

TRING SQUASH CLUB

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER 2023

1. ATTENDED BY

Mark Bullard (MB), Joanne Preston (JP), Chas Lefevre (CL), Anthony Palmer (AP), Jan Kerry (JK), Merril Trueman (MT), Peter Barham (PB), Katie Winterstein (KWi),

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Andy Booth (AB), James Walton (JW), Keith Warman (KW), Matt Duncan (MD), Kelly Gascoine (KG),

The minutes of the previous were approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Epos – MB has given instructions to MMM to purchase the hardware for the Epos system. MB, MD and Alex have done a review of the system required, and Pete has reviewed the numbers. PB to review notice period with global payments.

Door lock – Now installed physically, set up to be done. MB chasing.

1st team sponsorship – KW has discussed with Steve Malduca and Alex Preston and the plan presented to committee is:

Plan: Tring to become a regionally competitive squash club & give members the opportunity to watch high-level squash on a regular basis.

Target: Be in contention for the Herts league title on the last home game of the season

Requirement: £1500 to cover player match fees, balls, expenses and win bonuses.

Contingency: If we're successful and winning games then the win bonuses may require an additional £500 by the end of the season. If needed we can temper this requirement via player renegotiation, sponsorships or by dropping our star players.

We are hopeful of attracting some high level players and also attracting some sponsorship to help with the money that has been underwritten by the Committee.

Committee were happy with the proposal and requested that it was marketed well.

4. OFFICERS' REPORTS

A – CHAIRMAN

Thanks to KWi for the junior squashathon which was very successful and raised over their target for the chosen charity.

CL is running the Tring Masters Open this upcoming weekend (8th & 9th Sept). There are 5 Tring members playing, please come down to support.

Following rumoured bar price increases, MB has received feedback from some members. MB noted that the aim of the increases was to ensure that the club wasn't running as a loss and that should be true across all income / expenditure streams. At the AGM this year, the intention is to outline the P&L clearly so they can see that the bar is currently running at a loss. MB requested that this message is passed on if dissenting voices are heard around the club. JP noted that as a courtesy it may be worth giving the bar volunteers a heads up as to the reasons for the increase as they are often the ones in the firing line. Subsequently PB questioned thoughts regarding differential beer pricing which had been discussed between PB, MB and Chris at their AGM pre-meet. While there are differences in cost prices, it is hard to determine the true cost of each beer due to the wastage at times and therefore the overriding reason of keeping it simple for the bar volunteers with 1 price for all beers seems to make more sense at the current time. Therefore committee agreed the increase of all beers to £3.60. When the Epos system is introduced, differential pricing will be included.

Communications – ongoing issue with people not reading the newsletters. Please remind people to read the newsletters to find information about what's going on.

AGM – MB will provide a development plan update. i.e. following last year's plan which was not liked by members, MB looked to reduce scope and cost but that was still coming out expensive and fundraising ideas were rejected. Therefore we are now focused on an update and improvement to the bar and changing rooms.

Cathy Beard – Committee agreed that flowers and a meal for 2 would be a nice gesture for the years of service that Cathy has given the club.

B – TREASURER

PB provided a summary of the draft year end financials to 30 June 2023.

Cash in bank of £179k – similar as of today.

PB noted the grass routes development fund which will be used partly to bring players into the 1st team this year.

Bar sales £68k vs £53k the prior year period. Cost of sales of £58.5k led to a bar gross profit of £9.5k versus £3.5k the prior year. PB noted that this also includes the effect of a stock check at the end of the year (which hadn't happened the previous year) which had the effect of an increase on the numbers. PB stressed that this didn't include the costs of cooling, heating etc for the bar area which would make a significant effect.

Subscription and entry fees – Up to £30.8k from £21k YOY due to the discount on subscriptions given for the 2022 subs.

Court bookings and tournament fees were £23k which were flat YOY

Coaching - £8.7k up from £6.5k the prior year.

Total costs up to £66k from £57.7k YOY with minor changes in a number of categories.

Full year 2023 numbers resulted in £4k surplus (less if you exclude the effect from the stock take increase). Excluding the grant in 2022, we would have made a loss of c.£8k in 2022 (actual loss of £1.8k).

Auditors have asked about the income and expenditure relating to the social events and therefore PB will speak to Benny to get a bit more detail around each event (basic P&L).

C – MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (Andy Booth)

Below are the figures as of the 31ST August 2023:

Total – 389 (up from 376 last meeting)

Adult – 244 (11 with 3 year membership) (up 3 from last meeting)

Junior – 76 (up 3 from last meeting) – inc students

Life – 29 (same as last meeting)

Social – 34 (up 1 from last meeting)

The club has had 4 new members in August.

D – SECRETARY

No report.

5. TEAM REPORTS:

Men's Captain (Keith Warman)

The racketball teams in the Bucks leagues had an impressive season, the 1st team in division 1 finished third and the 2nd team in division 2 won the division. Congratulations to both teams and a big thanks to all the players who made this racketball season so much fun.

We have entered one squash team in the Bucks league division 1 and two teams in the Herts league, one in division 1 and one in division 2 for the upcoming winter season.

Steve Malduca, Alex Preston and I have discussed the proposal for the Herts 1st team from the last committee meeting and have developed a plan of action.

Ladies' Captain (Joanne Preston)

In the Bucks league we are entering the 1st team into division 1 (playing Wednesday nights) and the 2nd team in division 2 (playing Monday nights). This year, the Bucks ladies league also has a 3rd division which is a fantastic achievement for them and an indication of the participation of women in squash in Bucks (I've not seen a ladies 3rd division in county leagues for a significant amount of years). All matches for the Bucks league are published and on the Squash Club website, starting in September.

The Herts league matches are yet to be published as they are still trying to figure out what teams will be in the division. We've lost Harpenden this year as a result of their struggles, and most of the ladies moving away, but Bishops Stortford are entering a team for the first time since I've been at the club which is great (albeit a long way to travel for the away match).

We've got a couple of Women's team training sessions booked on the 11th and the 25th September and Kwi is checking if Rob Dunford will provide coaching on these nights as there is interest from the ladies (coaching to be paid for by the ladies, courts provided by Tring, thank you).

Women's Squash Week is the week from the 18th – 24th September 2023 and KWi is looking to hold an event at Tring on Thursday 21st Sept.

6. JUNIOR REPORT

No report.

7. OTHER REPORTS –

House (from Nigel Kerry)–

Its been a quiet few months for me with not too much going wrong. Below are listed a few things that are in hand, followed by a few comments.

- The single storey roof is now leaking in 3 places. I have asked a roofer to visit to discuss how best to solve the various problems. This was due to take place this week however... I will report when I have more information. I have no doubt that the problem of branches falling onto the roof is the main cause of these leaks.
- I have asked Simon Bell to clear the gutters which he is going to do in a couple of weeks time. I'm asking him to see if there is a way we can cover the hopper at the tree end of the roof to stop leaves and branches blocking it.
- I have also asked Simon to look into installing a safety ladder above the fire escape. This is to give safe, secure access to the roof for maintenance. It will be locked so that casual use will be prevented. I will provide a quote and pictures before proceeding
- I will be having another clearout of the loft shortly. Its once again becoming a storage place for unnecessary rubbish. The old record boards will be going. Its 3 years since they were taken down and no-one has shown any interest in wanting them. Please can I ask that if someone is holding a party they are asked if they want use of any of the mass of single use cutlery and cups now stored in loft.
- SB has almost finished the door to the understaffs cupboard. It would be handy to know when the new system is going to be installed.
- Courts 1& 2 are currently being cleaned etc. Thanks to KW for arranging this. You should all be aware that this is part of regular, programmed maintenance of the courts.
- The court heating will be going on towards the end of the month. Please can you decide what temperature you want them at and when you want the heating coming on/off. I get a bit fed up being harangued by both the too hot and the too cold factions. I'm aware KW has been tasked with looking into the insulation of the courts. I haven't given him much info about this

but happy to get Clive Birch to provide the necessary details. I'll turn the heating on in the lounge when I see the steam rising from the usual hot air emitted at the bar.

