

Minutes of Buxton Tennis Club AGM Thursday 17th Jan. 2019: Buckingham Hotel, 7.00pm

Present: Steve Thompson (chair), Anne Thompson (membership secretary), Allan Ramsay (secretary), Dan Osborne (treasurer), Leo Barbero, Jek Jacobs, Sally Gould, Lin Robinson, Mike Badman, Wendy Solman, Keith Boothby, Kate Tagg, Simon Bradbury, Carol Basset
Apologies: James Stuart, Joy White

Minutes of 2018 AGM: Steve Thompson noted that these had been circulated following the 2018 AGM. It was suggested that in future the minutes of the previous year's AGM should be recirculated with the agenda for the current year's AGM. This led to a further discussion of the means by which minutes and meeting notes should be distributed, and it was agreed that they should be made available via the website and that hard copies should be placed on the noticeboard in the pavilion and inside the storage hut.

Chair's report: Steve Thompson (ST) reported that negotiations with Sport England and Tarmac had now been successfully completed, apart from some formalities required by Sport England, and that we are on the verge of signing the contract for installation of floodlights. Sport England are contributing £15,000 and Tarmac are contributing £24,876 net towards the total cost of £40,536. (Under the Tarmac Landfill Communities Fund scheme, the club contributes 10% of Tarmac's gross outlay (£2,764.57), making the club's total contribution £3,424.57 or 8.4% of the total cost.).

Tarmac will want to publicise their contribution, and have proposed to come on a Saturday morning to meet members, take photos, and so on (the originally proposed date was 26/01/2019, but that fell through for various reasons and will be rearranged). Members noted that they had not been kept informed of progress on this topic, but it was pointed out that Tarmac had, quite reasonably, wanted to keep a degree of confidentiality about the negotiations and would want to make their own announcement at a time that suited them. The meeting expressed its thanks to Steve and the other people who had helped with this major achievement -- several previous chairs had attempted to obtain floodlights, but this had always previously fallen through from lack of funding.

ST noted that there was a feeling within the club that following up the installation of floodlights with the construction of a new clubhouse nearer to the courts would be a further significant step in the club's development, and it was agreed that the committee would continue to investigate funding for this.

ST noted that, in line with the requirements of the LTA, the club has drawn up safeguarding and diversity policies, which are posted on the website, and that Carmel Gray has been confirmed as the club's safeguarding officer.

Over the past year it became apparent that time had taken its toll on the trustees responsible for the Park Road ground lease. The meeting approved a suggestion coming from the umbrella organisation overseeing the three clubs, namely that the chairs of tennis, cricket and bowls would serve as trustees. They would be indemnified against possible personal liability by an amendment to the umbrella club's insurance policy.

ST reported that the various organisations that had been using the pavilion had discontinued their lettings, and that this would impact on the overall/joint club's income and would have knock-on effects on the tennis section. He noted that the loss of these lettings should lead to a decrease in electricity costs, but emphasised the importance of not leaving the heating on after matches and other uses of the pavilion: during the winter the tennis section are more or less the only people who use the clubhouse, so if we leave the heating on then it will probably remain on until we next use it.

The membership secretary (AT) reported that senior membership had risen (to 46) whilst junior numbers had fallen (to 33) from the very healthy level achieved in 2017, reflecting some difficulties with junior coaching last summer. There was a slight increase in family membership. Together these changes produced a small increase in subscription income.

Lin Robinson (LR) reported that we have appointed a new coach, who will start after Easter, and that she hopes to be able to rebuild junior membership to the previous levels. LR's expectation is that the coach will run junior sessions on Sunday mornings as previously, with the possibility of running adult sessions, either individual or group, on Sunday afternoons. There was considerable discussion around this. In particular, the possibility of running midweek sessions, possibly for new members, was raised and various issues relating to such sessions were discussed. It was agreed that the exact details of the coach's activity would be explored by LR, but that given that the coach would be travelling from Chesterfield it was unlikely that he would want to come for a short session in the middle of the week. The meeting congratulated Sally Gould (SG) on achieving her level 1 coaching qualification. SG anticipates that she will obtain level 2 in August -- the remaining steps are largely formal, but she needs to attend an LTA course which she will not be able to do until August. SG will then be able to make a significant contribution to coaching juniors, but unfortunately she will not be able to undertake adult coaching until she achieves level 3, which is a further and quite substantial effort.

The secretary had nothing of importance to report.

The treasurer (DO) presented the accounts, which had been informally audited by AT. These were accepted by the meeting: there was one minor expenditure by LR for which no receipt was available, and DO noted that this would not be acceptable in future. The general picture is that our income was slightly up and our expenditure was significantly down. The decrease in expenditure was largely due to not spending anything on court maintenance and to a decrease in the management charge. Neither of these factors is likely to continue -- we need to repaint the courts in the near future and to have a plan for eventually resurfacing them; and, as noted above, we no longer have a stream of income from letting the pavilion, which means that the management charge will almost certainly have to return to at least its previous level. We do have a healthy balance of £26,679 at the bank, but that is unlikely to be enough to cover the eventual cost of resurfacing the courts. Jek Jacobs (JJ) reminded the meeting that it had previously been agreed that we should ring-fence a 'sinking fund' for this purpose, and that we need a plan to ensure that this sinking fund is sufficient to cover the cost of resurfacing. DO agree that it would not be difficult to separate the bank balance into two sections, for everyday running expenses and for the sinking fund, but it was not clear how the club could build up the reserves to the necessary level. It was agreed that the committee would obtain estimates for resurfacing in order to determine the appropriate sum to set aside each year in order to meet that cost when it falls due.

Teams: reports from 2018 team captains and election of team captains for 2019 season. The ladies' team came 2nd in division 4, and will be promoted for 2019 . The men's team survived in division 3, which was a significant achievement given that they had lost their two best players for the season. The mixed A team came second from bottom in division 2, again having lost a number of their better players, and the mixed B team were mid-table in division 4. It is pleasing to note that a number of junior players are making the step up to playing in the senior teams, and we hope that this will continue.

Election of officers and committee members: the chair, treasurer, secretary and membership secretary agreed to continue in their offices for 2019-20, with the chair indicating clearly that he did not intend to do so for the following year. There were no counter-proposals and the officers were all re-elected. The existing committee (the officers + Wendy Solman, Lin Robinson, Leo Barbero, Sally Gould) also agreed to continue, and Mike Badman agreed to join the committee. It was noted that not all members of the committee are regular users of email or other forms of electronic communication, and that it was important to make sure that everyone was contacted properly to ensure that they were aware of meetings in good time.

Subscriptions for 2019: the committee proposed that subscriptions should remain unchanged. There was some discussion of coaching for new adults, reduced rates for new members, and whether people on the putative coaching courses should be required to join the club and whether they would be allowed to use the courts. This discussion was inconclusive, particularly given that it is not clear that the new coach would be in a position to run midweek courses for adult beginners. It was therefore agreed that the existing fee levels would continue, i.e. £105 for adults, £210 for a family, £45 for unemployed/student, £25 for junior, £60 for country members, with a £10 (£20 for family) discount if paid before 1 May, and £50 for new adult members.

The meeting closed at approximately 9:00PM.