

## **MINUTES OF SLTCC 45th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2021**

**Present:** Gillian Bartlett, Chair, the following Board members: Katharine Beaudry, Ray Franklin, Keith McMillan, Simon Taylor, plus Dez Lewington (Club Manager) and around 14 other members.

**Apologies:** Victoria Courtney, Jane Sheridan, Barbara Cavanagh, Craig McEwan, Stephen Rhoden, John Rowe.

### **Introduction**

Gillian welcomed everyone present and thanked them for coming. She introduced the other members of the Board, plus the Club Manager.

### **Minutes of the 2020 AGM**

Gillian confirmed that the minutes of the 2020 AGM had been approved by the Board and referred attendees that the minutes are available on the Club website. She thanked Simon Taylor for preparing these minutes.

### **1. Directors' and Chair's Report**

The Directors' Report circulated with the AGM papers sets out the details of the directors and who is standing to be re-elected (see agenda item 3), details of the Bar Committee (see agenda item 4).

The last AGM was held by Zoom in December 2020 – this had been delayed due to the Covid pandemic.

This AGM was being held in December again – noting that it covers the financial year from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

#### Chair's Report

The report contains a lot of detail about the club's year since 1 April 2020. Due to the Covid pandemic, there had been several lockdowns and restrictions on play on all sports during this period. As a result the Club did not fully re-open until 17th May 2021.

There had been significant financial challenges – nevertheless the Club suffered only a small financial loss in this period – when depreciation taken into account (see agenda item 2).

The most significant development is the surge in interest in tennis caused by the pandemic and the resulting increase in tennis membership. The accounts for the next financial year (ending 31 March 2022) will show a much improved financial position.

Further details are in the Chair's report sent out in the AGM papers.

#### AGM December 2020

A new Business Plan had been prepared prior to the last AGM held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020. At the last AGM several special resolutions were passed – (requiring 75% of voting members to approve). The most significant was the resolution to close the croquet lawn and build a new tennis court on the site of the croquet lawn.

It was also agreed to take all necessary steps to construct a new Clubhouse, with two squash courts incorporated. The steps taken on the new Clubhouse is covered in agenda item 5.

Whilst disappointing for croquet members, more positive news is that the Croquet section has managed to find an alternative location at Mayow Park. The Board is liaising with Jane Sheridan as director and chair of croquet section regarding financial support to set this up.

## **2. To receive the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021**

Ray Franklin introduced the Accounts for the financial year to 31 March 2021. The results were clearly impacted by the Covid pandemic and the related lockdowns and restrictions. Income was reduced by c.25% but with expenditure also significantly reduced. This gave an operating loss after depreciation for 2020/21 of £8,485, compared to an operating surplus of £5,099 for 2019/20;

Nevertheless, the financial position of the Club remained strong, assisted by:

- Government and local authority grants of c.£20k – the Club is grateful for the assistance provided by the government and local authority;
- The Club invested £16k to repair the roof of the current squash buildings;
- A further £20k was spent on installing LED lights on 3 tennis courts – this will reduce electricity and maintenance costs in future years. We are looking to install LED lights on tennis courts 1 and 2 in the current year;

The Club ended the 2020/21 financial year with a higher level of money in our bank account, c.£150k compared to £136k in April 2020. This was because many members prepaid membership by continuing to pay membership subscriptions, even when they could not use the Club's facilities. This is reflected in the accounts and will be reassessed at the end of next year.

Looking forward, the Covid pandemic has generated an increased demand for tennis and this will lead to higher operating surpluses (especially with an additional tennis court). This will assist in the future raising of money.

Gillian explained that there is no need for a vote to approve – the accounts are deemed to be received by the meeting. Gillian thanked Ray for his work on the accounts.

## **3. Election of Directors**

At the 2020 AGM two new directors were appointed; Jane Sheridan, as croquet representative, and Keith McMillan, who is the director representing Bar and lettings. There have been no resignations during the year and the same directors are on the Board as last year.

The Articles requires one third of the Directors to stand down each year. Accordingly, Gillian Bartlett, Victoria Courtney and Ray Franklin, stand down as directors by rotation and offer themselves for re-election. This is an Ordinary Resolution requiring a simple majority, including any proxy votes.

The AGM voted and approved the aforementioned as Directors.

#### **4. Election of Bar Committee**

In accordance with the relevant statutory requirements, each member of the Bar Committee retires. Paulinus Kriksciunas has left the Club and therefore cannot be reappointed to the Bar Committee. Keith McMillan and Simon Taylor retire and offer themselves for re-election. Vikki Chambers has been nominated by the Bar Committee and offers herself for election.

The AGM voted and approved the aforementioned as members of the Bar Committee.

