

## **TRING SQUASH CLUB**

### **MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2023**

#### **1. ATTENDED BY**

Mark Bullard (MB), Joanne Preston (JP), Matt Duncan (MD), Keith Warman (KW), Merrill Trueman (MT), Chas Lefevre (CL), Anthony Palmer (AP), Jan Kerry (JK), Peter Barham (PB), James Walton (JW), Kelly Gascoine (KG), Joni Duncan (JD)

The minutes of the previous were approved.

#### **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Katie Winterstein (KW<sub>i</sub>),

#### **3. MATTERS ARISING**

MB has been reviewing EPOS solutions with MMM which is ongoing. However a notice has been received from Global Payments (car machine merchant) who are increasing their prices which will further increase the cost for the club of all card payments taken through the existing machines.

External Sign – 2 designs provided. Committee voted on preferred option (2) at meeting.

Door lock hardware has arrived (lock for bar keys door and ladies changing room) – accessible through MMM fobs with sub groups. Discussion held with regards to safety access in case of an emergency to the ladies changing room which will be looked into before the locks are installed.

Defibrillator stats - 76 clicks, 60 unique clicks on the video sent out. Note from Sue Brennan regarding general knowledge of CPR. AP noted that its not common to get in person CPR training these days however there are good videos online, with a link provided by Sue Brennan. This will be sent round to all members with a follow up email to the defibrillator email.

TV Instructions now available as requested.

#### **4. OFFICERS' REPORTS**

##### **A – CHAIRMAN**

Thanks to Benny for arranging another successful Band Night last weekend.

Derek is now officially employed by the club for the cleaning. A discussion was held with regards to the cleaning schedule, and the issue of cobwebs in the bar/committee room ceilings. MB noted that a deep clean of the showers is done twice a year. KW noted that perhaps we could get some additional hours for weekend / additional work for cobwebs etc provided by a supplementary cleaner.

BT Sport renewal notice provided - Now £153.88 + VAT – renewal offer £144.26 + VAT which is cheaper. MB looking into the current pricing. No objections received from committee to renew.

Bar roof – Pendley Manor came to review the damage to the roof and have agreed to pay for the repairs. Repair to the roof has not resolved the leaking which requires further investigation.

Court Roof – test sample taken and there is no sign of deterioration.

Adult Intro sessions – Ladies finishes today. Men's to follow starting the 21<sup>st</sup> Feb with 6 people signed up so far.

Court 1 sponsorship renewal – MB speaking to Lennons regarding renewal - £1,200 for 18 months sponsorship.

Club Championship proposed dates - Entries Open/Close 17/3 - 11/4, draw 13/4, 19/4 start, finals 5/5/23

Paul Hobday push to expand participation in the racketball leagues. MB has confirmed he is in favour of increased participation but has confirmed it would need to slot into the existing league format.

PSC - Quotes to repair car park – new approach being considered, loose surface access routes. Continually need to retarmac these areas and the hope is that the maintenance would be better going forward, with the advantage of better drainage overall. It would be disruptive therefore won't be done until the football and rugby seasons are finished.

TAFC v Bury – 5th round FA Vase match – therefore it will be very busy this Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February.

## **B – TREASURER**

PB noted that the banking for the club is now mostly done online and while historically, cheques were signed by 2 signatories, he is able to do payments himself. For fraud purposes, PB proposed that each month the club's bank statements would be provided to MB so that there were some internal controls with regards to payments. MB confirmed he was happy to provide the monthly sign off.

PB presented the December quarter accounts with a comparison to last year. £174k cash in the bank at of 6/2/2023.

- Loss of £4k for the quarter (£2.5k surplus for the first half of the year, versus £3.4k surplus for the same time period last year)
- Bar sales of £18k,
- Court bookings £7k
- Subscription & entry fees £9k
- Asahi sponsorship £1.2k
- Junior coaching £3k
- Heavy overheads
  - o £10k repairs and maintenance

- £2k loft insulation
    - £600 loft clearance
    - £1k loft guttering
    - £800 defibrillator cost
    - Plus other minor costs
  - £3.5k booking system – mostly the cost of the new door locks (MD questioned whether this could be moved to repairs and maintenance as its not a booking system cost)
- YOY:
- bar sales up this year
  - court bookings similar
  - Subscription and entry fees up
  - Junior coaching up
  - Repairs and maintenance costs up in 2022. Other costs comparable.

