



**Notes from the EBU County Chair's Meeting
held via Zoom, at 14:00, on Wednesday 2nd September 2020**

Present:

Ian Payn	Chair	Gillian Fawcett	Vice Chair
Jerry Cope	Treasurer	Gordon Rainsford	Chief Executive Officer
Anthony Golding	Board Member	Kiat Huang	Board Member
Rob Lawy	Board Member	Ron Millet	Board Member
Bev Purvis	Board Member	Patrick Shields	Board Member
Sam Kelly	Note Taker & Communications Officer	Giorgio Provenza	EBED CEO

	Chair or designated substitute			Chair or designated substitute	
	Present	Apologies		Present	Apologies
Avon	Stuart King		London	Sati McKenzie	
Bedfordshire	Colin O'Hara		London	Teresa Brookes	
Bedfordshire	Pippa Green		Manchester	Alan Mould	
Berks & Bucks	Dick Davey		Manchester	Irene Davies	
Cambs & Hunts		Paul Barden	Mersey/Cheshire	Paul Roberts	
Channel Islands		Andy Hall	Middlesex	Peter Hasenson	
Cornwall	Liz Perry		Middlesex	Lyn Fry	
Cumbria	Ken Johnston		Middlesex	Paul Wilson	
Cumbria	Leo Lehninger		Norfolk	Robert Smith	
Derbyshire	Jim Parker		Northamptonshire		Chris Wormleighton
Devon		Geoff Clements	North East	Adrian Darnell	
Dorset		Tim Dunsby	Nottinghamshire	Mark Goddard	
Essex		Paul Mollison	Oxfordshire	Kathy Talbot	
Gloucestershire	Ian Sidgewick		Somerset	Tony Russ	
Hants & IoW		Andy Hughes	Staffs & Shrops		Pamela Booth-Jones
Herefordshire	Chris Chowney		Suffolk	Malcolm Pryor	
Herefordshire	Keith Stait		Suffolk	Peter Bushy	
Hertfordshire	Paul Littlewood		Surrey	Tim Warren	
Isle of Man		John Large	Surrey	Trevor Hobson	
Kent	Pail Gibbons		Sussex	Peter Clinch	
Kent	Norman Inniss		Warwickshire	Mike Thorley	
Lancashire		Bill Aston	Westmorland	Michael Rothwell	
Leicestershire	Dean Benton		Wiltshire	Lucy Cross	
Lincolnshire		Reg Loosley	Worcestershire	Barbara Griffiths	
London	Dominic Flint		Yorkshire	Nick Woolven	
London	James Smith		Yorkshire	Lesley Millet	

Opening comments

Ian Payn (IP), Chair, opened the meeting by welcoming all those present. IP confirmed the etiquette for feedback via the chat function and how to vote if requested.

Financial Strategy

Jerry Cope (JC) (Treasurer) circulated a report prior to the meeting. JC gave a brief financial status update. He reconfirmed details from the previous Chair meeting in May, that at that time it was thought that the EBU would likely be down by £100k within four months. He confirmed that the last few months have been better than expected and that the current cash flow is only £40k down from previous estimates, with part of this due to a large one off charge for fixing the roof of the Aylesbury office building.

JC confirmed that the following cuts have helped ease finances: cancelling the paper version of the June issue of English Bridge; staff redundancies; government furlough funding. He also confirmed that online income was higher than he had initially estimated, although it seems to be at a plateau now. The following have also contributed to the EBU's finances: welcome donations from members, all virtual clubs and counties paying UMS, Bridge Warehouse sales. Overall the EBU has responded positively to cope with the current Covid-19 pandemic.

JC noted that the EBU is due to pay three big charges, to the World Bridge Federation, the European Bridge League and a VAT Bill. The current forecast is that the EBU will end the year with a three figure negative cash income. He noted that we are currently actively trying to keep costs down and further increase our income. To increase income investment is needed in both the EBU website and membership development.

Competitions

GR opened by stating that currently all competitions are planned three months in advance, with decisions being made about whether the competition should go ahead online or face to face and in what format. The current decision is that no face to face EBU competitions will take place before the end of November. A decision regarding the Year End congresses will be made at the end of September, whether it will go ahead in London as well as online, or if it will be held online only [It has now been decided that it will be online only].

GR confirmed that the Summer Meeting held online was mostly a success, aside from significant problems on the Friday of the Team event. Lessons have been learned from this and future events should be run more smoothly.

The next congress to be run, will be the Autumn Congress. This will be held on a new platform, RealBridge.

GR asked for the county officials to indicate whether they would be likely to enter if the Tollemache were to be held online. It has subsequently been decided that the Tollemache will be held online on RealBridge.