- Mark and I were due to look into alternative court heating systems. I'm afraid I was far too busy to do this. I will have more time in the new year and happy to discuss with any interested parties. If someone else wishes to take on this as a project I'm very happy to pass it on.
- The cooker will be cleaned shortly. I'm aware that BL has cleaned it on occasions and I'm very grateful for that. This will be its 6 month "deep" clean. Just wish everyone using it would look after it, in particular clean the various trays properly.
- I've had a complaint about the cleanliness of the men's showers. I will look at how bad they are but I suggest I instigate a 6 monthly "deep" clean. This was on my agenda last year and Emma G did it for me but not sure that's now an option. I will ask but otherwise may use a "professional" outfit. Obviously if the showers aren't being cleaned properly on a regular basis then this work will have little effect.
- There was a problem with the intruder alarm that only applies to the bar. A connector on one of the shutters had broken off. There is a process for reporting an alarm going off. It starts with Simon Smith, then Benny, then me. I will put this information by the alarm board. The intruder alarm will ring for 15 minutes. Not information that is generally available for obvious reasons. If the alarm goes on for longer than that and lots of lights are flashing on the front of the building, it will be the fire alarm. False alarm procedures are on the cupboard in the kitchen and by the alarm board inside the front door.

As always I'm very happy to hear about any problems first hand rather than via the rumour mill. Please don't hesitate to pass my name on to any new members who have a building related problem.

General

I'm constantly being asked about the state of the stools around the bar. I'm aware there is a plan in hand to change these. Is it possible for something to be published so everyone knows what's going on.

I'm aware there is a plan to refurbish the ladies changing rooms. Please can I be involved when it comes to where the wiring goes. This applies to any other projects where wiring is involved.

MB and the committee noted thanks to Martin Jordan for his help in getting the ice machine fixed.

Social Report (club events in **green**)-

8th – 9th September – Tring Masters Bronze Event

16th September 2023 – 40 year bar celebration

17th September 2023 – private party

11th September 2023 – PSC Committee meeting & AGM

20th September 2023 – Swimming Club AGM

27th September 2023 – Proposed AGM date

30th September 2023 – Private party
14th October 2023 – band night
18th October 2023 – Dive Club AGM
28th October 2023 – private party
4th November 2023 – private party
10th November 2023 – Comedy Night
15th November 2023 – charity morning 10:30-13:00
18th November 2023 – private party
25th November 2023 – private party
16th December 2023 – Elvis Tribute
2nd February 2024 – Charity Quiz Night
24th February 2024 – band night
18th May 2024 – band night
28th September 2024 – private party
19th October 2024 – band night
14th December 2024 – band night

JP noted that Malcolm has requested that times are put into the calendar for social events / to ensure that bar volunteers are aware if it affects their slots.

Systems/Operations –
No report.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Coaching – Rob Dunford is back and it has coincided with Tim wanting to take a step back from coaching for a year to focus on his business. Therefore Rob will be taking on the Saturday coaching from Tim, will be helping Katie out on some Wednesdays and will be doing a couple of sessions for the ladies team training. KWi suggested that Rob also does a 6 week skills and drills adults course. Committee was very supportive of the proposal and was happy to support Rob in setting up the coaching. Tuesday and Friday nights were discussed as good nights when there are no team matches booked. MB suggested that Rob should list out his credentials. AP requested that Rob consider some racketball coaching as well.

Additionally, KWi suggested holding mini tournaments on Sat afternoons which committee were supportive of.

A discussion ensued regarding league participation. PB noted that we needed a way of displaying the leagues at the club. MB noted that while paper leagues are a hassle, he was still looking at the display screen in the entrance and the intention is to have the leagues on that.

Changing room: KW had forwarded a proposal for the men's and ladies changing room with the request that we issued a letter of intent to Jones and Farrow to ensure that we could confirm the slot of May 2024 for the work to begin. Committee discussed that the priorities for the available cash should follow the member's priorities which was firstly improvements to the bar and the ladies changing room and the men's changing . The full quote of £75k+VAT included both the men's and ladies changing room.

Committee confirmed they were keen to issue a letter of intent for the ladies changing room. However, committee needed a full statement of work and cost for the

ladies changing room only in order to evaluate the cost, including whether there was sufficient funds to do the work alongside the bar improvements.

CL noted that the Masters tournament was being held this weekend on Friday and Sat. CL noted that the tournament would make a profit. Barbara is again providing the food.

NK had raised a question whether FOC social membership could be provided to a few social members who come to the club only to volunteer at the bar every ~6 weeks. While committee acknowledged that they were grateful for the work, it was noted that there were a lot of members who contribute a significant amount of time to the club and it would be difficult to create a precedent for a few members only.

NK also noted that he believed the life membership should be removed as it could work out as a cheap deal. Committee considered the point but viewed that the proposed increased to £1,250 (effectively 10 years membership) seemed reasonable.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 17th October 2023.

The meeting closed at 21:24.

Joanne Preston

Tring Squash Club Secretary