PB noted that while there were increased sales, the club was reinvesting the money back into the club and therefore the financials were pretty flat for the first 6 months of the financial year.

### **C – MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

Below are the figures as of the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023:

#### **Total – 363 (up from 357 last meeting)**

Adult – 234 (up 4 from last meeting)

Junior – 67 (up 3 from last meeting) – inc students

Life – 29 (same as last meeting)

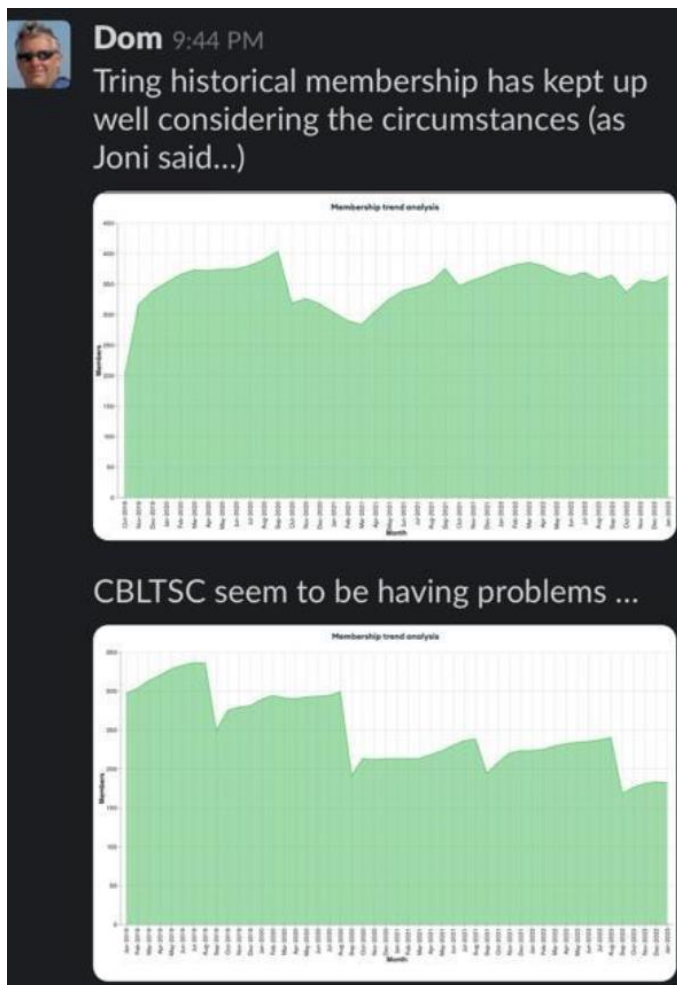
Social – 33 (down 1 from last meeting)

Solo bookings still an issue and recently JD has ‘caught’ out a couple of people namely one member who has booked solo courts for a whole year.

Social – JD has been approached (by a member) about non-members using the bar with a member present regularly and questioned whether the committee felt this was an issue or not. MB noted that the overall principal is (and has always been) that members can bring a guest in for a drink (husband, wife, friend etc). and committee was happy that there was no intention to change that at the current time.

JD forwarded a suggestion received from Chris Langford that all past playing members when ‘retiring’ get social membership for ‘free’ effectively being a Life member to keep them coming to the club. Committee considered the proposal but were not in favour of free membership.

JD noted that despite recent concerns, membership figures are pretty good and the below chart from Dom show how Tring is comparing to Chesham Bois:



## **D – SECRETARY**

No report

### **5. TEAM REPORTS:**

#### **Men's Captain –**

Despite the Herts 1st team now fulfilling their fixtures, they are still struggling due to the standard at other clubs being higher than at Tring.

The Bucks team are doing quite well in division 1, even though being champions may just be out of reach.

The Herts 2nd team is just holding on in division 3 despite being without their number 1 player since November due to injury. Their season is quite long stretching through to April, so hopefully there is time for recovery.

Work on the court floors has been completed – mostly court 4 but some work on other courts. Full clean on courts 1 and 2 to be done in September. JP requested that, when known, the dates are put in MB's newsletter / on the club calendar ahead of time so every opportunity has been taken to inform members.

