

BATH STREET MARINE TABLE TENNIS CLUB
General Management Committee Meeting – 04 April 2023

Present: Bernard Cooney (Chair), Graham Turner (Secretary), Ian Brownrigg (Treasurer), Andrew Armstrong and Lesley Blanchard.

1. The meeting commenced at 7pm with the Chair welcoming all members. An agenda had been circulated in advance.
2. Apologies received from Keith Hardman, Jenny Givens & Dave Noden. Keith Williams was expected but did not arrive.
3. Updates
 - a. Building, Maintenance & Security – KH had left a report with BC on a number of issues. First on security. There have been incidents of items going missing, and also the property not being properly locked up. The current CCTV only covers the main room, so it is suggested this should be extended to cover the kitchen and the outside of the building. Estimated cost is £600. This was agreed and BC will take forward. A number of adjustments have been made to the inside of the building in response to issues raised. Mention was also made of the complaint by Maghull TTC about space for junior match play on two tables. Everything possible is done to maximise space for match play, and the Liverpool League have been to carry out a further inspection. The outcome of that is not yet known. The heaters and dehumidifiers have been set to operate overnight. They are on timed control. There have been a number of incidents of people interfering with the controls. Members are asked not to touch the controls of heaters or dehumidifiers. Use ventilation to cool down if the building is too warm. There has also been damage to the main match table. It has not been possible to identify how this occurred, but probably by someone trying to fold it away single handed or pushing on the table. Tom Bell has done his best to repair, but it is not perfect. Any concerns about the property should be reported to KH. The ongoing concern over condensation was also discussed. Since the last serious episode the new heating controls have kept the club free of condensation. But it is felt a more permanent solution is needed. One option being investigated is that of having a new pitch roof covering. A firm called AY Roofing have been consulted, and a new pitch roof at a 5degree pitch, with anti-condensation liner is estimated to cost around £13,000. It was agreed this is an issue for the future once the situation with the lease is resolved. JG had provided a report on electricity costs, which are doubling from 1 April 2023. Giving an estimated cost for the next year of £7350. We have no direct supply, so are totally in the hands of Marine AFC. One possible option being looked at along with Marine AFC is that of solar. If the club and Marine jointly moved towards this there could be benefits all round. The addition of a new roof pitch might also provide the opportunity to add solar panels as part of a supply to the whole Marine site. IB & JG will take this forward.
 - b. Membership - IB reported that he is working on the basis of current adult membership being around 100 and junior 50. GRT asked if IB/JG could provide him with an up to date list of who they see as members as GRT currently has significantly more than this on the official database. The point being that there have been a number of changes, with people coming, and going, some only staying for a short time as members.
 - c. Social Agenda – At present it is not possible to arrange any new entertainment evenings at Marine. However, a few very good social events have been arranged for members by Mary Sefton. These have all been well supported. The team are also looking at the possibility of an end of season dinner, or similar.
 - d. Finance – IB reported that the current balances on the club's bank accounts are £43,057 and £7,082. At present the projection is that the year will yield a surplus of around £5,500. This will be reduced with the additional expenditure on security. There has been a rise in costs, especially electricity, but there have also been strong contributions to the finances from the

new 'spot the ball' competition and from refreshment sales, despite price increases for refreshments. The concern though is the ongoing matter of condensation and the roof and the further rise in electricity from 1 April 2023, where the unit price has doubled. These factors will play heavily in looking at charges for the next year.

- e. LDTTL – GRT reported that the 2022/23 season was drawing towards a close. All teams had functioned well and had largely run themselves thanks to excellent captaincy across the teams. There have been a few problems, the first division teams had suffered a little through health and injury issues and the junior team has experienced a couple of incidents including the complaint about space. Issues have however been fully dealt with at the time they arose. Two of the club's teams reached semi-finals of the respective divisional cup competitions, but neither got through to a final. In the veterans handicap cup the club has 2 teams in the semi-finals which are being played next week. There has been some very competitive table tennis across all teams and generally a good season.

4. Billy Clayton Trophy

GRT reported that he had been in contact with Mal Clark and recommended that the new junior trophy should become the Billy Clayton Trophy. The shield had cost £57.50, but at present GRT had not been able to find the invoice, which had been requested. He had suggested to the family a donation of say £100 to cover the trophy, engraving and medals. GRT will follow up with Mal Clark.

