WBU Council Meeting – 13th May 2026@ 11:00

Minutes

1. **Present :** Ceri Pierce, Jean Cufley, Paul Cunningham, Andrea Knox, Terry Ramwell, Dave Cartlidge, Gwynn Davis, Mia Deschepper, Brian King, Steve Jarvis, Rod Sheard, Paddy Murphy, Alan Screen.

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting** – accepted

3. **Matters Arising** : None

4. **AGM Matters and Motions:**

   An email was received from the East regarding the proposed constitution change – this was discussed after the MC / Presidents report.

5. **Report from President / Management Committee**

   Andrea presented her report and thanked the committee for everything over the last 2 years. Special thanks were made to Jean our retiring Treasurer and she is looking forward to welcoming James Williams. It is hoped to move to an accrual accounting basis this year rather than cash accounting.

   Andrea thanked the extensive volunteers involved with the WBU including the Laws & Ethics committee, selectors, editors, viewgraph operators, webmaster, junior coordinators, school co-ordinators, and ladies' coordinators with special thanks to Simon Richards who will be retiring as a selector this year.

   Actions undertaken over the last 2 years (which will also be presented at the AGM):

   Club Visits (23 so far), halted temporarily as Andrea dislocated and fractured her shoulder in 2025 and was unable to drive for quite some time
   Member Zoom Focus Groups
   New income generating events (Dragon Pairs)
   Set up of Hardship and Disability funds
   Investigating Business Partnerships – WI, Universities, U3A, other NBOs
   Club Communications project ("Don't Sheet The Messenger!")
   Cake Club (monthly assisted bridge for learners with a review afterwards -now co-branded with U3A)
   Strictly Come Teaching Event for learners
   New cards and bidding box inserts for every affiliated club
   Llanbrighton Congress, now jointly run with the EBU
   Free (online) Lessons with Christmas Vouchers
   Bridgesteddfod – the Annual Festival of Bridge
   Laws and Ethics activities (* a lot of work as there are currently two active collusion investigations)

   All of these roles and club visits were without any remuneration from the WBU.
   Outside of her WBU activities Andrea confirmed that in her personal capacity she had accepted the role of an EBED Trustee (English Bridge Education and Development) and had joined the EBU National Development Committee

Plans for the next year:

WBU History archive

The 'Common Game' International Sim Pairs

'Ministry of Fun'-a venture she will be doing personally with the EBU and EBED but will be open to WBU members

Launch of the Welsh Junior Cup

Looking to introduce the role of WBU Senior Co-ordinator

Issues Andrea reported she had encountered (some possibly inadvertent):

Cliques and lack of friendliness

Rude behaviour

Sexist treatment

Lack of encouragement as a player

Failure to disclose conflicts of interest

Solutions to issues proposed:

Expanding and bringing on board new selectors to provide a friendly and inclusive environment

Review of selection rules

Improving general conduct

Selectors' Charter with Area buy-in to ensure their selectors adhered to this

Conflicts and Discrimination Officer on the Selectors Committee

Seniors Officer appointed from the Selectors

Junior Officer appointed from the Selectors

Everyone thanked Andrea for the enormous amount of work she has carried out in every area of the WBU. It was noted that Ceri and Andrea have a standing order to make routine decisions which has facilitated a lot of this whilst bigger decisions were referred to the Management Committee for approval. Andrea clarified that she did not have any unfettered powers and all decisions had to go through at least a dual approval process.

It was noted that Andrea has effectively changed the President's role. A discussion of her role ensued. In order for Andrea to continue as President for a further year but protect the role of President for each Area for the future, the East have proposed an further amendment to the constitution. Andrea will review it and agreement or changes to this will be circulated to the Council for agreement prior to the AGM. There was no issue with the role of President rotating between the areas moving forward. However, Andrea may require a more permanent role with an appropriate title in order to remain carrying out her good works. Ceri stated that she had no objection to this title being Chief Executive Officer as her role was primarily administrative. Andrea wished to have time to reflect on this. Ceri and Andrea to discuss further and make proposals.