#### **Ladies' Captain –**

The ladies 1<sup>st</sup> team continue to sit top of the Herts league and are mid-table in the Bucks 1<sup>st</sup> division. Both leagues have had a difficult January with a team pulling out of each division due to lack of available players.

The ladies 2<sup>nd</sup> team have won their last 4 matches. They have a number of rearranged games to play over the next few months but are still sitting third in the second division despite the fewer games played. As expected, we have a couple of additional players to choose from who have returned since January so its been easier fill teams for the matches in the second half of the season.

## **6. JUNIOR REPORT**

Junior squashathon: Date is booked 15th July. Target is to have min of 2 juniors playing squash from 6 am - 6 pm. Organising is underway.

Tring PE squash: unfortunately from Sept 2023 Tring School are stopping outside school PE options ( due to staffing/ difficulty managing activities). This includes squash. Feedback has been that Squash has always been full and popular. KWi working with the school to find an alternative option.

## **7. OTHER REPORTS –**

**House** (from Nigel Kerry)–

- Drop in mains water pressure caused a few problems recently. I intend to get a full explanation of how the shower system works and the best option to take when the pressure drops. When the pressure drops as much as it did the new system shuts down so I need to make others aware as to how to restart it.
- Leak in lounge ceiling. After having the roof repaired I thought the leaks would stop but it appears not. It is easier to move around the loft now so next time it happens I will have more chance of tracking it down.
- There is a problem with 2 of the showers in the mens showers. They are distinctly colder than the others. I also think there has been a drop in pressure in the mens showers but not in the ladies. The ladies showers are also hotter. I have raised a ticket with Sinfields to look into this.
- A date has been booked for the work on the court floors. Thanks to Keith for organising and also arranging for the courts to be taken out of action.
- There have been another couple of instances recently of new members going straight on court in trainers they've worn from the car-park. I know Matt & Joni do their best to make sure that these members are fully aware of the protocol but I wondered if there was a way that when they booked their first court a message could be triggered from MMM to remind them. This was looked into offline and while not possible, all new members need to sign up to T&Cs and MD has prepared new posters for the courts to request clean shoes are used. It is possible to expand the T&Cs statement to specifically state that they would use appropriate equipment including clean shoes and committee were in favour of this change.
- Thank you to Barbara Lefevre for cleaning the cooker
- I'm aware that there is a plan to fit an electronic lock to the ladies changing room. Please can I ask that if there is any wiring involved that where that goes is discussed with me before installation.
- The closing mechanism on the front door has had to be adjusted several times recently. I am aware that it is a problem and will change the mechanism if it continues to annoy.

- I'm not sure if I'm overstepping my remit but I must raise my concerns about how many fire escapes are available during large social functions. Especially band nights where the stage is set up in front of the lounge escape. I'm sure this has been checked out but it might be worth asking for some "professional" advice e.g Darren Rice does risk assessment. A possible answer is to turn the double doors in the games room, that exit onto the garden, into another fire escape.
- Due to the way the heating is now set up the boiler is having to do a lot more work. It is a pretty substantial bit of kit but is probably 15 years old so some thought might need to go into a replacement in the next few years.
- Over the last few weeks there have been plenty of small jobs done and there are plenty more to do but, as always, I'm happy to hear of any complaints/problems. I will deal with them but, unless urgent, they will get done in Nigel time

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

18th February 2023 – Private Party  
 26th February 2023 – Private Party  
 11th March 2023 – Women's Squash Night  
 17th March 2023 – Club Handicap tournament finals night  
 18th March 2023 – Private party  
 8th April 2023 – private party  
 15th April 2023 – Private Party  
 13th May 2023 – Private party  
 3rd June 2023 – Dolly Parton Tribute  
 10th June 2023 – private party  
 1st July 2023 – private party  
 15th July 2023 – Junior squashathon  
 2nd September 2023 – private party  
 16th September 2023 – 40 year bar celebration  
 14th October 2023 – band night  
 4th November 2023 – private party  
 25th November 2023 – private party  
 16th December 2023 – Elvis Tribute  
 3rd February 2024 – band night  
 18th May 2024 – band night  
 28th September 2024 – private party  
 19th October 2024 – band night  
 14th December 2024 – band night

### **Systems/Operations** –

MD commented on solo bookings with guest fees introduced. There was still an issue of solo courts being booked without knowledge of whether it was solo practice. MMM have made a change so on the booking system and on the clocks, it shows if someone has made a solo booking or not which will make it easier for people to ask questions if they spot two players on a solo booked court.

