

# THE SOBELL BRIDGE CLUB

In aid of The Friends of Michael Sobell House  
Registered Charity No. 1079638



## Minutes of Committee Meeting No.116 held in the Friends' Meeting Room of the Michael Sobell Centre on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2023

<u>Present:</u>	Peter Cobden (PC)	Chairman
	Alan McBride (AMcB)	Treasurer
	Lynne Mathys (LM)	
	Terry Butfield (TB)	Playing Secretary
	Jane Brown (JB)	Webmaster
	Lois Hargreaves (LH)	Session Manager
	Joanna May (JM)	Secretary

1. Apologies for absence were received from Gwen Cozens, Adrienne Finch, and Val Lloyd.
2. The minutes of the most recent meeting, No.115 held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023, were approved as a true record of the meeting.

### 3. Matters arising

- i) Donations to the Hospice. PC had sent an email to members with instructions on how to donate directly to the Hospice.

JB confirmed she had amended the website with the instructions but not added the crib sheet. PC to send the crib sheet to JB for her to add to the website.

**Action: PC/JB**

- ii) JM had not contacted the U3A about advertising on their noticeboards; however, AMcB offered to contact Chorleywood U3A about advertising on their noticeboard.

**Action: AMcB**

- iii) Monday night online sessions. AMcB had spoken to Keith Jones (KJ). KJ could set up a session that would avoid robots. It was KJ's opinion that one needs a minimum of six tables to make the result meaningful. Players like to play with people they know. Many of the Thursday players have been tempted to play on a Monday night and maybe we should promote the Monday night sessions at the Club.

### 4. Chairman's report

- Tea & Cakes afternoon on 30<sup>th</sup> September

PC reported that we only sold 48 tickets, but we were looking to sell 64. The profit raised was £320. TB commented there was a more relaxed atmosphere without the need to split the group. LH commented that the event should have been made open to guests. The Committee agreed to this suggestion for future events, but it will not apply to the Christmas party.

- Christmas Party

It was agreed that the Christmas Party will be held on Saturday 9 December in the afternoon. The food will be plated. We will offer sandwiches/sausage rolls/pigs in blankets/mince pies, etc. and mulled wine. Tickets will be priced at £10 each; PC will

print 72 tickets. When people buy a ticket, they will be asked if they are going to bring a cake or something more savoury. TB kindly offered to direct the session.

There will be a raffle. PC would prefer fewer but better prizes (less bottles of wine). PC sought help from a member of the Committee to approach local businesses for raffle prizes; JB was seconded to help him. Other Committee Members were asked to email PC with any ideas of businesses that might be approached for raffle prizes.

PC will ask Mary and Stephen Gill to run the event provided they are not on holiday.

**Action: PC/JB**

- OMT's survey and analysis

TB had analysed the results of the survey which had been sent to all members. Most people who replied were in favour of an afternoon session. The survey specifically stated Wednesdays because key members required to run the session were involved in other activities on Tuesdays. 60% of Club members responded. TB adjusted the results to reflect probable fluctuations in actual attendances and concluded that the average number for a Wednesday afternoon will be 20.

It was PC's opinion that these figures put us on the cusp but must be seen as an opportunity for growing the membership. Lapsed members were not asked to complete the survey.

TB commented that Saturday afternoons were just about viable with six tables. Thursday evenings were well established with up to nine tables. He asked the Committee to consider the idea of starting another evening at the Club.

TB thought OMT might work although it was on the edge rather like Saturdays. He was seeking other ways of teaching i.e., could we introduce gentle duplicate with people who could mentor the newcomers? The only model that came to mind was to teach people and then start gentle duplicate.

AMcB and his wife Elena are going on a two-day teaching course at the end of November. After they have completed the course, AMcB confirmed they may be able to help the newcomers with gentle duplicate.

PC thought that gentle duplicate was a good idea, but we should not offer it on Wednesday afternoons as people who responded to the survey would have expected the normal session format.

Those willing to help with Wednesday afternoon sessions were:

Session Manager  
Ann Cobden/PC/JM

Directors  
Neil Frais/David Horan/Martin Isham

Scorers  
AF. Pete Davis' position to be clarified.

As regards the training of scorers, JB said this can only take place in a live session i.e., on a Thursday night when she is at the Club. AMcB/Elena McBride have offered to train as scorers. They will look over AF's shoulder when she is at the Club on 26 October.

In JB's opinion, in another month there should be a fair number who can score. She will review the number of scorers we have in January.

**Action: JB**

After the above discussion, PC took a vote on starting the OMT opportunity in January on a trial basis. There was no opposition, and the motion was carried. PC announced that the first session will be held on Wednesday 10 January. He will inform all members by email and write to lapsed members too.

**Action: PC**

PC would like to see a rota of scorers for all sessions (there is a rota of directors).

**Action: JB**

5. Webmaster's report

ScoreBridge has been abandoned.

Everyone on the Committee would like to thank AF for her sterling efforts in learning the new scoring system; she is always patient and never flustered even when there are problems.

6. Playing Secretary's report

- Sunday evenings' update

LH told the meeting that because of the drop in numbers, she and VL decided to send an email to everyone on VL's list asking them to reply to VL to confirm whether they intended to play at the Club the following Sunday. VL started sending these emails on a Wednesday evening in June 2022 and she continues to do this each week.

LH said that the Sunday evening session for 15 out of 52 weeks had had to be cancelled because of lack of support; 8 other sessions did not take place. A minimum of 3 tables is necessary.

PC to contact Tony Staw re our Sunday night sessions.

**Action: PC**

7. Membership Secretary's report

(a) A discussion took place regarding the number of players coming on Thursday evenings, notably from Pinner Bridge Club. It was agreed that if they have reached the number of guest visits outlined in the Club Rules, they should be asked to join the Club. At present, there is a £10 joining fee. The Committee agreed that this fee should be dropped with effect from 1 January 2024 after which new members will be asked to pay the annual subscription of £10.

(b) As GC was unable to attend today's meeting, the point raised by JB regarding the membership list and how long to keep data on it will be deferred to the next meeting on 13 January 2024.

TB raised a query about the timeframe for the data of lapsed members being kept on the Club's database. PC is to check the data in Dropbox as we should not be keeping any details past the stipulated date.

8. Treasurer's report

AMcB distributed a schedule showing income, expenditure, and cash from April 2023. The cash balance for quarter two was £15,198.

AMcB said there was a deposit account which he had inherited when he became Treasurer. He has moved most of the money into that account as it pays interest.

JB to see if we can program a code on the SumUp machine to identify different types of expenditure.

**Action: JB**

9. Secretary's report

Nothing to report.

10. Teaching programme

PC reported on behalf of TMB.

TMB currently has six pupils, five are expected to come through the beginners' course.

She is currently running sessions for ex-students from her home on Wednesdays where she has 6-12 students who pay £5 per session.

In January 2024, TMB will start an improvers' course on Saturday mornings at the Club - £100 for 10 weeks. She will also invite previous students and charge them £5 per class.

In April 2024, TMB is planning four Saturday morning sessions between 10:30 and 12:30 where Club members will be asked to help. It is TMB's wish to integrate these people into the Club.

11. Any Other Business

None.

12. Date of next meeting

10:00 a.m. on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2024.