

**Warrington Bridge Club**  
**Minutes of 45th AGM, held on 23 April 2022, 1030am, on Zoom**

**Present:**

Jim Steele (Chairman)  
Mike Dennis (Secretary)  
Janet Jagan (Treasurer)  
David Burrows (Committee member)  
Malcolm Roberts (Committee member)

and 10 club members.

**1 Apologies:**

The following members tendered their apologies: Peter Harrison, Tony James, Steve Bentley.

The following members tendered their apologies, and stated they were happy to appoint the Chairman to use their proxy vote if necessary: Stuart Hunter, Malcolm Roberts (Committee member), Gladys O'Hara, David Tilley, Simon Barber.

**2 Minutes of last AGM, held on 11th September 2021**

The minutes were accepted as read, proposed by Carol Bingham and seconded by Janine Curwell.

**3 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising not on today's agenda.

**4 Chairman's report**

The Chairman's report had previously been circulated with the AGM documentation, and posted on the website.

The Chairman gave a brief summary. He expressed particular thanks to Helen Wright and Angie Pinnington, who were standing down from the Committee at this time, for their contribution to the Management Committee and to the Club over many years. He gave an update about the new venue, and answered a question about the number of members in the various categories: our current paid-up membership is

Full members	51
New Player members	36
On-line members	23
Total	110

The Chairman commented that this position is healthier than we were at our low point in 2019/20, when we had only 59 members: he was encouraged by the constructive relationship between the Club and Warrington U3A, and thanked the U3A bridge organizing team for their excellent work in bringing people into the game.

**5 Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement**

An audited Income & Expenditure account for calendar year 2021 had been posted with the AGM documentation, available for members to scrutinize. This showed calendar 2021 for comparison.

The Treasurer and the Chairman took questions about the information in the accounts from 2020 and 2021. It was noted that because of changes in circumstances over the last three years some of the information format has changed as well, and this will become clearer after figures for 2022 are available for comparison. In particular, with the 2020 lockdown, and our move into on-line bridge in a 3-club consortium

with Brierfield and Stretford (BWS), we had changed our cashless billing arrangements to members, from a hybrid of arrears and advance, to payment every 2 months in arrears only. This had entailed, when the lockdown was imposed, repaying members for any advance fees they had paid. Furthermore, with BWS, our arrangements are that Stretford Bridge Club pay all the costs directly (BBO, RealBridge, EBU charges, TD charges) for the BWS sessions, and we reimburse Stretford Bridge Club every 2 months for our share of those costs. It took time to get these new arrangements working smoothly, which they now are, but a consequence was that reimbursement to Stretford Bridge Club for 2020 activities appears in our 2021 expenditure. While the overall position in our Income and Expenditure account to end 2021 is correct, the surplus for 2020 is somewhat overstated, and for 2021 understated by an equivalent amount.

David Lynas commented, supported by Janine Curwell, that our balance was quite large for a club of our size, and queried what steps the Management Committee were taking to manage this, and in particular to improve the value offered to members. There ensued a general discussion about our finances and likely upcoming additional costs, in particular related to our venue. The Chairman commented that in 2022 we had already spent some of our funds in updating our equipment, and in procuring additional equipment for use with our teaching activities. The Chairman proposed that the meeting's comments be taken on board by the Management Committee, who would take action accordingly, in particular with regard to managing the surplus, and how to use this to the benefit of members. This was accepted unanimously.

David Lynas also queried what the financial split was between our on-line and F2F activities. The Chairman responded that while we do not include this level of detail in our audited Income and Expenditure account, the Management Committee does have full access to the relevant financial information, and uses it to ensure that both activities are broadly in kilter, and that one does not subsidize the other.

There was a discussion about our venue, with both positive and negative comments- some members thought it was very good, but a few disliked it and had voted with their feet. The Chairman commented that we had canvassed members for suggestions for a new venue, and on the criteria they felt were important, once it had become clear that returning to Belong would not be an option (it has been closed to visitors since the Covid lockdown in March 2020). There had been a good response from members, and all suggested options had been followed up by the Management Committee. Alford Hall had been the only one to offer the facilities we needed, including a big enough room, secure storage for our equipment, and guaranteed availability on Mondays and Thursdays. There was an ongoing concern about the parking arrangements, in particular the disabled parking bays being always in use by anyone, rather than reserved for those who needed them. This is the subject of ongoing discussion with Alford Hall management.

## **6 Appointment of Auditor**

The appointment of Brian Drinkwater as auditor, replacing Geoff Fisher, was approved by the AGM in September 2021. The meeting was asked to support Brian Drinkwater's appointment for a further year. This was approved unanimously.

Janet Jagan thanked Brian for his help in producing the Income & Expenditure Account.

## **7 Setting of the annual subscription and visitor's fees**

The Chairman reminded the meeting of the present annual subscriptions:

Full members £20 (£15 to the Club, and £5 to Alford Hall for Alford membership)

New Players £10 (£5 to the Club, and £5 to Alford Hall for Alford membership)

On-line members £10

The meeting was content with the arrangements for Full Members and On-line members, but there was as discussion about New Player Members. There were some strong views that we were giving an exceptionally good deal, which was discriminating against Full Members who were paying more. The Chairman commented that this was recognized by the Committee, who had already decided that the lower subscription rate would be time limited to the end of the first full year after joining, and that the lower fee was part of the Club strategy to attract new members. The Secretary pointed out that annual subscription fees had a relatively minor effect, and that it was session fees, and therefore getting people to turn up and take part, which was far more important. It was noted that the Thursday morning charge of £2 was unrealistically low, with all the work that goes into providing the lessons and lesson notes, and with tea/coffee/biscuits included. The Committee had already decided to increase this to £3 from the start of the new term in September, which brings it into line with session fees for on-line and F2F bridge.

#### **8 Method of Collecting Subscriptions and Playing Fees**

Janet Jagan said that she felt the present system was working very well, and allowed her to manage collection of money very effectively. The Secretary commented that our cashless system is a model already being copied by many other clubs. The Management Committee proposes to continue with the present system. There was no demur from the meeting.

#### **9 Election of Officers and Management Committee**

Two members of the Committee have indicated they are standing down: Helen Wright and Angie Pinnington. The remaining members have said they are willing to stand for re-election:

Jim Steele        Chairman  
Mike Dennis     Secretary  
Janet Jagan     Treasurer  
David Burrows  
Malcolm Roberts

Three new nominees for the Committee are as follows

Janine Curwell    proposed by Janet Jagan, seconded by Hilary Wood  
David Tilley      proposed by Jim Steele, seconded by Mike Dennis  
Brigitte Massey proposed by Malcolm Roberts, seconded by Jim Steele

The meeting was asked to approve the appointment of the above 8 people en bloc. This was proposed by David Lynas, seconded by Jim Addison, and approved unanimously.

The meeting thanked the Chairman for the huge contribution to the Club running and development. The Chairman said while he is willing to continue for another year, and was grateful to the meeting for their support, he hoped that a new nominee for Chairman could be found for the next AGM in 2023.

#### **10 Any Other Business**

There were no items of AOB notified prior to the meeting.

There was one comment from David Gartside, a New Player member who attends the Thursday morning lessons. He said that the quality of the lessons, and the availability of lesson notes on the website, was excellent, and very well received.

The meeting closed at 1130am.