cearns, Simon Cearns, Mark Davies, Janet de Botton, Joe Fawcett, Chris Goodchild, Audrey Hartley, Jonathan Jacobs, Jonathan Lillycrop, David Millard, Sue Millard, Barry Myers, Boris Nedev, Paul Nicholas, Fionn O'Leary, Ned Paul, Ahsan Rizvi, Graham Sadie, Mike Scoltock, Ivor Snowden, Richard Vann

**2. Apologies for absence**

No apologies for absence were received apart from those who had arranged to be represented by proxy.

**3. Minutes of the AGM of 22nd October 2020**

The minutes of the last AGM were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and there were no matters arising.

**4. Chairman's report**

The Chairman noted that it was at the 2020 AGM that it had been announced that the club hoped to move to new premises in Hammersmith. The lease on Goldhawk Road was given up on very favourable terms – no back rent nor dilapidations costs had been charged, and the club's deposit had been returned. During the year a group of sympathetic investors had successfully acquired the building, setting up a company called MindSports Property Ltd (MPL) to own it. MPL had done the necessary renovation and refit work, and the club was now open for business in the London MindSports Centre.

The structure for use of the premises would be very much as before – the club will lease the whole premises on a long (30-year) lease from MPL, and space within the premises will be let out by the club to other users. It was important to try to maximise the use of the premises so as to maximise the income to the club

The Chairman asked John Dean, who is also the solicitor acting on behalf of the club, to explain the position with regard to the lease negotiations. John reported that some months had been spent in agreeing Heads of Terms for the lease, which were eventually signed in August. MPL's solicitor had drafted a lease based on these but some sticking points had arisen. Jerry Cope, the EBU Treasurer, had agreed to step in as mediator to help resolve these points and it was hoped that the lease would be agreed before the end of November. A building surveyor would be coming in during the next week to check out the building, produce a schedule of condition and estimate likely

running costs. Meanwhile, the club was operating under a “Licence to Occupy” which had been in place since the end of August.

John handed back to the Chairman, who went on to explain further that the club wanted the right to be able to terminate the lease, since the future of bridge was unclear, and that the terms of the break were one of the main sticking points.

Moving on to the activities of the club, the Chairman noted there had been a successful opening event at the end of August, and the club was now running regular Monday and Friday games which were slowly growing, as well as the SuperLeague matches every other Tuesday and Wednesday and a small social duplicate on Tuesday daytimes. There was also a monthly hybrid game – both f2f and online – and the chairman asked for views on whether this should be continued.

In addition, rooms were now let on a regular basis to chess groups every Monday and Thursday evenings, the London Go Centre was a regular user of the premises, as well as being a part-owner, and a new agreement would see Ned Paul bringing one of his social duplicates to play at the centre on Tuesday evenings – initially every other Tuesday to fit around the SuperLeague.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Ian Payn for filling in as club manager during the last few months, and Ollie Burgess for helping to generate and maintain enthusiasm for the duplicates. He also thanked Paula Leslie who was standing down as Treasurer after many years’ service in that role on the Management Committee.

## **5. Treasurer’s Report**

Andy Clery had taken over as Treasurer in October, and he expressed his thanks to Paula for her help in the handover. He had circulated the accounts for both YCBC Ltd and Cardinbrook Ltd prior to the meeting and he presented the main points that they showed.

YCBC Ltd made a surplus of just over £30K last year. Income came mainly from running the online games, government grants and furlough payments which had allowed all the club staff to be kept on. The club was also very grateful to some individual members for their donations. In addition there had been a significant sum paid in advance by the EBU, who subsequently were unable to use the club as much as they had planned during the year; some of this income was therefore carried forward to cover EBU use of the premises this year.

Cardinbrook, which is a subsidiary company of YCBC but not part of the charity, is the company that runs the bar and is also the company through which the outstanding debentures are held. Cardinbrook made a loss of £9k in the year, due to the necessity of writing off much of the stock, and also because of some debenture repayments. Since Cardinbrook is not in a position to be able to repay the remaining debentures, steps are in hand to transfer the remaining debentures to YCBC Ltd.

The Treasurer went on to outline the current position. The club has approx £94K in the bank, but £58K of this is already allocated as follows: £34k promised towards the cost of refit works on the new premises; £10K business rates grant, which may need to be repaid; £8K ring-fenced for the Youth project; £4K online member credits; £2K professional fees in connection with the lease.

The Treasurer noted that he estimated that a total of 19 tables per week were needed in the Monday and Friday games in order to break even. This figure will come down, however, if more users can be found to fill the premises. The club is now operating under a new policy of trying to maximise income through competitive pricing for its services. Bar prices have been significantly reduced from those charged at Goldhawk Road and room hire rates are very reasonable. As a result, bar takings are currently good and growing and new users of the facilities are being found – most recently Ned Paul’s club, which had not been taken into account in these calculations.

Finally, the Treasurer stressed the importance of members completing Gift Aid forms, which allows the value of their subscriptions and any donations to be significantly increased.

Carrie Eden asked what steps had been taken towards a membership drive or a drive to boost attendance, and suggested there should be a bridge sub-committee. It was also suggested there should be a host system for Fridays in addition to the one Rosie White organises for Mondays. Ian Payn explained that there were very few volunteers available to take on this organisational work, but it was agreed we might investigate the provision of an online system to ensure hosts for duplicate games.

Debbie Sandford asked about teaching at the club and the manager explained that one course was nearing completion, with several more scheduled for the New Year. All members could help by bringing the teaching availability to the attention of their contacts.

John Vos enquired about the maximum capacity of the club for bridge events. It was explained that 24 tables could be accommodated comfortably, and up to about 30 would be possible for some events.

## **6. Election of Directors**

Two of the club's directors were standing down in rotation, namely Brian Callaghan and David Muller; Paula Leslie was also standing down as a director; Andrew Clery, who had been co-opted during the year was also standing down as required by the club's Articles of Association.

Brian Callaghan, Andrew Clery and David Muller were re-standing for election. They had been formally nominated and all three were duly elected nem con.

## **7. Any Other Business**

a) Chris Duckworth proposed a vote of thanks to Rosie White. That she organises the host system for Mondays had already been mentioned, but it should be noted that she also does all the book-keeping for the club – almost a full-time job especially since the introduction of individual member accounts. She has been responsible for recruitment and training of three different club managers during the last couple of years and she has managed all the work necessary to fit out the new premises for use by the club. All of this is done on a voluntary basis, and the meeting expressed its appreciation.

b) Carrie Eden asked what was happening about a new club manager. The Chairman explained that so far no long term suitable candidate had been found and consideration was being given to what type of person might be needed – many aspects of the job are concerned with building management and do not require bridge knowledge. Ian Payn explained that various avenues have been and are being tried, not as yet with success. Rosie explained that the money was not available to pay what the job is worth, adding to the difficulty of filling the role.

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 7.30 pm.