

Minutes of the Virtual YCBA Bridge Development Committee meeting held on Tuesday 17 November 2020 commencing at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Lesley Millett (Chair), Nick Woolven, David Guild, Pauline Stout, Ron Millet and Rowena White.

IN ATTENDANCE: Julia Staniforth (YCBA Secretary) and Jim Edwards (for item 3)

1) Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Apologies for absence had been received from Phil Godfrey and Brian Davidson. There were no declarations of interest.

2) Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes had been agreed previously and there were no matters arising.

3) Online teaching provision and platforms used

Jim Edwards gave a demonstration of online teaching using BridgePlay.UK for the actual playing and using Zoom for communication although other communication platforms could easily be used. Jim was willing to make the facility available to other users if requested.

A meeting of the Northern Counties Working Group that had taken place earlier in the day had indicated that the amount of teaching across northern counties was mixed with Manchester a leading county offering a comprehensive range with an established marketing plan involving all their teachers.

Rowena reported she was not currently teaching any students online, Nick four continuing students, David had a small number of beginners using English Bridge School (EBS) materials, Pauline had 6 a mix of years 1 and 2, Jim had one table of beginners and Brian 3 tables of intermediate level students.

Discussion took place on how more online teaching could be initiated and it was accepted that there were some barriers with the use of technology and materials available. It was felt that 2 tables was the most convenient number to work with, but this did pose some limitations for its viability and would therefore be dependent on voluntary helpers for increased numbers.

David indicated that a new online teaching programme should be available by the end of 2020 and this could be rolled out to clubs.

It was agreed that there was a need to obtain the latest information on online teaching activities from clubs and to identify what support was needed. Nick, David, Pauline and Rowena were asked to consider how this could best be achieved and for a discussion to take place in conjunction with any information obtained from the forthcoming Members Meeting.

4) New bridge platforms for online teaching

This had been discussed under item 3 in relation to BridgePlay UK. Nick had attended a RealBridge teaching session but felt that more training was needed to be able to use the platform effectively and that a combination of Zoom and BBO was the most used platform currently.

5) Strategies for attracting new students to online classes

It was felt that some further training for teachers was needed to give confidence to teach online and that a new teaching programme would be helpful. Possible approaches were to contact clubs to ascertain what support was needed and then the list of teachers.

Rowena outlined that to be able to input into schools a personal contact was needed as there was little support without it. Rowena had been asked to undertake an enrichment

course for VI form students and this may be a mechanism for an introduction to bridge to enhance a student's CV/UCAS submission.

6) Competitions for new bridge players

It was proposed that a 'Stepping Stones Special' event take place on Sunday 10 January commencing at 2.30pm playing 12 boards on BBO with no entry fee for players graded 5 or below on the NGS scale. Nick was asked to arrange the Director, Pauline would take entries, David would create a membership group on the Pianola database to email directly entry forms and Nick in conjunction with Brian Davidson would provide the hands and a zoom commentary at the end. Lesley would produce the entry form

It was hoped to encourage new players who may wish to play for the first time online and Nick and Pauline offered to provide support if needed to enable a player to register and experience BBO.

7) Youth bridge update

Nick reported that prior to lockdown an inter-primary school event had taken place and there was some evidence that children were seeking to encourage their parents to play. It was known that Stamford BC had established a teaching initiative in schools and Rowena agreed to contact Liz Dale to ascertain if any online teaching was taking place. York BC had facilitated a six week course in local schools prior to lockdown. It was believed that university students could be interested in online bridge possibly using the RealBridge platform as there had been successful media coverage of chess playing online which had attracted half a million viewers.

8) Any other items/future items

No other issues were raised.

9) Date and Time of Next Meetings.

The next meeting is arranged by the chairman of the committee in December 2020.