



MINUTES OF THE WELSH BRIDGE UNION COUNCIL

held on Tuesday 24th March at Crossgates Community Hall, Llandrindod Wells

Present: Herbie Rowley (President), Neville Richards (CEO), Fiona Noyce (Treasurer), Jean Hand (NTO), Alan Screen, Irene Thomas, Gareth Jones, Geoff Evans, Simon Gottschalk, Marie Topp, Mike Clare, Phil Bowers, Rita Lawrence. (Who also took the Minutes)

1 Apologies Paddy Murphy, Bob Alderdice & Jean Cufley

2 Report from the Management Committee for Council

This report was given by the WBU President. (Attached)

3 Review of Management Committee actions during the previous 12 months

This review was given by the President. (Attached)

4 Matters arising from item 3

- 4.1 Timing of the meeting – In response to a query raised by one delegate, it was agreed that the current meeting of Council was additional to the meeting within two months of the AGM required by the Constitution. That meeting would take place as usual immediately prior to the AGM.
- 4.2 WBU Journal – It was reported that absence of a hard copy format is causing difficulties in some clubs as some members do not have access to a computer. It was suggested that perhaps a calendar could be provided.
Discussion followed including the logistics of distributing both a hard copy journal and newsletter. The competition rules journal is available online as are other publications. The Chief Executive has undertaken to provide, on personal application, a printed copy to any member experiencing difficulty in obtaining one. The cost and distribution of a hard copy journal was debated. One suggestion made was that members could be charged for a diary if they wanted one. The point was made that club secretaries are responsible for making sure members who want copies of information available on the WBU website get it. It was pointed out that sometimes details and dates are unavoidably changed and so calendars and hard copies are not necessarily accurate. The President agreed that the Management Committee would discuss this at the next meeting.
- 4.3 Perry & Spickett competition - The President reported that some Areas were experiencing difficulty in obtaining reasonably priced accommodation for their teams It was asked if this competition could be held in Mid Wales every year instead of rotating. Members were alerted to the fact that

the AGM is held at the same time and therefore AGM attendance is boosted. Following a vote the majority agreed that the Perry & Spickett be held in Mid Wales each year.

It was also agreed that the AGM continue to be held on the same day. The decisions will be recommended by the Council to the AGM.

- 4.4 Management Committee interference with calendar arrangements appointed officers have made - The President reported that these changes were due to exceptional circumstances, i.e. scheduling the Mixed Pairs Competition would be breaking WBU custom and practice if it was staged at the same time as the Junior Camrose Competition.
- 4.5 Delegates from the North Wales Bridge Association reported that their webmaster was having difficulties accessing some of the information from the Websites, but there was uncertainty as to whether this was the Area or National website. The Chief Executive will contact the NWBA webmaster and address any problems. It was reported there are two WBU websites: www.welshbridgeunion.org and www.wbu.org.uk. Dot org is updated regularly with News and Selection material, Mike Tedd manages the WBU traditional website but wishes to stand down as webmaster before July. The Chief Executive suggested that any member interested in taking over the role of webmaster should contact him. The websites would be merged to provide one contact URL.
- 4.6 NWBA'S email to the Management Committee - It was reported that there had been no response to a letter attached to an email, although an email response addressing the matters raised had been received from the Chief Executive. The President apologised for the non reply by letter but pointed out that the representative from the NWBA has a responsibility of reporting back to members. The NTO said there had been an exchange of emails with Gwynn Davis regarding issues with competitions. The last email to her from Gwynn Davis indicated that no further response was necessary and she read it out. It was agreed that minutes of the MC or Council when drafted could be agreed by those present using email. They could then be circulated and published on the website in a more timely fashion.

5 Finances

- 5.1 **Draft accounts** - these were tabled by the treasurer.
- 5.2 **Affiliation fees** - these are all covered though one has not yet been paid due to problems with the bank. Lloyds have not been very helpful this year.
- 5.2 **Celtic Sims figures** - it took a while for the final sum to be settled due to late payments.
- 5.3 **Sponsorship** - Last year there was quite a lot of sponsorship but not so much this year which is expected to see a drop of about £5,000.
- 5.4 **Interest** - this rate is lower than other organisations.
- 5.5 **Prize monies** - the Management Committee reviewed this and adjustments were made. It had been difficult to find out if all winners had been paid.
- 5.6 **Finance Committee** - two attempts were made to hold a meeting but on each occasion it could not be held due to a lack of a quorum.
- 5.7 **Honoraria** - this was raised by the President. All had been paid this year except that for the new

position of Club Liaison and Education Officer which will be paid now for the full year as a goodwill gesture. The workload of the NTO had not decreased and it was agreed that the honoraria be restored to its former level and be back dated.

- 5.8 **Debit/credit cards** - The Chief Executive now has a debit card. A discussion ensued about the benefits of issuing credit cards. The constitution does not allow the organisation to borrow and so the constitution would have to be changed if credit cards were to be issued. It was agreed not to apply for credit cards as the debit card is sufficient. It was however proposed that the constitution be changed to allow the organisation to borrow money if it wished to at some time in the future.
- 5.9 **Competition organisers expenses** - confusion about who pays has resulted in double payments though the sums have been repaid. Also, there is concern that there are some funds lurking in the system which is not reaching the Treasurer. It is only small amounts but over time it will mount up. It is thought that not all sims money is coming in. Discussion followed.
- 5.10 **International teams funding for the next 3 years** - selectors have discussed this and wished that no mention of expenses for European events be made. This gives the discretion to award expenses or not; information to say, "expenses MAY be paid". The Management Committee would decide depending on circumstances. It was agreed that in future entries to competitions should not be accepted unless accompanied by payment.
- 5.11 **Bridge Premier League** - this was queried. The Treasurer reported that funds are not yet all in. The Chief Executive said it would all be accounted for and there would be no losses this year.
- 5.12 **Subscriptions** - a member asked if we should raise the WBU membership subscription in view of the competition income versus the expenditure. The option for requiring all affiliated club members to be WBU members was discussed. A motion was proposed and seconded that "all club members of an affiliated club must be a member of the WBU." This was carried by a majority vote. This motion would be put forward to the Annual General Meeting. It was agreed that a survey be sent to all clubs to ascertain how many club members were members of the WBU and how many were not.
- 6 **Election of President** Gareth Jones was proposed: nominated by Irene Thomas and seconded by Jean Hand. Gareth Jones nomination would go forward to the Annual General Meeting.
- 7 **Any other business**
- 7.1 **The cost of directors** - the Chief Executive said this cost was growing fast and we should therefore look to use our own homegrown directors. This proposition was well received.
- 7.2 The Treasurer alerted the Council to the fact she would unfortunately not be able to attend the AGM.
- 8 **Date of the next meeting (AGM)** This would be held prior to the Perry & Spickett on the 6th June.