

TRING SQUASH CLUB

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2023

1. ATTENDED BY

Mark Bullard (MB), Joanne Preston (JP), Chas Lefevre (CL), Merrill Trueman (MT), Peter Barham (PB), Katie Winterstein (KW), Steve Malduca (SM), Andy Booth (AB), James Walton (JW), Keith Warman (KW)

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Matt Duncan (MD), Kelly Gascoine (KG), Anthony Palmer (AP), Jan Kerry (JK),

The minutes of the previous were approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Welcome to Steve

Epos – ??

Door lock – Now installed physically, all set up and fobs given out to the required members (thanks to Andy). Now all ready to go ahead with storing the bar keys in there. Only members nominated with bar access within MMM will be able to access the cupboard.

MMM – screen to be moved from the end of the corridor to the entrance hall so that the display is more visible to members. KW enquired whether we could have a bigger screen. AB confirmed it was not really possible with the kiosk but he's separately looking at trying to get a rotating display on the TV.

4. OFFICERS' REPORTS

A – CHAIRMAN

Adult introductory sessions will be held again in the New Year. Ad deadline of the 15th December 2023 for the local magazine. Rob Dunford is happy to run the coaching (and Tim is happy for Rob to go ahead given his busy schedule). Looking at the best day (likely to be either a Tuesday or a Friday night). MT enquired about the follow on coaching / introductory opportunities for any new members, particularly the men who seem to get left a little bit. It was discussed that this year, Rob Dunford is around and will be able to run follow on sessions this year.

Chris Langford has been speaking to the hotel regarding a number of issues and an opportunity has arisen where Pendley may be able to offer squash to their guests. The exact mechanics hasn't been worked out but MB is trying to decide whether we would offer a corporate rate, or a individual rate, what times they can play. KW questioned whether we would want to offer it as he was not keen on having people we didn't know using the club. Committee discussed that it would be paying guests of the hotel. After a discussion, the majority of the committee were happy with MB looking into the proposal (any players would need to abide to the rules of the club and bring their own kit).

Use of the club regarding social events and use by members of the public. MB noted that there had been a concern raised with him about the events being held and there was a safety element raised (noting that the fire exits can be blocked or screened off). It was noted that any events should be predominantly attended by members as we're not set up for events for the general public, and have no security in place. MT questioned whether we could announce where the fire exits are at the start of an event. There was a discussion regarding what was being blocked and the fire safety numbers and it was acknowledged that there needed to be a thought to fire safety when having events. The designated fire exits for an event must not be obstructed in any way (by a curtain, stage or stacked furniture). It was noted that a fire risk assessment needed to be considered. MB proposed that he would discuss with a member who is an expert in this area to get written down guidance for any future events.

Cash – MB noted that any transactions needed to go through the books properly and that included cash (for both the events and also the player match fees for the 1st team matches). Everything needs to go through the P&L and to be correctly detailed as income and expenditure. PB noted that if cash was needed, he can go to the bank and get cash out as needed sporadically throughout the year (or alternatively he can pay the bands by bank transfer).

Racketball – Mike Harris (6 time racketball national champion) is around in May and is offering to put on some coaching on Friday 10th May. Details to follow. Committee discussed when the club championships would be held and given that Easter is early, it is likely that the finals would be before that.

Cleaning – Emma is covering 2 days soon as the normal cleaner is on holiday.

B – TREASURER

PB provided MB the last 6 months bank statements to review.

Bank account - £192, 510 as of this morning.

HSBC signatory mandate – PB has received a reminder regarding old names still on the mandate. Therefore PB has the forms for MB to sign and they will be updating the bank mandate to add Mark Bullard as a signatory on the 2 Squash Club accounts and everyone else apart from PB would be removed. PB noted that he also needed to provide the bank with minutes of meetings when the current Chairman and Secretary were appointed which he would do.

PB presented the last quarter accounts to the 3 months ended 30th September 2023 and the equivalent period last year:

- Breakeven in the last quarter with a surplus of £939, versus £6.7k last season. The main difference PB believed was due to the timing of subscription fees coming in which showed a similar drop. PB noted that about £8k was paid in during the first week of October from Stripe payments. PB noted that we should have a true comparison in the accounts to the end of December which would included the majority of the subscriptions
- Bar sales pretty flat YOY at £14k
- Court bookings up from £4k to £5.4k
- Junior coaching £2.1k this year versus £3k last year (Kwi noted that it was due to us not running summer camps this year)

- Overheads were pretty similar apart from repairs and maintenance which were up slightly due to specific costs that had been paid, including the court maintenance fees.

C – MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (Andy Booth)

Membership numbers as of November 2023 (10th Nov)

	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	
Adult	233	227	203	202	
Adult (3 year)	10	10	14	14	
Family Junior	25	26	25	25	
Junior		43	44	37	36
Life	29	30	31	31	
Social	34	35	36	42	
Student	8	8	8	8	
Total	388	387	355	358	
Lapsed	186	186	193	193	

Membership category	2022												2023												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
Adult	191	197	202	216	222	227	237	242	237	228	218	217	222	221	231	233	234	235	234	232	226	203	202	199	191
Adult (3 year)	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	10	10	10	14	14	14	14
Facilities	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	6	7	10	10	10	10	
Family Junior	17	18	19	20	20	20	22	22	24	22	21	21	19	20	23	24	25	25	25	25	26	25	25	25	25
Junior	22	23	23	25	25	25	27	28	31	29	34	35	39	39	42	44	43	41	41	43	44	39	36	28	26
Life Membership	27	27	27	27	27	28	28	28	28	28	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	30	31	31	31	31	31
Social	23	23	23	23	24	24	24	25	25	28	32	32	32	33	33	32	33	33	35	34	35	40	42	39	37
Student	5	5	5	5	5	5	8	8	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	9	8	8	8	8	8	8
Totals	301	309	315	332	339	345	362	369	371	359	358	358	365	366	382	386	387	387	390	387	386	370	368	354	342
Lapsed members	113	113	113	113	113	113	120	127	148	152	160	162	163	165	169	175	178	182	188	193	193	193	193	193	193

Comments

- We/I still need to add 5 Life members into MMM; they were missing records/members
 - Found after research with Chris prior to the TSRC Bar 40 years anniversary Party
- Multiple renewals happening still, and more Juniors joining – YAY !!
 - OCT (rest of): 5 new Adults (2 x 1 st Team players) and 5 new Junior
 - NOV (so far): 4 new adults, 2 new Juniors and 1 new Social
- Replacement FOBs for store cupboard Door access system for Bar keys continues:
 - Distribution of new FOBs started on a 1:1 basis.
 - 38 of 59 distributed so far.
 - Remainder will be left behind the bar for collection in the coming week

D – SECRETARY

No report.

5. TEAM REPORTS:

Men's Captain (Keith Warman)

The Herts first team have made a very good start to the season, winning their opening matches with the help from some new players who have bolstered the squad.

The first team home matches are very well supported by club members more than justifying the sponsorship of the team.

The Herts 2nd team are struggling in a division that appears to be too high for them! They have managed just the one win from five matches.

The Bucks team have made a steady start, winning two of five matches and picking up some points within the losses!

Both the Bucks team and the Herts 2nd team are possibly not helping each other as the matches are on the same night, so the clubs playing resources are spread too thinly.

Ladies' Captain (Joanne Preston)

In the Bucks's division, we've had a difficult start to the season for both teams, with both teams down on players due to injuries. Both teams are currently sitting at the bottom of their respective tables.

In the Herts league, the ladies 1st team are currently sitting 2nd in the table – the league seemingly slightly weaker than the Bucks league this season.

6. JUNIOR REPORT

Juniors: Junior committee has started with 6 members plus coaches.
George Hughes, Georgia Greenall, Elsie Preston, Seb Cacchioli, Zac Ewer, Joshua Quinn.

7. OTHER REPORTS –

House (from Nigel Kerry)–

Wasp nest treated. The pointing has fallen out of the angle of the sloping roof. This will be repaired to prevent any further efforts by flying intruders.

- New LED safety lights being installed to replace existing lamp ones.
Testing mechanism to be installed at far end of corridor cupboard.
- Safety light test to be carried out in December. Power will need to be shut off but will arrange this with court use in mind.
- P.A.testing to be carried out in December.
- Brad Sinfield(BS) to meet MB to discuss radiators in lounge and possible re-sighting of heating control.
- BS to replace 2 of the shower controls in mens changing rooms.

- Have agreed with a group to carry out weekly testing of fire alarm and safety lights. This rota will start in the NY
- Have arranged for MB to forward a floor plan of club to Darren Rice to look into aspects of fire safety. With the amount of social functions taking place the committee needs to be 100% sure of how its stands with current fire regulations. I will report back.
- I'm going to ask that the committee authorises me to arrange a full risk assessment of the club. This may well open a can of worms but "ignorance is bliss" is no defence if something goes seriously wrong and the responsibility will fall on the committee. I will do nothing until instructed.
- Auxiliary heating turned on.
- I've had a complaint from a member about the state of the men's showers. This wasn't a complaint I could accept but I will be arranging the cleaning of the floor because I want the toilet floor cleaned.
- I've had a complaint about the state of Court 3 surrounds. I've been aware for a while that a lot of the painting carried out in 2020 is now in need of redecorating. This is to be expected as the areas concerned are heavily used. I have arranged for this to be carried out but don't expect it to happen pre-Christmas.
- The carpet on Court 3 seating has been really badly used. I'm hoping the same company that are doing the showers will clean the carpet. However it is up to the members to try and treat the whole place with a bit more respect.

Finally, please can I ask that if you're approached by a member with a complaint, or a comment about the state of the Club, you refer them to me. It is important to me that I'm able to talk to the person with the complaint. This means I will get a better idea of what they actually want, rather than a third person's interpretation of the problem. I'm happy for my mobile number and the HouseManager email address to be shown in a future information email if that helps.

