

## **Minutes of the Committee meeting held at 5pm Monday, 11 January 2021 online on Zoom**

Present:	Reverend Canon Christopher Smith (CS)	President
	Christine McCreath (CC)	Past President
	Tony Reed-Jones (TRJ)	Honorary Treasurer
	Paul Gipson (PG)	Honorary Secretary
	Louis Moore (LM)	Honorary Competitions Secretary
	Peter Calder (PC)	Committee member
	Jill Connor (JC)	Committee member
	Sue Price (SP)	Committee member
	Penny Davidson (PD)	Committee member
	Chris Orchard (CO)	Committee member

Apologies: None

### 1. President's welcome

CS wished everyone a Happy New Year in opening the meeting. He noted that despite the good news of available vaccines we are currently in more severe lockdowns than previously on both sides of the border.

### 2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were approved unanimously.

### 3. Berwick Congress

It was agreed that there was no prospect of running a face-to-face Congress. However there was a desire to run an online version of the Congress and PG outlined some of the BBO options.

The Committee agreed on a format that retained the essence of the congress with a pairs event followed by a Swiss teams event. PG confirmed that the club could not offer cash prizes (due to the SBU agreement with BBO) but could offer BB\$.

PG will look at the SBU, EBU and East District events and suggest potential dates to the Committee. SP and LM highlighted the need to set a date as soon as possible as people may be planning post-vaccination family visits in the May timeframe.

**Action:** PG to suggest potential Congress dates.

### 4. League teams

CS introduced the item saying it was unfinished Committee business from 10 March 2020.

The East District currently plans to finish the 2019-20 season with teams playing matches that affect promotion and relegation. This would mean two matches for Berwick A and three matches for Berwick Bears.

The East District hopes to start the 2021-22 season in September but this is dependent on the coronavirus situation.

There was a wide-ranging discussion about the teams with all the Committee members contributing.

The newer members of the club said that we should promote the league teams better to club members, perhaps with a dedicated area of the website. There was broad agreement that it should be an honour to play for the club and that there should be transparency in team selection, with the second team aiming to develop players for the first team.

Everyone was aware that the biggest issue for the teams is travel. Unless playing another Borders club, teams have to travel to Dunbar or Haddington during the winter, typically meaning a round-trip of 2-3 hours for many. As many members dislike driving at night, just ensuring that a team has sufficient drivers is a major component of team selection.

CS summarised the discussion:

- Main issues:
  - travel
  - informing members about the league teams
  - communication about the league teams
  - teams are run for the club and not for individuals
- Secondary:
  - team captains
  - team selection

SP and JC asked about running the event online. PG confirmed that it was possible, subject to some security issues unless there was an external director. PG will discuss this with the League Secretary.

CS asked the Committee to consider this matter further and we'll discuss it again at the next meeting.

## 5. AOCB

- Pianola Play

PG arranged a 6-board trial session on Pianola Play and 12 club members participated. This is a new product developed by Pianola and PG was keen to investigate it as a potential replacement for BBO if we need to run online bridge from September.

It was clear that Pianola Play is a pre-release product, but the session enabled the club to provide substantial feedback to Pianola.

- Club tournaments on BBO

CM and SP raised the concern about slow play at the club tournaments on BBO, with seven minutes per board being insufficient for some players. PG and LM have discussed increasing the time but do not believe that this would reduce the number of boards where play cannot be completed in time.

JC and SP mentioned that some players would like the barometer option turned on. LM said that turning it off did not appear to affect the speed of the game, so it will be enabled.

**Action:** PG will remind all members that bridge is a timed sport and that they need to play to the clock.

- Brexit

PG mentioned that the New Member Form has been updated due to Brexit but no change was necessary for the Privacy Policy.

The meeting closed at 6pm.

The next committee meeting will be on Monday, 8 March at 5pm on Zoom.