

LANSDOWN TENNIS, SQUASH AND CROQUET CLUB LTD
MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
TUESDAY, 6th OCTOBER 2020
Start Time: 7.00 pm

Present:

Andy Ewings (AE)	Chairman
James Scully (JS)	Deputy Chairman
Jeremy Goulding (JG)	President
Mark Groves (MG)	Treasurer
David Barnes (DB)	Fabric Manager
Mark Radley (MR)	Squash Secretary
Jeremy Labram (JL)	Committee Member
Claire Ackerman (CA)	Committee Member
Jean Wilson (JW)	Committee Member
Jon Foulds (JF)	Committee Member
Philip Torjussen (PT)	General Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Rupert Larkin. They were accepted.

2. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting dated the 20th August were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

AE welcomed everyone to the first committee meeting including Jon Foulds and Mark Radley who were new members.

He wanted to go through what we were hoping to achieve during the next year. Being in the middle of the pandemic will continue to affect the Club and we will need to think about how we are going to cope with this. We do have a healthy cash flow position but there will be some expenditure in the future. In addition, we do not know how much membership churn there will be next March and we are experiencing lower coaching income and lost bar income. With a potential rebate to the membership next year, it could mean that we will be between £75K and £100K down on our budgeted income. We therefore need to make sensible decisions in the future.

We have to think 'are all of the facilities that we provide relevant?'

We will need to think of the staffing in the clubroom. Income is currently running at 40% of normal income and staff costs at 50% of normal. These costs have been supported heavily by the furlough scheme so as that support reduces we will have challenging decisions and need to 'tread carefully' in the next six months.

PT gave a review of the membership figures which were looking positive with 523 full paying adult members and 64 younger/country members. This is better than last year.

JL asked about the planning application and PT advised that he had had email discussions with Martin Almond, Planning Officer and he had visited the Club and looked round. He did not give any opinion, positive or otherwise.

JS advised that he had checked with the BANES website and there were several objections to the planning application. JF advised that he would have a chat with Martin Almond who he knew quite well and would report back.

ACTION: JF

5. ACCOUNTS

3rd quarter accounts would be available towards the end of the month.

Bank balance was looking healthy.

AE asked if there were any reservations on some of the proposed projects going ahead. MG advised that we had enough money to do the resurfacing of courts 1, 2 and 3. However, we would need to investigate further with regards to the installation of the Padel courts.

6. LADIES AND GENTS CHANGING ROOMS

PT gave a resume of where we were with regards to the changing rooms. Final fixtures and fittings were due to be installed later this week. Plumbing engineer was to visit on the 7th October to commission all new radiators and heating and ensure the showers were working correctly. Deep clean of the gents was due to take place on the 7th October. It was hoped that the changing rooms would be available for use very soon.

JL said that the changing rooms look great but we need to do an audit for who is going to be using it and how they will use it and it will need to be simple and practical. Probably the difficult challenge is for the dynamics of people movements in that it will be quite different. It is likely that there will be a challenge in the route to the changing rooms. It will need to go to the Covid committee for final sign-off as it is a new facility.

7. SQUASH UPDATE

MR introduced himself as a member who had been playing at the Club for a year and has also played in the teams. He was looking forward to increasing membership and the system with the 'bubbles' was going well. They have reduced the times between the bookings of the courts from 45 minutes down to 30 and he has received some thank you emails so this has gone smoothly. However, some of the incorrect bookings could not be cancelled so this could lead to some complaints.

He has been looking at the Covid policy around the squash area and will be reviewing this as soon as possible. World Squash 'Day' starts on Saturday. This is an ES initiative and is effectively a Nationwide team match. This will be played over a month so there will not be any changes to the current procedure. We had a grant of £200 from ES which is to be spent on encouraging the restart of Squash after Covid and can be spent as the Squash Committee decides. It will perhaps be used as an incentive for spending time in the bar.

CA advised that if MR needed any help with marketing the World Squash Day, to let her know.

Jon Foulds advised that there is a potential for mix up if members do not use the actual court that had been booked. It would be useful to remind the members to do this. PT to include it in a newsletter in the future.

ACTION PT

JF suggested that perhaps a read only touch screen could be installed so that it is easy to see what courts are in use? It could also act as a reminder so that everyone knows the times when they should be finishing. AE confirmed that this will be relatively easy to introduce and could be part of the new app that is coming along soon. JF asked if it was possible to have a swipe facility? AE confirmed that this was part of access control and when introduced, will protect the interest of members, and ensure that only members only access the club.

MG asked if we had an opportunity to get new members for the World Squash day as we had done in the past? JG said that the challenge is that we can only play squash in bubbles so any kind of promotional event in the squash area is a tricky one to organise.

MR confirmed that he wanted to organise something that would give people the right experience and he would report back to the committee in due course.

8. TENNIS

In RL's absence tonight as he was working, JS reported back on a few points:

Club Mixer is going really well with high participation. Club Play used to take place on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday afternoons. The Club mixers are currently taking place on Tuesday and Saturdays. Team Practise is also going well and will be coach led every other week from now on. We are

also looking to start up a coach led session for improvers, which should appeal to a wide cross section of the membership.

