

Paper To Support Resolution By John Hayton, Seconded By David Lewis

I served on the YCBA Management Board for over four years up to January 2021. Throughout that time I have thought that the YCBA was carrying far too much in the way of surplus funds. Current assets, virtually all of which are bank balances, amounted to £54,418 at 31 March 2020. As far as I am aware, the current assets have increased to over £60,000 at 31 March 2021. We have arrived at this position over a number of years with regular financial surpluses. In recent years these surpluses, before club grants, have been in the order of £6,000 to £8,000 each year.

In 2019/20 the YCBA made technology grants to clubs of £5,394, so the YCBA Management Board has recognised the need to utilise the funds which they have. However, a series of small annual grant schemes of this kind does not go far enough to utilise excess YCBA funds. Also, all the events being run by the YCBA now seem to be budgeted to make very good profits, so unless things change the annual YCBA surpluses will continue and the bank balances will always increase.

This seems to be out of line with the objects of the YCBA, as stated in the constitution " ...to employ the funds of the YCBA in the best interests of the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, having regard to the fact that the YCBA is a non-profit making body." The YCBA, in my view, has become a profit making body.

The resolution before the AGM is not intended to precipitate a spending spree. If the resolution is passed in would give the YCBA Management Board a great deal of latitude on how they go about the reduction in reserves. I understand that the Management Board is considering a reduction in the YCBA's Universal Membership System levy, from 5p to zero for a period of 12 months. This will partly address the issue of excess YCBA reserves, but by no means would it solve the problem which the association has.

The reduction of reserves stated in the resolution is very prudent. The YCBA has fixed overheads of around £3,000, so even if the association were to have no surpluses at all on running bridge events for several years, the £30,000 buffer that is proposed would not be seriously depleted. The argument that funds are being retained for a "rainy day" is a false one, given the financial results for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Now is not the time to leave YCBA's financial resources in the bank. The funds should be put to good use to achieve the association's objectives. It will be a difficult task, to identify a series of projects and initiatives which effectively promote Duplicate Contract Bridge, but it is a task which should not be put off. Passing this resolution would be the first step in the right direction.

John Hayton