



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE NORTHERN COUNTIES WORKING
GROUP
AT Leeds Bridge Club
03/04/14 commencing 10.45am**

Northern Regional County Representatives:

| County | Name | County | Name | County | Name |
|-------------|---------------|------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Lancashire | John Brearley | Manchester | Jeff Morris | Merseyside & Cheshire | Paul Roberts |
| Westmorland | Mike Rothwell | Yorkshire | Lesley Millet | Yorkshire | Phil Godfrey |

Invited Members:

| County | Name | Reason |
|-----------|------------|---------------|
| EBU Board | Ron Millet | In attendance |

Apologies:

| County | Name | County | Name | County | Name |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Merseyside & Cheshire | Julian Merrill | Lincolnshire | Deidre Fell | North East | Val Gibson |
| North East | Ann Caygill | <i>Resigned</i> | | | |
| EBU Board | Darren Evetts | | | | |

Chair: Lesley Millet

LM circulated revised Terms of Reference from the EBU, confirming the move of Lincolnshire from the Midlands to the Northern Working Group.

MINUTES were submitted and as previously AGREED by email were noted as correct.

MATTERS ARISING – a discussion took place as to whether the Group’s approach should be highly structured as in the Terms of Reference, or freer. It was also questioned as to how the various points raised previously by the Group should be acted upon.

RM advised that within the EBU framework the Group could act and discuss as they chose.

--- A meeting of all the Working Groups would be held in mid July to progress these discussions

Concern was expressed that the Group should not just be a talking shop. The EBU will be expected, as appropriate, to take action on recommendations that were made.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & CROSS COUNTY COLLABORATION

A general discussion took place on these matters and focused on possible Joint Events. By way of context, the following matters were noted –

EBU Membership at 31/03/13 was 10975 consisting of –

Lancs, 1966, Lincolnshire 722, Manchester 1488, Merseyside & Cheshire 1081, North East 1568, Westmorland 273, Yorks 3877

(Source EBU – AGM Minutes)

Liverpool – had some none p2p events, which were rubber Bridge for nominal entry money.

Manchester – a newcomers league – Should the County Association provide the structure for this (JM). This was useful in getting people into play, including teams.

There is a need to change the Bridge image and modernise it. The young element from the Universities had been lost.

Merseyside had a youth officer who later gave up because of lack of player interest.

A new approach is required to encourage beginners to take part in events at Congresses and elsewhere.

Yorks gave an example of cross County collaboration – they had accepted Darlington in a YCBA Sim Pairs Event. *Paying extra to play*

AGREED That this was a useful template and the technical issue of the allocation of p2p monies would not be allowed to deflect this.

After further discussion The Working Group then AGREED–

There will be a General Policy of shared information and events.

This would be implemented by:

- a) Establishing a point of contact for each County in the chat room created by Darren Evetts.
- b) Telephone Numbers & Email addresses of key personnel would be shared
- c) Circulating each other's events.

This led to a discussion on a Newcomers Event as a Cross County arrangement, and it was AGREED.

A Newcomers Event across all Northern Counties would held.

This would consist of a qualifying round in Clubs.

A third of entrants to go through to the final, with a cross counties final with shared hands.

Because of the size of the Northern area, the Final would be held in 2 locations, simultaneously using the same hands, with merged results displayed at both locations.

Issues of :- What is an Improver? Do the locations (2) of the final remain fixed or move each year, room hire, food, etc. were raised.

A notional Cost of £500 was suggested.

A concept of a stripped down parallel Bridge World for Improvers was suggested, which would lead to "leakage" into mainstream affiliated Bridge.

FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

It was AGREED-

Non EBU Clubs should be involved in this with separate entry events to qualify, then mixed in for the final.

To consider later was:- Should there be an extra Inducement? Separate prizes? How to treat a non EBU player whose standard was above improver?

The strategy underlying this was to get unaffiliated clubs to go further, join the EBU, get them to think about duplicate Bridge.