New clock has been installed for court 2. Issue with old clocks that the batteries inside were expanding. New clocks are mini kiosks with no batteries – has been tested on court 3 and working fine. Other old court clocks will be replaced in due course.

Alex and Matt have done some testing on robustness of the MMM system in the case of a shutdown.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

KW questioned ladies Saturday morning session – 4 courts – needed? To speak to KWi about releasing courts if not needed (just reserving 2 as needed?).

KW requested new trays for the oven in the kitchen. MB requested that KW purchases what is needed (rather than replace the unneeded) which would be refunded by the club.

KW noted that the handicap tournament is running smoothly. Dave Proudfoot has agreed to umpire the finals night Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March) as KW is on holiday. Court 3 has been booked from 7pm and its on the club calendar.

The club has been asked whether it wants to hold a masters graded event potentially in conjunction with Berkhamsted. MB noted that we need to ensure we have a volunteer team to assist with running the weekend. CL noted that a tournament manager would be provided, and we could limit player numbers etc. MB supportive of the idea in principal but reiterated that we would need a team of volunteers to provide food / open bar etc and someone from Tring would need to be around to host etc. CL was happy to coordinate with ES and will pull together a team of volunteers. JP requested that any date avoided when private parties were booked in (all listed in the club calendar on the website).

KW and JP looking to do a Women's Open session on 11th March (International Women's Day) to invite the players who have attended the free coaching back to the club to meet other lady members. Committee happy with this going ahead.

AP asked whether there was a volunteers evening to be arranged. MB noted that there hasn't been one for a while and it would be nice to revive it. It was noted that this should be separate to the 40<sup>th</sup> bar celebration being planned for the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2023 by Chris Langford.

Development Plan Update - revised plan drawn up. Second storey taken out of the scope and space to the side has been removed. Revised quote from the builders is £165K + VAT – covers ladies changing room, disabled toilet, slightly less storage. Investigating costs and approach for following phases (removal of existing ladies changing room, opening up the space, glassbacks etc). Committee noted that there didn't seem to be appetite for borrowing therefore raising of additional funds would be required by fundraising efforts. MT noted that the current feedback she had received was that the appetite had changed and improvement of existing facilities was foremost in member's minds currently over a big development. Committee discussed the revised proposal and viewed that it was still a significant cost for changes which while it would enable future works, would not provide the full vision for the initial cost.

MB noted that there were a number of potential funding streams available to assist the club with any development: -

- Seminar
- Funding 4 Sport – worth paying for professional help.

- Crowdfunding, matched by Sport England. Subs
- Various Sport England programs available
- S106/CIL -developer funds through the council – would need an agreed development plan to apply for it.
- Consultant
  - Supporting material, video, photos
  - Consultancy available
  - Will charge for written support
- SNAP – show cases sponsorship opportunities
- Easy fundraising -linked to online shopping purchases. Easy and should be an ongoing funding source, need to get members on board. MB noted that we should be doing this anyway.
- Crowdfund Herts - limited
- Grassboots – interesting but limited
- Trust Funds
- Internal Fund raising

Committee discussed the priority of the member's wishes for the club and the bar improvement was noted as seemingly favoured at the current time so that should go ahead with the development plan considered once some improvements have been made.

Bar improvements – an interior designer has provided a plan discussed at committee previously. MB proposed that we formally engage the interior designer to provide a plan for improvements with the following brief:

- Make the lounge area more appealing to younger members,
- Accommodating and complementing the club's ideas for new furniture and furniture layout.
- Making the entrance to the bar more inviting
- Leaving flooring as-is.
- Easy wins – warmer (2700 °C) bulbs
- Etc.

Committee were in favour of engaging the Interior Designer to progress the work on the bar improvements.

## **9. NEXT MEETING**

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023.

The meeting closed at 22:12.

Joanne Preston

Tring Squash Club Secretary