

TRING SQUASH CLUB

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2022

1. ATTENDED BY

Mark Bullard (MB), Joanne Preston (JP), Matt Duncan (MD), Keith Warman (KW), Merril Trueman (MT), Chas Lefevre (CL), Anthony Palmer (AP), Jan Kerry (JK), Katie Winterstein (KWi),

The minutes of the previous were approved.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Peter Barham (PB), James Walton (JW), Kelly Gascoine (KG), Joni Duncan (JD)

3. OFFICERS' REPORTS

A – CHAIRMAN

Steve Jones is stepping down from organising the Sunday club night. Thanks go to him for his efforts over recent years. Steve is looking for a replacement.

Friday club night has been going well and will be continued each week. A question arose regarding whether people were paying for their participation in the club night. MB confirmed that he would be around on many Fridays so will check. KWi noted that Rudy is often around too so could be asked to keep an eye as well. It will also be noted in the next club newsletter.

Club guest fees – since the introduction of the guest fees on MMM, we have seen an increase in the amount of people rejoining who have been playing on the courts without membership.

Adult beginner course – will be run again in the New Year. Its been moved to a Tuesday night 7:40pm – 8:40pm as it's a better time for Katie and Tim. A discussion was held about whether it was ok for existing members, or people who had done the courses before, to join and whether there was demand for paid for adult courses. It was suggested that they could be added to a reserve list and join if the courses weren't full. It was also noted that there is an issue in the club with having our existing coaches available at the times they are required, and a demand for further coaching which is being looked into by the coaching team.

Thanks to Matt and Alex for their help in getting the second screen set up. KW noted that he's been asked if we can get instructions for how to turn the TVs on which MB will prepare. A discussion was held with regards to whether the TV in the bar area was meant to be mute, or if volume was ok in certain circumstances. Its is currently in a trial period and members' view will be taken into account when this is evaluated.

Social members – on MMM anyone can currently join as a social member. Historically its always been for ex squash players, or people who have contributed to the club in some way. Committee agreed with the historic way of approving new social members to go through committee. MMM description will be looked at to see if

it can be edited to make clear that any applications will be approved by committee and if not approved, their membership would be revoked.

James Walton has previously organised for an interior designer to look at the bar area. MB questioned whether committee could get feelers out to gather feedback on what members wanted from a refurbished bar area to see if it was worthwhile giving someone a more detailed spec for them to revert on.

Christmas decorations – MD noted that the Christmas decorations are getting quite old so it would be good to get new decorations.

Racketball tournament – going well, final this week. KW requested that in future years there is more time given between the rounds to play games, if more thought could be put in for the seedings, and if the semi finals and finals could be played in the same week as the club champs. It was noted that there would be an increase in the conflict of games. No cap on numbers.

Handicap tournament – entries open for handicap tournament but Charles does not want to run it so we're looking for someone to run it this year. KW questioned whether we should allow the better plays to enter as its difficult to handicap the draw. KW noted that he would be happy to handicap the top players, KW would do the juniors and it was suggested that someone like Carol Booth may have good knowledge of other players. KW to enquire to see if he can find someone to run it.

No update from Pendley.

MB is exploring an EPOS system for behind the bar. This has been driven by the current charges for the card machines being quite high and the savings that the club could potentially make by switching systems. Early conversations being held.

B – TREASURER

PB had distributed the latest Sept quarter accounts to the committee on November 3rd by email with no questions received to date.

C – MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Below are the figures as of the 30th November 2022:

Total – 357 (up from 346 last meeting, and up from 343 in November 2021)

Adult – 230 (down 1 from last meeting)

Junior – 64 (up 6 from last meeting) – inc students

Life – 29 (up 1 from last meeting)

Social – 34 (up 8 from last meeting)

Membership is very steady and with the introduction of £5 charges we are seeing members re-join quicker. We still have an issue with solo courts being booked which JD is monitoring, and we have one member who still continues to bring a guest but has been paying the fee. JD questioned whether we allow this to continue or politely ask this guest to join. Committee view was that as long as the guest fee was being paid then we would see how it goes. MD noted that it would be useful to share the

names of repeat offenders with committee members so that the committee members could keep an eye out while at the club.

ES fees due end of the month which I will submit just before Christmas at a time suitable for Pete to pay.

D – SECRETARY

No report

4. MATTERS ARISING

Door locks – on order.

External sign – JD refreshing the graphics to have the new logo.

KW noted that court 4 has a number of dead spots on the floor. KW questioned whether he could get someone in to advise what to do about the floor. Committee agreed that it should be looked at.

Membership statistics (graphs included in an appendix to these minutes):

- Now have 3 years worth of data in MMM which we can look through.
- MD has reviewed and extracted some data points to show what information we now have access to.
- Current membership levels very similar to where we were before the first lock down in March 2020
- Every year you can see the drop off during the membership renewal period which starts to build up again as ex members rejoin.
- Membership age highest between the ages of 40 and 70.
- Bookings by age is highest in the 50-60 and 60-65 categories.
- Court usage now at high point over the last 12 months
- MD noted that now we have the data, we could use it to track the health of the club going forward.
- JK questioned whether it was possible to compare the data to other clubs to spot trends / learn from each other. MD mentioned that he had asked MMM for comparison details when they become available.

Refundable deposits for social events – in response to a previous discussion, MD confirmed it is possible to either taken deposits through MMM or through a card machine which can be refunded after the event.

5. TEAM REPORTS:

Men's Captain –

The Bucks team are sitting 2nd division 1 after some impressive results. The team led by Alex Preston are able to call on both Katie Maliff and Phil Yerby to ensure a high level of performance.