BRIDGE PACKS

Bridge Packs were explained with joint ownership and cost sharing upto £250 between a County and the EBU. These were offered for bone fide situations on a first come first served basis.

NOTED for consideration by individual Counties.

TD DEVELOPMENT

The YCBA rep explained the TD Development and Refresher meetings –

There would 2 p.a. Eligibility was any Club TD or anyone who has undertaken the TD course. The next one will be held on 17th May at Olicana Club. The second in York in September.

AGREED – The concept was approved by all reps with details to be circulated.

Charge – £5 per head.

To develop this, the EBU would be requested for a list of Club TDs in the North split by County with email addresses for the Working Group records. This would be forwarded sector by sector to individual Counties.

BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT

A concept of Seminars for Bridge to discuss all aspects of Bridge was considered.

Subjects would be discussed in workshop format to be held usually at a weekend.

Examples would be –

Training sessions for the top level squads.

Bridge Administration as a separate series of subjects for a) large clubs b) small clubs run by one person.

AGREED

LM & PG will discuss at the YCBA Develop & Education Committee the design for a Cross County Seminars template.

PUBLICITY

The LEARNBRIDGEYORKSHIRE website was explained and the back room template (Wordpress) was offered for free to any County. *(Note the actual cost of Wordpress software is excluded from this offer)*

Discussion then took place on what publicity should be like. The following ideas arose for further development.

Is a common document required? Publicity was needed both for inside the EBU and outside.

Press releases on Bridge & dementia from a hard core of research. Reference was made to the World Bridge Federation web site - there were presentations – several on Dementia. The counties/ EBU should work up a professional Press Release on this.

The resource of a Cross County Publicity officer was raised. Discussion in traditional media, newspapers, was dying but only in some areas. Radio, Leeds local Community radio discusses bridge matters, local TV were developing for the future. Facebook and Twitter were also raised.

AGREED

TO set up a network of Club and County Facebook accounts and befriend everyone. This will mean that personal "friends" will be circulated.

Notes will be sent to the Board, Shareholders and also to relevant County Chairmen with regular presentations and updates of the work of the County WPs

A discussion took place on what do the County WPs want from the EBU?

AGREED. They would want in principle support for projects with occasional financial support where the project was well argued and monitored.

TERMS OF REFERENCE were discussed

Is the Group being asked to be just an implementation arm of the EBU?

After further discussion the following policy was SUGGESTED

- a) The Club Liaison and Education officers should be in communication and used as a sounding board for local strategy.
- b) It should be accepted that the County WPs should have the right to put flesh on the bones of the EBU structure.
- c) When officers visit or communicate with Clubs they should advise the County in question.
- d) The County WG should meet with the EBU's Club Liaison Officer, Education Officer and the Publicity Officer at future meetings.

AWARDS

RM presented a brief report and suggested how the Group could be involved in a system of suggestions and nominations

JM commented on his delegacy to the Sports and Recreational Alliance. An award to the Chess Federation had been made- he will research the details of what was granted to see if it has relevance to Bridge.

YOUTH EDUCATION

Arising from a request for advice from Yorkshire on the techniques for gaining entry into schools, PG listed what was necessary.

These were –

- 1.– Knowing the right person within the school who will commit to support Bridge This factor is crucial.
- 2.– Availability of good quality teachers on our part who are ready and available to start teaching immediately.
- 3.– Start with a taster session. Using Minibridge arrange 2 schools events per annum, building into a calendar of events.
- 4.– Pure luck of knowing teachers who have just finished University, and then obtain a Bridge qualification and go straight into class rooms.

RM agreed to circulate a Paper previously prepared on a structure for teaching adults.

AOB

LM asked for a second to accompany her to the National meeting – Paul Roberts volunteered, second string Jeff Morris.

Next meeting to be held after the National Meeting in July.

The meeting closed at 14.15.