Courts 1, 2 and 3 have had maintenance to remove the amount of sand, and we are likely to resurface those courts during the spring of 2021. TSC are currently looking into this further.

If we go ahead with the surfacing of 1, 2 and 3, what approval do we need to go ahead? It was agreed that if the surface is not to be changed then it will only need committee approval. However, if the surface is to change to, say, artificial clay, then it will need to go to an EGM for a members' vote.

Having flood lights on the bottom three courts will make a big difference.

JW had spoken to some tennis members who were very enthusiastic about the new tennis mixer sessions.

9. CROQUET

In HG's absence, JW reported that croquet was going well. There had been some guests and the surface of the lawn is very good at the moment.

Howard is a very good host and he has done a good job.

10. SAFEGUARDING

There were no issues to be discussed.

11. AOB

DB asked about the heating of the squash courts 2 and 3. AE advised that he was under the impression that the committee had agreed to spend money on the heating of the squash courts. DB confirmed that the fans ensure that the ventilation is correct and the recent heating system upgrade ensured that the right temperature was obtained in the lobby areas so we may not need the heaters on 2 and 3 at the moment. It may be worth waiting.

AE advised that this squash expenditure was minimal and it may be worth putting the heating in so that it is an even temperature all round. This was capital expenditure and if it works out at hundreds a year it will be worth doing. DB reminded everyone that the heating is zoned to ensure correct heating all round. It was agreed that MR would have a chat with DB to see if it is needed. JL said that it is quite cool in that area but heats up quickly. If the fans are on all the time - will the heat not just go out? DB confirmed this was radiant heat so it will only heat up the body and walls and not just the air. DB had asked a number of members and not many liked the heat. Discussion should be taken outside of this group, heaters installed if that was decided by MR/DB, and the outcome reported back at the next meeting.

ACTION: MR and DB

JF confirmed that with the recent refurbishments, we had a modern club and looked great. However, the

clubroom ceiling doesn't look good. It was confirmed that when the clubroom was refurbished, we looked at either painting or cladding the ceiling but it was quite expensive. JF was asked if he would look at what options were available and he agreed to do that.

ACTION: JF

PT advised that he had reports of school children jumping over the fence near the Richmond Road entrance. Access control would make it harder. AE and JS also reported seeing children jumping over the fence. This was to be discussed again in the future.

MG asked about the current operation of the bar and why we didn't need to offer table service? AE confirmed that this was a matter for the Covid group. He made the observation that if we are going to offer table service, it will increase staffing costs. He had spoken to the Public Protection Service at Banes to explain everything we were doing to protect ourselves. There were 3 people in this department dedicated to ensuring compliance of businesses to covid rules. She explained they had been inundated with calls from businesses asking if they had to provide table service and that it was not viable for them to do so. She appreciated that to do so seemed less safe than the measures that were already in place at Lansdown. However by the letter of the law, we should be operating a table service because we are a licensed premise. She said that in the event of complaints being made they would come and talk to us about what we are doing.

MG asked if we should update the members on what we are doing i.e. why we are not doing table service. AE confirmed that we were waiting for guidance from BANES which doesn't seem to be forthcoming so the Covid Committee will meet to discuss this.

AE advised that he was not sure what to do about the table service rule.

JF asked what were the implications for the club and AE advised that it was unlikely that we will be fined but it is possible. However, we had not been negligent in any way.

JS: It is aimed to stop the mingling at the bar. Please let AE know of any opinions.

ACTION: ALL

MG asked what JL thought. Were it to come to a legal position, we do have a defence - however, he is not a lawyer and it is not black and white. We have to be careful about the likely customers in the clubroom - it does attract an older type of person. MG confirmed that common sense suggests that we are doing the right thing. MR asked if it was worth to seek approval in writing so that we can be seen to be doing the right thing? AE agreed to report back on what other clubs are doing. MR thought it was important to be open with the members.

DB asked if we had carried out a full risk assessment and it was confirmed that we had.

JL confirmed that with Covid, there were four main principles that to consider:

- Prepare because it may get stricter

- We had to be more robust
- We had to make preparations for an outbreak at the Club
- Everybody must play their part and be responsible.

There were aspects that we hadn't thought of as well as tightening up on what we were currently doing.

JW had met someone who was asthmatic and therefore didn't have to wear a mask. However, we are always going to get people who will dodge the situation. JF advised that we need to reiterate that when people come off the squash court, you need to put the mask on.

JW asked why we could not offer a wider choice of food? AE would like to provide a system where Jo comes in for a short burst to cook and prepare the food. He will be providing a report for the committee to give consideration on what to do in the future. 25% of our sales are for food so we need to find a way of selling that in a better way. We also need to be smart at what we sell and when we sell it. There is an emotive aspect to this and we can take a view on it.

JF asked what was happening about the introduction of Padel? It was agreed that once we knew the cost of resurfacing tennis courts 1, 2 and 3, we could revisit the Padel project and consider the loan funding from the LTA. It was agreed that we should go to the membership about this first before we started thinking of putting in for planning. It was agreed to make it an action point at the next meeting.

ACTION: PT

13. NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be Thursday, 26th November at 7.00 pm via the zoom link.

There being no further business the meeting finished at 20.47.

Signed _____

Andy Ewings, Chairman