

West of England Bridge Club

Minutes of a Committee meeting held at the RAFA Club on Wednesday 27th October 2021

Present: Alan Evans (Chair), Bridget Johnson, Chris Frew, Jan Duncan, David Jones, Bernice Horseman, Bill Ashford, Jane Chapman, Laurie Barth, Jen Challoner.

Absent: Dinah Moore

Minutes of previous meeting (13th September 2021):

These were agreed and signed.

1 Actions arising (not covered elsewhere):

- 1.1 Action on Chris to disguise hole in parquet flooring: still in progress.
- 1.2 'Repositioning' the Monday afternoon session: Alan wrote to all members, and Paul Brown phoned around. Actions completed.
- 1.3 Action on Chris to get publicity entries into local free magazines – done.

2 Issues relating to RAFA Club as a venue: (actions for Jane, unless otherwise stated)

- 2.1 Still seeking written instructions for the stairlift.
- 2.2 Wiring for a fire alarm system has stalled. Any further news?
- 2.3 Jane has asked about the possibility of sandwiches; the answer is, it's not practical.
- 2.4 Lights on the way to the car park have been installed.
- 2.5 Chris raised the matter that many of us have now joined the RAFA Club, but have no idea what its Rules are. How do we find out?
- 2.6 Chris thought we should do more to support RAFA's activities, particularly the charitable ones; can we get Directors to announce/support the Poppy Appeal and the Christmas Draw, for example? Agreed in principle.
- 2.7 The bare bulb lighting the stairs looks a bit naff; may it be smartened up?
- 2.8 The intermittent beeping of the stairlift warning is an offputting fault we would like fixed.
- 2.9 Bridget raised the loo door-closer anomaly; the door-closer on the Ladies is too fierce. Meanwhile, there is no door-closer at all on the Gents, treating passers-by to unwelcome sights and smells, as its patrons often don't shut the door. Can this be fixed?
- 2.10 There is general concern that the hot-water urn has no thermostat, so needs to be monitored from when it is switched on.
- 2.11 Chris raised the Room Hire Agreement with RAFA Club. Although both sides are acting as though it is in force, because of the lockdown in March 2020 it was never in fact signed. Committee agreed that it would be better if it were reviewed and signed.

3 Issues relating to WoEBC as a bridge club:

- 3.1 Duplimate machine. Alan found a UK-based agent, who serviced it. Gareth reports that it is now better, but not perfect. However, one way or another, Gareth is continuing to deal the cards.
- 3.2 Printer: Alan reported that it was a beast to install, but now works well. It is wirelessly connected.

4 Officers' reports

- 4.1 (Treasurer) Bill reported that our current account has been drained to almost nil, as a result of paying for the lower ground repainting, the many months of paying a retainer, and – since 30th August – the full monthly rental payment. However, in the nick of time, a transfer of £3,000 from our savings account is expected around 30th October. Broadly, taking the rental payments, the temporary waiving of most fees by a Director and the

extra £1 table money, we are now broadly breaking even. This news was greeted with surprise and relief.

Jen asked if, in the special circumstances of the Thursday session, it could be subsidised until table numbers pick up. This was agreed.

- 4.2 (Membership Secretary) Bridget produced an analysis of who was now playing but had yet to renew as a member. Directors and Jen agreed to request payment from those listed.

Bridget pointed out that she does not have the means to progress which WoEBC members have joined the RAF Association or the RAFA Club.

- 4.3 (Secretary) Chris raised:

4.3.1 Dinah Moore's situation. Dinah was seconded to Committee to help with the premises search, and was extremely helpful. However, since lockdown we have had no sight and no contact. Chris wrote to Dinah some weeks ago but has had no reply. Committee felt that continuing to contact may actually be harassing her, so agreed to unsecond Dinah until her personal situation is clearer.

4.3.2 AGM date. Chris asked whether we could fix the date for our next AGM in May. However, Bill wants to take advantage of the lockdown to reset our Financial Year (as we have already reset the Membership Year). But, this may need a change to our Constitution. **Action: Chris and Bill** to get together to plot a path forward.

- 4.4 (Tournaments Director) Jan tried to raise NICKO teams, but found insufficient interest from those still members.

Jan also recommended that for the time being we do not commit to any of our annual programme of internal competitions. This was agreed; it fits with our decision to not start the Quarterly and Annual Competitions that rely on regular Monday and Wednesday evening results.

- 4.5 (Chairman) Alan relayed a report from Gareth on card payment options. After considering the transaction charges, and the technical glitches others have experienced, Committee decided there was insufficient case for us to change. We will continue to use cash.

Alan is concerned about the low table numbers, though they may have stabilised, or even be creeping up. Because of our strong savings position we can afford to carry on as we are until Spring. We may then have to consider more drastic action.

The lack of qualified Directors is a problem. Alan appealed for more of our experienced members to seek qualification.

A rule of thumb was agreed: Cross-IMPed pairs scoring is fairer when there are three tables or fewer. Beyond that, Directors should use their own judgement.

5 Communication to Members

No particular issue was raised that warrants an email to all members.

6 Any Other Business

- 6.1 Chris suggested that we should make a one-off offer to the RAFA Club to run a free introductory course of bridge lessons. This was agreed in principle; we would pay David to run the course. **Action: Jane** to take up with the RAFA Club Committee.

7 Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 8th December, 6:00 pm, at the RAFA Club.

Agreed
(CHAIRMAN)

Date