#### **5. New Clubhouse – Update and Finance**

Dez advised that preplanning for the whole project (the new tennis court and the new Clubhouse) has been submitted to Bromley Council. It is hoped that we will receive feedback from Bromley Council by mid January (this date may be subject to Covid developments).

Assuming there are no major issues the Club will move to the full Planning application for the new tennis court, seeking to build in spring / summer 2022.

The second phase will be the full Planning application of the new Clubhouse (including two squash courts). The new Clubhouse will have a bar/cafe which will be open more regularly and have a better location and facilities than the present bar.

The existing Clubhouse will be repurposed as a dedicated nursery facility for Witty Kiddies. Finally, most of the current squash building (which is not structurally that sound) will be demolished.

In reply to a question, Dez confirmed that the Clubhouse will be built in the overgrown area (close to the croquet lawn). The existing trees around the edge of this area will be kept to screen the new Clubhouse from local residents. There would be no trees removed from the area between the croquet lawn and courts 6 and 7.

Ray advised that the cost of building the new tennis court is not an issue as the Club has funds to cover and it will generate substantial income. He advised the cost to build the new Clubhouse is estimated at £750k.

The financial position of the Club has improved due to the aforementioned growth in popularity of tennis, generating extra membership and coaching / community tennis income. Plus there will be higher income from the nursery and from activities in the new Clubhouse. Accordingly, the Club considers that it will be able to generate an annual operating surplus in excess of £70kpa going forward.

This would allow the Club to service £750k of interest-free loans. In practice, the Club will look to fund the new Clubhouse from a mix of grants, interest free loans, Club fundraising and a minimum of interest-bearing loans.

The Club will form a Committee to explore fundraising and the meeting advised that the Club is looking for volunteers to join the fundraising committee.

In conclusion, the Club considers that the building of the new Clubhouse is a financially viable project.

## **6. Any Other Business**

Angela Finch, a croquet member made a statement. She explained that it is sad for the croquet section to leave the Club, given that they have been part of the Club for 123 years. She stressed that inclusivity in sport is important, and croquet has been a very enjoyable game for less mobile members.

She was grateful for the negotiations being undertaken with Mayow Park to enable the croquet section to use the old bowling green in the park – noting it is not quite like for like, as an outdoor dramatic group will use the lawn for 4 weeks each summer.

In conclusion, Angela stressed how important and pleasurable the croquet section has been at the Club, but recognised that this is the end of an era. She wished good luck to the Club and thanked it for their support.

Gillian advised that she had been in regular contact with Jane Sheridan and that Jane had been in regular contact with Lewisham Council over the last year. It seems likely that the new croquet club was going to enter into a contract with the Council very soon. It appeared that the Council was very keen to promote more sport in its parks. Gillian also mentioned that the Club had agreed at the last AGM to make a contribution towards the set up costs of the new croquet lawn and that this was still the case. The Club would be making a contribution towards the setting up of the new croquet lawn at Mayow Park and we are just waiting for more information from Jane about the costs at the moment.

A follow on question from the meeting on inclusivity – can the Club explore short tennis and pickleball? Dez advised that he was looking into this and was meeting up with a former member, who had set pickleball up in Croydon.

A question was asked as to the outcome of the Planning Permission for a mobile telephone mast to be constructed just outside the Club. Dez advised that the application for an 18 metre high mast was rejected; a request was then made for a slightly shorter 15 metre mast – this too was rejected, although may still be open to appeal.

## **7. Volunteer of the Year Award 2021**

Gillian mentioned the valuable role of the many volunteers who helped with the Club – as listed on the Key Roles list. The club benefits from having many volunteers and their assistance and more help is always welcome.

The award was originally introduced to recognise exceptional contribution and service to the Club during the year. The award recognises important contributions even if not in the actual year of award. This year the award goes to a member of the squash section which, - as mentioned in the report, has been particularly affected by the pandemic, being an indoor sport.

Simon as director representing squash announced the winner. He explained that the squash section has effectively closed for over a year, only reopening properly in May. Many previous members have moved on, although we have gained several new members.

The winner of the award has taken on the running of both the squash and racketball leagues, previously undertaken by Pete Edwards and Dave Roberts.

Running leagues is an important and delicate task, especially when there are many new members. It is greatly to this member's credit that both the squash and racketball leagues have recommenced and are proving popular. The first racketball competition for almost two years has also been organised and held (won by John Rowe).

Squash membership is growing at a healthy rate and having active leagues is an important contributory factor in attracting new members. This member is also active on the renewed squash committee (aided by Dez and Simon).

Simon was therefore pleased to announce to the AGM that winner of Volunteer of the Year Award for 2021 is Alastair Putt. The Trophy was presented to Alastair by Gillian; the presentation was held after the meeting closed when Alistair arrived.

At 8:50pm pm Gillian closed the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.