The Herts 1st team are having all the issues that the Bucks team are not in much tougher league. The lack of players of a high enough calibre is resulting in the postponement of some fixtures.

The Herts 2nd team are trying to cement their place in division 3, even though they are struggling at present there are enough players to hopefully ensure a mid-table finish.

Please refer to AOB for further discussion regarding the Herts 1st team.

Ladies' Captain –

The ladies 1st team have had a great first half of the season in the Herts league, winning 5 out of 5 games so far and sitting top of the table. On the opposite side, the matches for the 1st team in the Bucks division have started slowly with a couple of losses, and a couple of cancellations due to our opponents not being able to field teams. Hopefully we'll have more success in the Bucks league in the second half of the season.

The ladies 2nd team have also enjoyed a great first half of the season, winning 4 out of 4 games so far. We've struggled a bit to field teams for some games due to players being not available for a number of reasons so they've needed to be supported by 1st team players, but have a few 2nd players coming back to the team for the second half so this will hopefully improve from January.

6. JUNIOR REPORT

Inter Club - we have entered an U 11's team. Unfortunately, not enough interest in other age categories.

Had friendly match day against Berkhamsted Juniors. This was a success and we will host the return match day in the Spring Term.

Tring School - Yr 10-11 sessions are going well. The school have agreed to some inter school matches. KW is in talks with Berkhamsted School to organise this. There has been a good level of interest from Tring School students in playing squash and joining the club.

Junior Leagues - these have started with three boxes at the bottom of the adult leagues. They will run alongside the adult leagues, juniors then able to progress up when ready. (Thank you Charles)

7. OTHER REPORTS –

House –

- The roof over the bar/lounge has been repaired. I have spoken to Pendley Hotel to make them aware that their trees have damaged our roof, and to raise the subject about preventing future and potentially more serious damage. Their response has been very cooperative. I hope this spirit is maintained once I fire over the invoice.
- In doing the above work the redundant air vents have been removed which were a likely point of water ingress and hopefully will prove to be the cause of the club's long standing water leaks.
- In the loft, the following work is underway:-
 - a. Installation of a safe walk way in the loft over the bar/lounge area. While access is only needed for maintenance, it will make the area safe and prevent further accidental damage to the ceiling slats. The walk way is made up of

thermal panels to serve as both insulation and load spreader purposes.

b. The old insulation has been cleared away and new rock wool type insulation will be installed in the remaining area of the loft off the walkway.

c. An attempt will be made to identify and removed redundant cables, etc in the loft.

- The Sarnafil roof over the courts was tested to see if there has been any deterioration. The good news is that there isn't any and the roof should last for many more years. FYI the Sarnafil membrane is on 30 mm of solid insulation.
- Switch to LED virtually complete

Thanks to Nigel for his continued work at the club.

KW questioned when the car park would be fixed as there are big potholes at the current time.

Social Report -

17th December 2022 – Xmas Party – Abba Tribute

4th February 2023 – band night

18th February 2023 – Private Party

15th April 2023 – Private Party

3rd June 2023 – Dolly Parton Tribute

14th October 2023 – band night

25th November 2023 – private party

16th December 2023 – Elvis Tribute

3rd February 2024 – band night

Bar 40th Anniversary – Chris Langford wants to organise an event 28/10/23.

Committee supportive of the event but noted that it was the same night as the rugby world cup final and also half term week so there may be members occupied.

Systems/Operations –

The missing (damaged) clock on Court 2 is being replaced and its possible we will need to replace the clock on court 1 – MD is looking into this.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Junior squashathon – 5th March 2023. Entrants fee to support a charity (Whiz kids). Committee were in favour.

Development plan

- reduced proposal drawn up and with contractor for pricing
- Exploring Building options to reduce costs
- AP questioned whether we needed to look at individual cubicles in the changing rooms (men's in addition to ladies) to future proof and ensure the club is comfortable to use for the younger generation.

MB has looked into fund raising ideas if ever needed. Ideas coming through include:

- Crowdfunding, matched by Sport England. Subs
- Various Sport England programs
- S106/CIL -developer funds through the council

- Consultant
 - Supporting material, video, photos
 - Consultancy available
 - Will charge for written support

Men's Herts 1st Team – KW noted that there has been a lot of talk about the Herts 1st team as they are struggling. Members have historically often come down to watch the matches on a Thursday night but they are coming down to find matches postponed or matches not of the calibre that they are expecting. The Herts league is a lot stronger than the Bucks league. There are a number of players who have played historically to strengthen the team who are no longer playing. KW noted that there isn't a good solution at the current time but there are options to look at. KW noted that the best squash at the current time is on a Wednesday night when the Bucks 1st team is playing and we'll look at options to improve the standard.

Vinyl banners – MD had conversations with the PSA regarding squash imagery for vinyl banners to try to make the club look more attractive. PSA are happy for us to have the images in return for a donation. MD looking at pricing of the banners.

New defibrillator – the existing machine is almost obsolete so AP has looked into a new defibrillator which will be fitted shortly. AP raised the issue that despite the ease of use, the majority of members would probably be reluctant to use the machine as they didn't know how and how do we incentivise or encourage all members to know how to use it. There is a video produced by the defibrillator company which demonstrates how easy it would be to use the machine and is only 9 minutes long. MB noted that if the link was sent out by mailchimp then we would be able to know who had clicked on the link and this will be sent out via a specific email to all.

Christmas day – it was confirmed that the bar would be open on Christmas Day, from midday until around 2pm with Benny and Keith sharing the workload.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 7th February 2023.

The meeting closed at 22:16.

Joanne Preston

Tring Squash Club Secretary