Social Report (club events in green)-

2nd December – Adult Christmas squash tournament
 9th December – junior Christmas party
 10th December – private party
 15th December – Racketball finals night & private party
 16th December 2023 – Elvis Tribute
 19th December 2023 – private Xmas gathering
 29th December 2023 – private party
 January – bar improvements work
 2nd February 2024 – Charity Quiz Night
 24th February 2024 – band night
 3rd March 2024 – Junior Bronze Tournament
 4th May 2024 – private party
 18th May 2024 – band night
 28th September 2024 – private party
 19th October 2024 – band night
 16th November 2024 – private party
 14th December 2024 – band night

Systems/Operations –

No report.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Deferred from last meeting – AGM comments:

Geoff Bray suggested looking into green measures which is being looked at. Geoff Bray also suggested looking into other sports (such as pilates instructors) who may be able to use the club during non peak times. MB noted that any suggestions would be welcome.

Geoff Bray also noted that we could improve the marketing strategy for the club. MB noted that he was open to the ideas but wouldn't be actively doing anything about it. MB noted that some of the things other clubs do wouldn't work at the squash club (due to the need for equipment etc.).

SM questioned whether we have ever considered a joint rackets partnership with the tennis club as he is aware of tennis players who have played squash in the past and may be interested in playing again. MB noted that it would be interesting to look into a partnership type agreement. MB also noted that the membership levels are high so there is also an opportunity to market to existing members to join the leagues / participate in activities etc. PB questioned whether there was a link between Tring tennis club and Halton which SM confirmed there wasn't.

JW noted that Aylesbury rugby club are currently building 6 padel tennis courts. MB has looked into the possibility of playing and it would require new facilities as it cannot be accommodated on a squash court. CL noted that there is a company building them for free on the land but they take the court fees, with a share going to the land owner.

Committee concurred that it would be an interesting idea to look into.

Bar refurbishment – mood board was provided at the last meeting. MB summarised that there were certain things that were a given (new furniture, fill in of the ceiling etc) but they had images for committee to consider to provide a more specific direction. Committee reviewed the proposed images and were in agreement that plastering & painting the end and side wall, and leaving one side wall with the brick finish would be a nice improvement, while leaving a bit of character of the original bar. The bar surrounding would be clad underneath with a foot rail added. The ceiling would be filled in (to cover the beams). The proposal is to have a range of furniture for different seating areas, including some high seats so there wasn't a wall of backs at the bar on the high seats. MB noted that the products in the pictures are what we were thinking of moving forward with, and based on the fire safety in mind. The trophy cabinet would be changed and a new home found. The lighting, speakers etc. would be changed. MB confirmed that with that guidance they would move forward with purchasing the products and moving forward with organising the building work. Lighting needs further consideration as to where it would be placed.

Building work has been quoted at £28 plus VAT, although the scope has changed slightly. Radiators would be replaced which would be added on and KW had been asked about certain other items which may add to the cost (new fire doors?) etc.

KW noted that there were some decisions that needed to be made quickly, including what should be done behind the bar area. MB commented that he had received a quote for antique glass for behind the bar but it was expensive. KW questioned whether a shop fitter could fit something. KW to enquire with the builder to consider ideas.

Men's changing room privacy – KW has received a quote for putting cubicles in the men's shower area of £5k. MB said that he would like to revisit the proposed location in the men's shower room as the quote sounded a lot.

Solar panels / underfloor heating – CL provided an update to MB last week. Its been confirmed that there is no issue putting solar panels on the roof. The solar company has suggested putting another membrane on the roof

3 quotes received, one of which is £32k for 30KW system (60 panels) from Eden Solar including 20kWh battery storage. Savings are not easy to work out – c.£5-£10k per year. Enquiries raised about how it would sit on the roof and what we could afford based on the other financial commitments that we have already committed to.

Cost of underfloor heating was £10k per court on top.

PB commented that to be financially prudent, we should wait on a decision regarding the solar panels until after the bar and ladies changing room had been done. At that point we can review finances and make a decision on the panels.

Subsequent to the meeting, this was further discussed by committee over email and the majority agreed that while it would be good to have solar panels at the club, it should be reviewed once the existing financial commitments have been paid for, in case there is any overrun of costs on these projects.

KW questioned the supplementary heaters as it had previously been discussed that they were expensive. It was agreed that these should be turned off. KW requested that the normal court heating is turned up to adjust.

Coaching update – KWi noted that the feedback regarding the coaching was that the Tuesday nights were going well but they wanted to be marketed better (although members are still not reading emails). Feedback survey taken and there is a demand for racketball coaching. KWi proposed a Friday evening from 5:40pm to 7pm (it's a quiet time). Tuesday evenings would be continued with the general squash session. There has been interest regarding a daytime session with KWi was proposing for a Thursday or Friday lunchtime (when courts are quiet). Committee were happy with the racketball coaching on a Friday evening (2 courts) with a block of 6 and then review.

Ethan Duncan has proposed running a weekly general fitness training session. KW questioned whether there was someone more experienced who would be able to assist. KWi to enquire. JP enquired whether there was any safeguarding concerns that we needed to take into account with a junior running a session potentially on their own.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for 23rd January 2023 (to confirm with JK on her return).

The meeting closed at 22:20.

Joanne Preston

Tring Squash Club Secretary