

**Minutes of a Meeting of the SBU Board of Trustees
held on 6 August 2025 at 2.00 pm.**

In the Chair: Sarah Gunn

Present: Robert Ferrari
Alan Goodman
Mike Hodder
Jean McLaren
Ian Patrick
Ronan Valentine

In attendance: Bob McKinnon (Ops Coordinator)

1. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Minutes of the last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Action: SG to send to Damien for upload to website

3. Actions arising from June 2025 meeting

Issue	Responsibility of	Update
Safeguarding and child protection at summer Camp -adequacy of risk controls	MH	Joan Forsyth completed the risk assessment. MH will ensure the latest risk assessment template is uploaded to the website for future use
Draft 2025 AGM minutes to be approved by trustees for upload as draft to website	AG	To be approved at august meeting
Communications/website 2023 review report to be sent to trustees	SG	Trustees received 2023 report
Communications update	RV	See separate paper with finance on agenda
Operations update - actions	BM	

4. Matters arising from the June minutes not elsewhere on the agenda

Safeguarding and child protection at the SBU Summer youth Camp.

MH had received clarification from Joan Forsyth that the risk assessment had been completed and all risks considered and mitigating factors in place.

The meeting agreed that the Safeguarding policy should be led by the trustees, ensuring full comprehension and knowledge of the policy by anyone and everyone dealing with children and vulnerable young adults.

The completion and adherence to the risk assessment for each activity should be the responsibility of the leader for that activity with adherence to the SBU's safeguarding policy.

Action: MH will ensure the uptodate risk assessment template is uploaded to the website for future use

5. Approval of draft AGM minutes

Trustees agreed the minutes were correct and agreed they would be uploaded to the website as draft for members information.

Action: SG to send draft minutes to Damien for upload on website. Approval of minutes would be sought from the members at the 2026 AGM.

6. Finance

Robert presented the draft budget for approval with various projects dependent on the approval.

6.1.1 Proposal to Address Membership Decline in the SBU and Affiliated Clubs

The board were asked to approve the scoping of a promotional campaign that will:

- Identify the current perceptions of bridge in Scotland and produce valuable insights around our audiences and motivations to help inform effective marketing. Use the gathered data to create various promotional materials and activities.
- Contract with external agencies whose expertise will be instrumental to the campaign's success.
- Implement impact/outcome measures to evaluate success and challenges.

The trustees are asked to agree “in principle” a national promotional/marketing campaign to boost membership numbers of the SBU and affiliated clubs.

Response; There was an “in principle” agreement to this.

Action: SG to table a 'Brief' for the next meeting with outline costs, objectives and impact measures. There was a reluctance among the trustees to carry out a national survey of perceptions as a basis for any further campaign and media engagement. The trustees accepted that a campaign to boost membership and raise awareness of bridge as a relevant game in modern society would have costs, which they are prepared to consider outwith the approved budget for 25/26.

6.1.2 SBU Website and Communications Project

The Trustees agreed to support the development of a new website with an outline cost of £20,000. Questions were raised as to where this cost sat in the budget and request for further clarity in future as to what was P&L funding and what was capital funding. The website project is currently seen as a capital spend, with depreciation costs subsequently increasing accordingly in the P&L

AG raised concerns that there would not be sufficient resources/volunteers within the SBU to ensure success of the project.

Action: i) RV to table at the next board meeting, a timeline; estimated detailed costings for the project and confirmation that the working group would be able to deliver the project.
ii) RF agreed to ensure future budget and finance reporting would include Balance Sheet as well as P&L.

6.1.3 Pay2Play update

The trustees noted the update tabled by Alan and the list of Q and A prepared ahead of the zoom sessions starting on 12 August.

SG has to date replied to 3 specific queries that have been directed to her and has urged those correspondents to attend a zoom session to learn more.

MH noted his potential conflict of interest, as a trustee and North District Chair. To date he has had no queries from any clubs in North District.

The New Melville Bridge Club had asked for more than one representative to be able to join a zoom session.

Actions; i) IP and MH to review club and district affiliation agreements to assess if reference needs to be included on P2P – to be tabled at next board meeting if required.
ii) AG asked that all clubs should be notified that each club can have any number of members attending the sessions.
[Post meeting clubs had already signed up with various members attending different scheduled dates]

6.1.4 Budget approval

The trustees approved the budget 25/26 with a forecast deficit of (£9,002). All reference to a national campaign to boost numbers removed from the budget but with the understanding this project can be reviewed again during the year with the trustees open to approving exceptional costs.

