

**Special General Meeting**  
**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November at 10:00**

**Present**

Management Committee members - Ceri Pierce, Gilly Clench, Simon Gottschalk, Paddy Murphy  
8 WBU members

Currently WBU subs are set at the AGM in June/July for the following April which means that there is a substantial lead time required to change subscriptions.

The WBU seeks to amend the constitution so that the Management Committee can set membership subscriptions for future years at Management Committee meetings in a more timely manner.

The motion :

**"The annual subscriptions shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting of the Union held during the preceding subscription year"**

**To**

**"The annual subscriptions shall be determined by the Management Committee".**

The meeting had been convened to discuss and vote upon the motion :

Gilly declared the meeting inquorate, but it was decided to discuss the motion and obtain feedback.

Steve's Webb, our membership secretary provided a report that was read out :

The Wbu needs money.

The only sources of income are membership subscriptions and Masterpoint fees.  
Before Covid there were over 2200 members who generated approximately £25,000 per annum and about £5,000 through Masterpoint fees.

This year the combined total will be about £15,000 from only 1,370 members.

We need to increase the membership fee.

If we do not change the constitution the increase cannot take place until April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

If the motion is passed, the Management Committee will determine a necessary but responsible increase as soon as possible.

In January, I will notify all club officials of their current members, as usual, and include details of the forthcoming rise due on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2023.

There have not been any charges levied by the areas in the last couple of years. Any charge required by the 4 areas will be included in the determined fee increase.

No one likes to pay more money but if we do not the WBU will collapse.

Steve Webb  
Masterpoint and Membership Secretary

This was discussed and varying views were put forward:

- The WBU is dying and membership subs won't make much difference.
- This motion gives the WBU more breathing space to turn things around after COVID has changed the way people play bridge. The WBU is suffering from apathy as is evidenced by the attendance at today's meeting.
- Members do not enter competitions, our advertising needs to be improved we are all getting older.
- It is recognised that new members should be attracted and teaching must take place in order to do this.
- The WBU will approach BGB to change the way the home unions contribute to the home international series as they are a drain on our resources and we pay the same as for example the EBU with 56,000 members.
- It was suggested that maybe an automatic increase each year could be agreed in advance.
- Clubs would struggle with an increase. Their members may reject it as most are not competitive players and then we would be left with just a handful of direct members.
- The competitions on offer need to be revamped.
- Any increase would need to be communicated to clubs before 1st January as their financial year starts then.
- Some whilst in favour of increasing subs were not in favour of the MC determining them.
- It was felt that the constitution was too restrictive and needs an overhaul.

The meeting was closed and a report will be made back to the MC.

In general, people were in agreement with a small increase but not necessarily set by the MC.

Gilly proposed having a more general discussion with the membership following an MC meeting in order to attract more participants.