6. **Appointments of Committees**

Management Committee

To consist of President, CEO, Treasurer, NTO and 4 Area delegates. It was noted that the MC may choose to invite others as appropriate.

Approved

Finance Committee

To consist of the WBU Treasurer and Area Treasurers or their delegates.

Approved

Tournament Committee
To consist of the National Tournament Organiser plus Area Tournament Organisers.
Approved

L&E Committee
To consist of Paddy Murphy, Andrea Knox, Tony Disley.
Approved

An increase from 3 members to 4 (David Stevenson) is proposed at the AGM in the constitutional amendments as we have had a valuable and experienced new volunteer come forward. This was approved in principle. It was noted that there will often be a requirement for an 4th member of the L&E committee due to the possibilities of one of the other members being conflicted.

The East expressed concern regarding the level of power they perceived that Andrea had due to her multiple roles and mentioned specifically her role on Laws & Ethics. Andrea explained that she would gladly step down from her role on Laws& Ethics as it was a great deal of work for a volunteer, especially with two active collusion investigations underway. The sole reason she had taken this role and volunteered her time to do what is essentially legal work on a pro bono (non-chargeable) basis was the fact that in such investigations she felt it was important they were run by a properly legally trained person as the main risk of an organisation being sued by those accused arises from a failure to follow proper procedures, hence her training as a Solicitor was an important qualification for this role.

NOTE: post-meeting, having reflected on the comments from the East, Andrea confirmed she would not be remaining on the Laws& Ethics Committee as she is exceptionally busy in her own commercial law practice and does not wish to spend her spare time doing pro bono work where it is not fully appreciated by all parties.

Andrea's resignation enables David Stevenson to be appointed immediately.

Selection Committee
The East raised an objection as Andrea had suggested that 2 specific people from the nominations (Mark Roderick and Liz Commins) be approved as part of her above proposal to bring in some new blood and specifically to target friendliness/encouragement and inclusiveness and to have individual Selectors with specific responsibility for (a) Seniors (b) Juniors and (c) Conflicts/Discrimination. They objected to Andrea trying to influence the choice of Selectors.

Furthermore, election of Andrea's two suggested nominees would mean that one of the two remaining existing Selectors from the East (Paul Denning or Simon Gottschalk) would not be elected as there were only 3 slots remaining.

Separately it was noted that of the of 4 nominations made direct to the Council, several Council members had no knowledge of or background information of the candidates which caused an issue for them when voting for the 3 available positions.

It was noted that Simon Richards was retiring as a Selector from the AGM and that the Areas had nominated the following as their nominated Selectors (who are elected automatically):
East: Tim Rees
West: Tony Disley
Mid: Sarah Amos
North: Paddy Murphy

Agreed that the existing Selectors (Paul Denning and Simon Gottschalk) will remain as Selectors unchanged for now and a resume would be provided for each of the 4 nominees for the 3 remaining Council-elected places. Once these resumes were provided the Council would reconvene (on Zoom or by email) and make its vote on the 3 remaining Selector places.

The AGM will be asked to approve this process.

Membership Secretary – Steve Webb
Approved

Masterpoints Secretary – Steve Webb
Approved

National Tournament Organiser – No nominations

Treasurer – James Williams
Approved

President – Andrea Knox
Approved – subject to Constitutional changes approval at the AGM (* as this would be Andrea's third successive year as President and currently the Constitution only allows up to 2 years of office)

7. **Approval of honoraria and services**

Treasurer	£1,500
Masterpoints Secretary	£1,000
Membership Secretary	£1,000
NTO	£1,500
Webmaster	£500
CEO Admin Services	£12,500
Junior Co-ordinator	£750

Approved

Note - NTO has been increased to £1500

8. **AOB**
A member from the Mid has offered to review our website function and design. The CBAI is also reviewing their website and will share their findings with us when complete.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

Approx. 8 weeks before the next AGM.