

PLYMOUTH BRIDGE CLUB

1 Moorview Terrace, Mutley, Plymouth, PL4 7EB

Minutes of 2021 Annual General Meeting

7th June 2021

Attendees: Meeting held via Zoom with 32 members in attendance.

1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies received from Ailie Henry, Alasdair McNaughton, Margaret and Digby Hole, Elizabeth Rawlings, Sylvia Allkins, and Susan Wright,

2. Minutes of 2020 Annual General Meeting 4th June 2020

2.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising from the 2020 AGM.

4. Chair's Report and Announcement of 2020/21 Cup Winners

4.1 Steve Lacey (Chair) presented the following report.

I didn't expect to be chairing another online AGM when I wrote my last Chair's Report and I hope that next year we will be able again to meet in person at the club. However we are clearly not out of the Covid woods yet and while the vaccination programme must give us cause for optimism the growth of the pandemic worldwide will require us all to be vigilant and careful.

We have learnt a great deal during the last twelve months about the power of the internet to enable us all to keep in touch. I have spoken more to friends and family during lockdown using facetime, duo, WhatsApp and Zoom than before the pandemic and most of us have learnt to play bridge on-line. We have been able to welcome players to our club tournaments who were located in Canada, the Channel Islands and Hertfordshire as well as players from Devon and Cornwall.

We have played interclub matches with teams from Chester, Potters Bar, Tylers Green, Pinner, and South West Scotland. I am really pleased that we have begun interclub games, which can only help us improve our standards and add a new dimension to the life of the club.

My expectation going forward is that playing bridge on-line will continue to be a major part of the bridge environment.

So, what does that mean for the reopening of 1 Moor View Terrace. Will we need a clubhouse in future?

My view is that a physical location is necessary for keeping the club together as a social entity. A place where we can meet, facilitate access to the game for current members who do not play on line, introduce new players and maintain the social dimension of the club which is so important.

The challenge will be how to open safely while not losing the advantages of the online environment.

We have clearly learnt a lot about social distancing and preventing the passing of infections between people. I will always remember hearing a cruise ship doctor in the middle of handling a norovirus outbreak at sea saying that the most dangerous area on the ship for catching something was the Card Room. There must be a question about whether we should go back to using playing cards and bidding boxes where everyone is handling them.

We may need to organize the club so that we are socially distanced and masked. The refreshment and bathroom facilities may need to be regularly and thoroughly cleaned. A one way system may be needed. Instead of using cards we may play on computers or tablets enabling some people to play in the club while others continue to play at home. (I think many of us may prefer to play at home on a snowy evening in January.)

So the challenge for the new committee will be to decide when it is safe to reopen the clubhouse and how we should open to keep us all infection free.

Fortunately thanks to Charles' initiative we have received a startup grant from Plymouth City Council, which we can use to finance new arrangements.

A major success this year has been the organization of four sessions of bridge each week. Monday and Thursday afternoons have been sessions for members only and Tuesday and Friday evenings sessions have been open to non-members and have attracted players from throughout Devon and Cornwall. These sessions have regularly attracted up to 8-10 tables - which is fantastic.

Thanks are due to our team of directors, Morag, Eileen, Sue, Bruce, Andy, Pete and Charles.

Bridge Base Online has provided us with a good platform and we have more recently started using Real Bridge which I see as being our preferred platform going forward. Real Bridge has the advantage of being British, is supported by the EBU and has the major advantage of enabling players to see and hear each other.

I have already mentioned the initiative by the competitions committee of introducing inter club team matches that have been very enjoyable. It is good that we can benchmark our standard of play against other clubs. Thank you to Andy and Karen for organising the teams and liaising with the opposition.

Since Christmas we have resumed Bridge Lessons and delivered them online using a mixture of Zoom and Real Bridge. My thanks to Eileen and Alex who have taken on preparing and delivering the lessons. We currently have 8 beginners attending on a Monday morning and 22 improvers on a Wednesday morning. We also ran bridge practice sessions on Thursday mornings on Real Bridge and plan to run them again in the summer when the present courses of lessons finish.

Clearly the building still needs to be maintained and I am grateful to Clare who is visiting every week and taking the opportunity to give areas a thorough clean in preparation for when we can reopen.

I would also like to thank Karen and John Allder who until lockdown organized and maintained our less formal Tuesday afternoon bridge sessions. John and Karen have decided to step down from that duty - so we will be looking for others to take on their mantle once the club reopens.

Thank you to the members of the Committee, who played important roles in leading the club this year. It has been a quiet year for building improvements although it has been necessary to repair a leaky roof and skylight. My thanks to Ailie who made the necessary arrangements. Thank you also to Richard and Robert who have decided to step down from the committee this year.

I am delighted to see we have a strong line up of people willing to serve this coming year.

I will let Charles report on the financial position of the club - but under his stewardship the clubs finances remain healthy.