7. Youth Bridge Report

The trustees were asked to consider breaking down the YC role into manageable chunks, namely somebody to take responsibility for each of the following

- Providing organisational support and direction to the group of youth teachers
- Organisation and implementation of youth camps. We need an experienced and skilled camp organiser supported by a small group of good organisers
- Because of the critical importance of safeguarding and GDPR, a resource that provides direction to all those involved in youth activities
- Organising readily accessible training and educational materials including a restructuring of website pages to improve accessibility.
- Acting as the SBU link to the BAMSAs “bridging schools” project

In dedicating resources on different aspects of delivery, teaching, training, resources, competitions, and camp organisation, sitting within a Youth Bridge Convenorship, the overall activity area will be more easily managed. It is hoped recruitment of a Youth Bridge Convenor with oversight of the area will then be easier.

Actions: In the short term BM with support from AG will look to find volunteers to lead on the various areas detailed above. If volunteers are not forthcoming then outsourcing may be necessary at a cost – eg summer camp organiser.

8. Review of Bye-laws, E D & I policy and Standing Orders

8.1. The Board were asked to consider the following points and decide whether or not relevant changes to the Bye-Laws should be made and in some cases provide more detail in the Bye-Laws.

- a. The EBU Bye-Laws are more of a legal document and have as appendices their Disciplinary Rules and procedures. The SBU Bye-Laws have as appendices the Terms of Reference of the Board’s Standing Committees so the reference to Disciplinary Procedures is indirect through the remit of the L&E Committee.

Response: No action needed as Board agreed to leave SBU Bye-Laws as they are, as sufficient with regards to reference to Disciplinary Procedures

- b. Is there a need for the Bye-Laws to at least make reference to the Masterpoint Handbook? The EBU Bye-Laws make considerable reference to Master Points.

Response: No amendment needed

- c. Should Para 1.1 of the Bye-Laws contain more detail about Member Subscriptions? Given that the May 25 AGM approved the motion that U26s do not pay a membership fee does that need to be included in the text or is the phrase 'where applicable' sufficient? Should the exact fees be recorded in the Bye-Laws?

Response: No detail of exact fees required. Current phrase "where applicable" is sufficient

- d. Is the section on Behaviour required given this is part of the remit of the L&E Committee?

Response: Remove the section on Behaviour as its part of the remit of the L & E Committee

- e. In para 9.3 of the Bye-Laws it states that the Chair of Laws and Ethics shall not normally be a trustee. The current Chair of L&E is a trustee and there is potential conflict of interest as they are also Convenor of the Disciplinary Panel.

Action: The Board were concerned with the conflict of Interest with the Chair of L & E also being Convenor of the Disciplinary Panel. SG will work with IP to identify a volunteer able to become the Convenor of the Disciplinary Panel – NB occurrences of the Panel convening are rare.

The Board agreed the recommendation to change all references to Chief Operating Officer to Operations Coordinator.

8.2 The Board were asked to consider the following:

All references in the E, D & I Policy to CEO should be amended to Operations Coordinator

Response: Board agreed

The section on Eligibility of transgender players in events restricted by gender, should be expanded to state

Qualification to play in events restricted by gender will be determined by the gender on their passport or, if they do not have a passport, on their Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC). With neither a passport nor a GRC, it would be their gender at birth (biological sex) which would determine their eligibility.

Response; RV was uncomfortable with having any requirement in the policies to evidence gender A number of the other trustees had no opinion to give and the Chair voted to agree with the recommendation tabled

The Board were reminded of the following inclusion in the existing policy *that it is incumbent on Clubs, Districts and the SBU to make reasonable adjustments to allow players with a protected characteristic (e.g., disability) to fully engage in the playing of Bridge at all levels in Scotland.*

When choosing venues for national events it is important to ensure such facilities are available.

Response: noted by the board

8.3 The board were asked to consider variations to existing Standing orders:

- a. Appointment of Vice Chair – a role currently vacant
Response: to be discussed at a further meeting, with regards to succession planning and trustees' roles in general
- b. Secretary to the Board – a role currently vacant since 2022
Response; Remove the requirement to have a secretary to the Board
- c. Structure and standardisation of papers for the Board
Response: the Board were in favour of standardised papers to the Board and urged all trustees to adhere to this.

8. Operations Coordinator Update

A comprehensive update was tabled by Bob.

He brought attention to the low number of registrations for the Britannia Hotels Swiss Pairs on 6 September. AG questioned the way the event was promoted on the website and with the focus on how to pay on the day, which might be deterring early registration.

Action: AG and BM to send links to EBU and CBAI. All trustees asked to promote to clubs/personal contacts highlighting the opportunities to win cash prizes at all levels.

9. Future board Meetings

The trustees were asked to consider their entries to the doodle poll to try and get mutually agreed dates. Unless on holiday it is hoped that other commitments might be rearranged to ensure as many trustees are present as possible. The frequency of trustee meetings has been reduced with this intention in mind.

Action: SG to add some Thursday options and trustees to update their availability by 9 August, so that a September meeting can be diarised asap.

Date of next Meeting – 24 September 6pm