

**LANSDOWN TENNIS, SQUASH AND CROQUET CLUB LTD**  
**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON**  
**THURSDAY, 13<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2022**

**Start Time: 19.00 hrs**

**Present:**

James Scully (JS)	Chair
Claire Ackerman (CA)	Deputy Chair
Mark Groves (MG)	Treasurer
David Barnes (DB)	Fabrics Manager
Mark Radley (MR)	Squash Secretary
Jeremy Labram (JL)	Committee Member
Joan McLoughlin (JM)	Committee Member
Jon Foulds (JF)	Committee Member

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Jeremy Goulding, Brian Levine and Howard Grove

**2. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meetings dated the 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November were agreed.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

JG spoke with Pete Rodgers regarding selling flowers at the club. JG expressed concerns that we may be setting a precedent if we allow for this in terms of what we allow and what we don't allow. JG also expressed further concerns around insurance and trading licences. Discussions are still in progress around the potential of flowers being sold through the Lansdown till, and how promotions for this may occur.

**ACTION: JG**

MG has been in contact with Mentoring Plus who are interested in running a scheme with us. MG has contacted Tom Therrien to see if they are happy to support.

**ACTION: MG**

**4. CHAIRPERSON'S MATTERS**

● **Office update**

The office has had a tricky couple of months - unfortunately it didn't work out with

Tina (admin assistant), but things are already looking more positive with Caroline who started this week. Given these issues and training support for Caroline, the office is a little behind although Natalie is doing a tremendous job to keep on top of things.

We expect things to look much better in a couple of months when Caroline is fully up to speed.

The accountants may also take on some bookkeeping in the short term to help, MG to monitor as Caroline may be able to handle it.

JL commented that Caroline is off to a very good start with office duties and was impressed with how she handled a member query in her first couple of days.

Given all the above JS asked the committee to avoid non urgent office queries for the time being until Caroline is fully up to speed.

**ACTION: MG**

- **Coronavirus update**

Covid committee have been monitoring the situation and the club is continuing with its cautious approach.

We've had members to deal with who've refused to wear masks - JS has spoken to those concerned about the club's issues with this stance and for different reasons they will not be using the clubhouse for the time being. The committee recognises the government policy stating individual's rights not to wear a mask if they have an exemption; the club also has a duty to protect its members.

Jo and her team have been instructed not to serve anyone not wearing a mask; customers wearing an exemption lanyard will be served at their table.

Signage has also been reviewed / updated.

JL reiterated that covid levels in BANES have not changed and are still at a very high level so there will be no changes to the current clubhouse Covid rules.

JF made a suggestion that spare masks could be supplied at the entrance. JL confirmed masks are available at the bar if members forget their own.

DB suggested looking into getting some air purifiers for the club room. DB to investigate this. JL agreed to take this forward as a Covid matter once DB has done some cost analysis.

**ACTION: DB, JL**

- **Cleaning contract**

We continue to be concerned by the standard of cleaning in the club and have received several complaints from members. Conversations are ongoing regarding this, more news at the next meeting.

**ACTION: JS, NC**

JL queried whose decision it was to procure any new services we may require. JS confirmed it would usually be done by the office, Chair and Deputy Chair with key financial decisions involving the President & treasurer too. JM asked if this subcommittee / group had been formalised in previous meetings. JS wasn't sure on the history, JM to discuss with JG.

**ACTION: JM, JG**

- **Membership figures**

It's a quiet time of year for new members but we have a few new joiners and we're at our highest adult membership levels ever. We still fall within LTA guidance for court usage per no. members but we're getting closer to a potential maximum and JS / CA feel that we should focus on retention rather than marketing, see below for more info.

- **Marketing**

JS and CA would like to focus on member retention (internal marketing) rather than external marketing given the limited resource we have available to support this. In particular a big focus on all that we can do with regards to retaining members so that as many as possible renew on May 1<sup>st</sup>.

MR mentioned that Conall Platts had suggested running a Racketball session dedicated for members who primarily play tennis.

MG agreed that focussing on internal marketing would be beneficial as it would decrease the churn at renewals which in turn decreases overall costs as the costs of retaining a member are far less than requiring a new member.

CA to look into finding volunteers to form a Marketing committee.

**ACTION: CA**

- **Membership for those on lower wage / universal credit**

This was raised by JS as something to explore - looking for a volunteer to explore further, JL has also mentioned it. JL confirmed that we can't discriminate against people on lower income, and we need to make sure a special provision is made for those who fall into the category. The cost for those who fall into this category is £520. A process of how people apply for this has to be investigated and agreed. JL to summarize his findings and share with the main committee. Volunteers required to help support this.

**ACTION: JL**

- **Bar staff update**

We are currently looking to hire a Trainee Food and Beverage Supervisor. In terms of casual bar staff, Jo has done well to recruit a few more staff so we are hoping the bar will be back to full functionality as soon as possible. CA also added that we have increased wages for staff, pre-empting the minimum wage increase in April. JS mentioned that we're keen to rollout the new food menu once Covid restrictions ease and when we have more catering staff available.