I would like to take this opportunity to mark the passing of Ann Husk who was a long standing member of PBC, Flan Conroy, a more recent member who continued cheerfully playing at the club during his long illness, Sheena Wallis, who passed very suddenly and was a keen afternoon player, and Beryl Edmonds who was a much loved nonagenarian who welcomed members to her care home to play bridge in her final months. You may have noticed we now have the Beryl Edmonds Cup in her memory.

I also send my best wishes to Gloria Summer who has decided to move away to be nearer her son and family in Wales, and to Christine Maunder who has withdrawn from the club due to ill health.

Now normally I would have the pleasure of awarding the cups to the winners of this year's competitions. So let me congratulate all the winners and I will look forward to the day you can get your hands on the silverware when it is safe to do so.

Competition winners 2020/21

Summer Cup	Eileen Clout
Tudor Summer Cup	Sue Gregory
Mayflower Cup	Sue Gregory
Mayflower Tudor Cup	Sue Gregory
Mayflower 400 Cup	Margaret and Digby Hole
Spring Cup 2021	Andy Carpenter
Tudor Spring Cup	Sue Gregory
Jan Plumb Cup	Suzanne Cornish and Allan Simpson
Spring Cup 2020	Mel Melville-Brown

Thank you to Richard, Andy and Bruce for organizing the competitions this year.

Every now and then we like to recognize the contribution members have made to the life of the club by awarding Life Memberships. This year I would like to propose Life Membership for Charles Greenlees. Charles has been a member of PBC on and off since 1977 and in recent years has been the Club Treasurer. He has also been a key member of the teaching team. This year it has been almost entirely down to the initiative, organization and hard work of Charles that the club has continued to function on-line and as you will hear in his treasurer's report his application for grants has helped keep us in a healthy financial position. Charles has been especially good at encouraging people into the online environment with his patient advice and encouragement.

The Chair asked for someone to second his proposal, which seconded unanimously.

Remember your committee are here to serve you - and we are willing and open to receiving feedback and suggestions from you all.

So thank you again for joining this virtual AGM. I hope by this time next year we will be meeting again at 1 Moor View Terrace.

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 Charles Greenlees (Treasurer) stated that the accounts (Annex A) had been made available on the club website prior to the AGM and provided the following report.

The Club remains in a pretty healthy financial position despite having been closed for the last 15 months. This is due in part to my applying for and receiving several grants for our sector, from the government via PCC. I would also like to thank Eileen for her hard work in preparing the accounts and her advice.

Subscriptions are only marginally down on last year as bridge students had to become members, as well as members from other clubs having to join in order to play in the afternoon sessions. We have regrettably lost some members for a variety of reasons but numbers remain sustainable.

Table money has also held up reasonably well because the committee decided early on in lockdown to create a virtual club and take the club and its members online. Various other local clubs were contacted by myself and we have run 4 well subscribed sessions each week. I would particularly like to thank Andy & Allan for their help in doing this, as well as Bruce, Pete, Steve, Eileen, Morag & Sue Gregory for Directing and scoring these.

Teaching revenue is down but from before Christmas until this month we have had between 26 & 32 students attending a weekly course on line which will show in next years' accounts. Here again I would particularly like to thank Alex, Eileen, and Steve for their not inconsiderable input as well as Martin Jones, Bruce, Morag & Sue Gregory with their advice and help with running of the practice play sessions

Room rental income is of course well down due to the closure of the clubhouse. We are though getting several new enquiries from customers but cannot proceed with these until it is known what precautions we need to take and the cost of implementing these.

I would once again like to thank Clare who has visited the club regularly to clean and keep our insurance policy valid. She keeps me posted with any issues and will be a vital cog in the reopening of the club

You should all be aware by now of our intention to take the club forward as a cashless entity. This will take place over the course of several months but it will end the thankless task of collecting table money at each session, be able to run online sessions easily and facilitate other events/reasons where money has been involved.

Lastly, I would like to remind you all again that you need to run down your BB\$ accounts as we will be moving the Monday afternoon sessions to RealBridge as well as the Thursday sessions, in due course. If you also play in the evening this of course is less important though we may also move at least one of these to RealBridge.

In addition Charles also thanked Ruth Edmondson and Brigid McElroy for holding evening lessons which also results in new members to the club.

Eileen Clout reminded members to check their balances with the move to a cashless club and to be mindful that if you fall into arrears you are in effect using other members' money.

There were no comments on the accounts and Steve Lacey (Chair) thanked Charles Greenlees (Treasurer) for his report.

6. Election of Officers

6.1 The following nominations were tabled:

- a) Chair - Steve Lacey
- b) Vice Chair - Mel Melville-Brown
- c) Treasurer - Charles Greenlees
- d) Secretary - Allan Simpson

6.2 There being no need for a ballot the above nominations were unanimously agreed.

7. Election of Committee

7.1 Nominations received from the following were agreed

Martin Berkien
Diane McGregor
Gill Seymour
Bruce Foster
Karen Murphy
Toni Fairhead

7.2 There being no need for a ballot the above nominations were unanimously agreed.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 There were no items of Any Other Business.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed.

Allan Simpson
Secretary