

**Special General Meeting**  
**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

**Chair Gilly Clench (President)**  
**Present 50+ WBU members**

**Background**

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.

In particular the Management Committee wish to set the subscriptions now for April 2023, otherwise they will be set in June/July for 2024, leaving a 15 month lead time.

**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 thanked everyone for turning up and declared the meeting quorate.

Steve also thanked everyone for their attendance and made a statement regarding the proposal:

Essentially the WBU needs more income and would like to raise subscriptions for this year. Because of the timing involved the MC would like to request that they can make this decision rather than doing so at the AGM held in June or July. The AGM cannot be held earlier as the annual accounts would not be prepared (year end is 31 March).

Pre covid, subs were £12 plus £2 for area fees. It is anticipated that we would like to raise to £15 to include £1 area fees, so the net increase is only £1.

Fees were suspended during covid and when we restarted them they were reduced to £10.

The WBU needs money as it is running at a loss of around 9-10K per annum.

**In answer to queries from the floor :**

The balance in the bank and reserves is 85K, which is a big reduction from previous years. Our membership has reduced from 3000+ to 1300

StepBridge costs £1 to play, 10% of which goes to the WBU. (It was noted by one member that £1 is remarkably cheap.)

Swansea bridge club had submitted a statement that was read out - in summary, Swansea has increased costs and decreased numbers of members - with only 15 who play in WBU events. There is great concern that the membership will wish to disaffiliate if WBU increases its subs.

General discussion was held regarding the pros and cons of clubs belonging to a governing body; where costs could be saved by the WBU; comparing the costs of WBU membership with EBU and other organisation's memberships charges.

#### **Comments made by the floor:**

Are WBU costs appropriate - CEO and honorarium?

Should Internationals be held online?

Should the Perry and Spickett be held online?

It should be the members who make the decision not the MC

Could have an EGM before April and take vote for subs to be put in place by April 1<sup>st</sup>

This would not provide enough notice for the clubs

It is only a £1 increase that is being suggested

It is normal for a Management to make such decisions

What does the WBU do for clubs?

If we are not funded by members we have to ask other people to pay more

Should the Council make the decision not the MC

Everyone has saved a fortune playing online compared with playing face to face

Could we fund raise with Sim Pairs etc

It is normal / automatic in other areas eg Golf, that when you belong to a club, that the club is part of a governing body - the members are not consulted

It costs £33 to join the EBU as a direct member

#### **Vote**

A vote was held and 83% voted in favour of the motion and 17% against.

#### **Motion passed.**

The meeting was closed and everyone was thanked for their interest and attendance.