Re-Opening

GR mentioned the very few clubs that have decided to re-open. These clubs have completed risk assessments and have ensured a limited number of tables to keep people socially distant while playing. GR also noted that clubs on the Isle of Man and Guernsey have been playing face to face bridge, but that these clubs are in special circumstances as they are on Islands with no Covid cases at present and their governments have lifted social distancing guidelines.

GR noted that there have been lots of clubs questioning the EBU for a decision about running live events but reiterated that clubs are responsible for making their own decisions about re-opening, based on the government advice and regulations.

Strategy

PS talked about the current EBU strategy and the ongoing changes being made for the future. He gave a short presentation of the EBU's Vision Statement. It is hoped that the final version will be presented at the AGM.

PS also gave a mission breakdown. He asked those present for their thoughts about which aspects of the mission statement are more or less important. There was discussion about the way forward for the new strategy. PS confirmed there would be a five step consultation process, starting in September and crystallising in October, before being finalised at the AGM.

PS noted that the national working groups are best placed to help find the right balance between the EBU and Counties. PS concluded by asking that all counties help in contributing to the EBU Forums for ideas and continued discussion about future strategy.

PS answered questions from the counties.

EBED

Giorgio Provenza (GP) is the new CEO for EBED> He gave a brief overview of his time working in the world of bridge playing and teaching, before he joined EBED. He is also involved in junior bridge, as a coach for the English Under 16 squad.

GP gave a brief overview of a number of projects that EBED have been working on:

- EBED have been taking big steps over the past six months to prepare their new English Bridge School (EBS), and the launch of the project has recently taken place. This new platform is teacher led, incorporating the Bridge for All curriculum. GP asked for the counties to help with spreading awareness and encouraging their teachers to use this new facility.
- Increasing the number of EBED Relaxed games played online per week. GP encouraged counties to contact jacqueline@ebedcio.org.uk for more information about these sessions.
- Online training courses for teachers, which are starting this week.
- With Youth Bridge, most projects have been put on hold for the past few months with the closure of schools, but EBED hope to offer more for Youth Bridge over the next few months.

GP then answered questions from the counties.

IP thanked everyone for attending and advised that all questions and comments will be taken into consideration.

The meeting finished at 4.02pm.

APPENDIX

EBU VISION STATEMENT

“Bridge is recognised as the best mindsport, and **has become** the most popular **card game** ~~indoor pastime~~ in England, **providing individuals and society with social, health and intellectual benefits.**”

EBU MISSION STATEMENT

V1 : “The EBU exists to represent the interests of English bridge players, and to ensure that the needs of bridge players at different levels and of bridge clubs of all types, as well as the needs of those learning the game, are adequately addressed throughout England”

V2 : “The EBU exists to represent the interests of **all** bridge players in England ~~internationally~~; **it provides a valued set of services** to these players (and to those learning the game) and to their bridge clubs, **to ensure that playing bridge is an enjoyable experience.**”

EBU VALUES STATEMENT

“we will achieve our vision working in a collaborative way with all clubs and players in the county, and with neighbouring countries, based on the principles of inclusivity, transparency and mutual respect.”

We will achieve our vision in a collaborative way with players, volunteers, employees and partners, based on the principles of inclusivity, transparency and mutual respect.

Because of a cut & paste error, the wrong words (grey above) were displayed at the meeting; the correct words are shown in black here

MISSION BREAKDOWN

1. Support for recruiting, teaching and the development of bridge players.
2. Running a variety of competitions for English bridge players.
3. Communications about bridge for player members (magazine & diary & website).
4. National grading schemes (Master Points and NGS).
5. Provision of regulations for competitions in England.
6. Support to the interpretation of the Laws in England, TD services.
7. Disciplinary processes and dispute resolution.
8. Advice and support to affiliated bridge clubs on club management.
9. Promoting the game of bridge as a healthy and sociable pastime.
10. Representing English bridge players in BGB/EBL/WBF and in the development of the Laws
11. Managing international representation.

THE EXAM QUESTION

In the opinions of players and clubs, which aspects of the mission are more important and which are less important?

WHERE NEXT ON STRATEGY

- ... the strategy breaks down into parts, and for each part we need
1. To be informed by the consultation with members
 2. A brainstorming of issues
 3. A brainstorming of ideas
 4. A small group to rationalise and propose
 5. The EBU Board to endorse

SOME RECENT STATISTICS

- ... from recent activity UMS numbers
- Top NGS bands are more online than lower
 - Some counties show 3* proportion of others active
 - 40% of frequent players not showing online
 - Those who play, play more sessions

STRATEGY COMPONENTS

1. Player Recruitment & Development
2. Competitions
3. Representative Events
4. Membership & Communications
5. Financial & Commercial < EWG
6. Technology < EWG

COUNTY BA INPUTS

1. Consultation with members – understanding priorities
2. Contributions on issues to address
3. Contributions on idea of how to address these
4. Authorship