## **5. ACCOUNTS**

MG confirmed final quarter figures won't be ready until the middle/end February. Once this is done full year figures will be finalised. MG circulated a draft budget with the committee. Based on the assumptions that have been made, MG confirmed the club is in a strong cash position even when accounting for possible large spends on CapEx projects. MG confirmed they have been conservative with the budget figures but the club still remains in a comfortable financial position.

MG confirmed all CapEx costs would have to be discussed and agreed to by committee or taken to EGM for any spending to go ahead. The budget is there to illustrate possible CapEx spend only. JL thanked MG for hard work in clearly constructing the budget.

Committee approval was given to the budget based on it being a framework within which the club can operate comfortably knowing that we are able to afford such spends on CapEx.

JL queried why we have had such a large surplus fund in the past. JS confirmed that previously we have had to cater for substantial costs, like resurfacing tennis courts and we now have additional CapEx projects and upgrades that we would like to go ahead with - several of which are in the planning stage at the moment and likely to go ahead this year.

JL suggested that it would be useful to put together more information on potential spend over future years, so we know what our future liabilities will be before committing to any

current expenditure. MG agreed that with a bit more work, forecasts for future club spend can be put in place to give us a better picture moving forward.

**ACTION: MG**

## **6. FABRIC**

DB confirmed that the lounge windows will need to be replaced and that he has quotes for the work that can be included in the budget.

DB has been working with John Morgan to replace the lights on courts 1-7 with LED lights. Lee West (LTA consultant) is coming on site next week to do a feasibility study and DB will have a review with him after. DB confirmed that we are no longer able to get the equipment required to run the lights on courts 1-7 so likelihood is they will have to be replaced and this should be a priority. JS confirmed this is one of the reasons why Lee West has been taken on as a consultant.

DB has begun researching car charging points for electric cars in the car park. DB to get quotes. JS confirmed that this could be tied in with Padel should that go ahead. JF commented we need to be careful on how much room charging points will take up and make sure we don't lose any car parking spaces.

DB waiting on a quote for new glass balustrades for the Squash courts.

A new control box needs to be installed for the car park lighting and barrier. But the barrier is working well other than that.

JF has asked for a communication to be sent out to the members as to what to do if they are locked in the car park after hours.

**ACTION: DB**

## **7. SQUASH**

MR confirmed that a formal response has been sent to Elite regarding the RFP they sent in. Our previous contract has been extended for now to bridge the gap while negotiations are currently being worked on. Negotiations should happen in the next couple of weeks, these will include CA and Andy Ewings.

DB confirmed two courts are refurbished every year. DB to let MR know when this is happening and if he needs any support. DB confirmed it will probably be done over the summer after the squash season has finished.

JS asked MR to put together a proposal for any potential squash upgrades as soon as possible as it would be great to have a plan in place so that members are aware before renewals.

**ACTION: MR**

MR confirmed we might be holding the county championships again this year, the date is still to be confirmed. We also are hosting an Avon County Junior Development Session at the end of January.

MR has requested we put a calendar of events together on the app / website. MR and JS to discuss offline.

**ACTION: MR, JS**

## **8. TENNIS**

Brian has picked up discussions with Bluesky about the new tennis contract - nothing of concern from initial chats. Further update at next committee meeting.

TSC are considering whether to run the Easter junior tournament - it's during school holidays which are generally quieter at the club, provides good revenue for the club and helps with our LTA relationship so we are likely to go ahead

TSC meeting later this month although JS not aware of any pressing issues

MG commented on previous communications with JG about parameters that should be set in terms of spend on tennis contracts. JS to discuss with BL about what parameters he's working within.

**ACTION: BL, JS**

## **9. CROQUET**

Play continues for croquet (weather permitting). The excessive worm casts caused by the wet conditions, which create an objectionable appearance if trodden or rolled in, has been treated.

A solar light has been fitted inside the croquet equipment hut

JL noted that we sadly lost one of our Croquet members, Ralph Williamson, who recently died, aged 88.

## **10. PADEL**

JF updated to say that a Padel subcommittee has now been created to help gather more information to support the Padel proposal. Tasks have been allocated to subcommittee members and they are making good progress. JS commented that some good information

has been put together and confirmed that the proposal will be shared as soon as possible and then a date for an EGM will be set once this has been done.

**11. SAFEGUARDING**

JS confirmed that there was nothing to report. DB added that Natalie has received a document from the LTA which needs to be completed and some questions referred to safeguarding. JS confirmed he will follow up with Natalie on this.

**ACTION: JS**

**12. AOB**

Table Tennis Table has now been repaired. Additional parts need to be ordered. JF confirmed more people are using it and that it should be marketed more to the members.

**ACTION: JF**

MG reiterated that additional work can be done to put together long term forecasts for the budget, to reassure the committee that we will be in a strong cash position in years to come. JM suggested a 5 year program of major works would be very useful.

JL queried if dogs were allowed in the club, JS mentioned that it had previously been agreed that dogs were not allowed at the club unless they were guide dogs.

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

JS to send out a poll to committee members to find a suitable date for the next committee meeting around the beginning of March.