5. Sponsorship & Shirts

BC reported that the Care Trust had once again offered sponsorship of new shirts. This time a fresh style of material had been found, and BC showed an example. It was agreed this was exactly the right type of material. At present these are round neck shirts, BC will look to see if there are alternatives. The shirts, plus club logo and Care Trust logo work out at around £13 each and the Care Trust are content with this price. It was agreed BC should continue to pursue this.

6. Booking System

It was agreed that the current booking system is not working well for everyone. Administrators are having difficulty seeing bookings, and few members appear to be using it. GRT said that he had been approached by an alternative provider, who could offer it seemed a more complete option. However, the main difference is that the TTE programme, whilst not perfect, is free, but an alternative system would come at a cost which would be a percentage of receipts. It was felt that members still may not be inclined to use a booking system even if a new system were introduced so it could prove to be a waist of funds. The TTE system is gradually being improved. On balance therefore it was agreed that for the time being to leave things as they are.

7. Club Structure and Constitution

There are three issues.

- The lease. There has been no progress on the negotiations with Marine AFC for a change to the lease. GRT has contacted Sefton Borough Council and asked for their help in facilitating a face to face meeting with Marine to try and understand why things are not moving forward. The Marine Chairman seems to say informally that there is no problem with the change, but this is not translating into actions. The consequences of no progress are stark. And decisions must be made by July this year. GRT will continue to explore every avenue to bring negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion.
- Club Structure. The club has been putting off a change in structure pending outcomes of the lease negotiations. However, with a growing and ever changing membership it is considered the time is right to make a change regardless. It was therefore proposed and agreed that we

should take forward the formation of a community interest company (CIC) and bring forward a resolution at the AGM for the closure of the private members club and its succession by a new CIC to carry on all the activities of the club. This would at least offer a degree of protection to individual club members.

- Constitution change. It was agreed that the proposed wording change of Rule 10 on what constitutes a quorum for club meetings should be brought before the AGM.

8. Preparing for the End of Year

- It was proposed that the Club AGM be held on Wednesday 24 May. It is helpful to have the club AGM prior to the League meeting so that the club's representative can be mandated by members as necessary to vote at the League AGM.
- It was appreciated the difficulty this presents to the finance team to prepare year end accounts and have them audited. It was suggested that we could seek appointment of two auditors this year so that if one is not available the other can fulfil the role and thus not delay the completion of accounts.
- IB reported that some preliminary thoughts had been given to next years fees. IB thought that it may be possible to retain the current fee level, but uncertainty over costs suggested that now was the time for an increase. There has not been a fee increase for a considerable number of years. There was also an extensive discussion about level of fees for juniors. The current fee is a 'bargain', but nevertheless the club is not experiencing a queue of juniors to get in. By contrast the club wishes to do all it can to promote junior table tennis. IB/JG & GRT will do some number crunching based on an adult membership of 100 and see what it shows. IB will then bring forward a proposal for adult and junior membership.

9. LDTTL Development Plan.

GRT had circulated a of the email from the League dated 23 Feb 2023. It was agreed that the club fully supported the ideals set out and the idea of league development. It was felt the two central issues for the League should be a 'home.' A centre on which activities of the league can be based for the benefit of all clubs; and an inclusive programme for junior development led by the league. All juniors should have a route of progression available to them, at present it is difficult for individual clubs to provide this. To the extent that currently just 2 clubs across the league, one of which is our own, has any significant junior activity. It was agreed that for the time being all that was needed is for the club to confirm that it supports league development.

10. Juniors & Coaching

GRT said that he would like to bring forward a proposal that the club should 'buy in' some additional coaching services. To some extent this had already started, with Neil Pickard now attending one of the junior sessions once a month. The proposal is that Neil, who normally charges for his coaching services, be offered 1 year of free adult club membership in exchange for providing a significant coaching session once per month. In value the two would be approximately the same. The proposal was agreed and GRT will negotiate the exact terms.

11. Any other business

There was no other business.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9:37pm.

Graham Turner,
Secretary, 4 April 2023