

BATH STREET MARINE TABLE TENNIS CLUB
General Management Committee Meeting – 3 March 2022

Present: Bernard Cooney (Chair), Graham Turner (Secretary), Ian Brownrigg (Treasurer), Lesley Blanchard, Jenny Givens and Dave Noden.

1. The meeting commenced just after 8pm with the Chair welcoming members present, saying he was glad to be back at the club and thanking all for their support and continuing work for the club during his recent absence through health reasons.
2. Apologies received from: Keith Hardman and Keith Williams.
3. Membership
 - a. Ian & Jenny reported that they believed we currently have 88 adult members and 38 junior members. The number of adult members differed slightly from that held by the Secretary, but IB/JG reported that there had been some recent losses which the Secretary may not yet be aware of.
 - b. BC reported on communications from TTE about the role of Welfare Officer which he currently held. Unfortunately, he had not been able to undertake a relevant course to obtain the relevant certification considered necessary by TTE for such a role. This was largely a covid issue as the LCC were still not running face to face courses and there were also no online modules currently available. He is in touch with Terri Wainwright of LCC about this. The Man Com confirmed that they wished Bernard to continue in this role and supported the idea that relevant training would be undertaken as soon as an appropriate course became available. It was considered more important that we had a named Welfare Officer rather than a certificate of learning!
 - c. It was considered that the current roles allocated to Man Com members were working well, possibly except for communications and media due to the resignation from the group of Ray O'Leary. The internet, Facebook and WhatsApp groups continue to be used for communication. A Twitter account had been started but this had not been regularly used due to the Chairman's absence. There is perhaps still a need for a media officer.
 - d. It was agreed that now was the time to start thinking and preparing for the AGM. In particular, considering what resolutions would be put before the AGM, especially regarding fees. There was discussion in this area especially around value for money for those limiting their use of the club to say league match play, and the level of junior membership fees. It was agreed that the Treasurer should start preparation of an anticipated 2022/23 budget and from that calculate what is needed by way of fees based on current membership to enable a resolution that all could support to be drawn up.
4. Sponsorship and Logo
 - a. BC reported that the new T shirts had been received but there had been a problem over sizing. The Secretary was now collecting further information from players about required size based on the models received. It had been agreed with the supplier that they would provide additional shirts of relevant sizes but would not require the return of the wrongly sized models. There was a discussion on the type of material, and the placing of both the sponsors and club's badges. But we are where we are. It was agreed we should now focus on completing this order and size requirements so that photographs can be taken for the sponsors.
 - b. It was agreed that for the moment we would use the new club motif as displayed on the arm of the shirts. BC will provide the Secretary with an electronic version of the motif to bring into the club's publications etc. Further it was agreed the logo should be presented to the AGM and members asked if they wished to adopt it for the club or have an open competition to design a new logo. It was considered that for identity it was important that the club settled on what logo it is going to use.

5. Building

- a. Recently it had been necessary to have further repair work carried out to the roof of the building. This had been undertaken by a local firm known to KH and at a very competitive price. The Man Com recorded its appreciation of the work Keith and the team had done in relation to this, and in maintaining the building in general. It was acknowledged that now that the club was fully responsible for its own building maintaining the property was a very big responsibility which Keith was managing extremely well.
- b. A concern had arisen over requests for keys to the building for junior members. Juniors are not however permitted to use the building unless accompanied by a relevant adult. This could lead to use of the building by non-members. Members were reminded that junior members have equal rights to adult members as currently we have just one category of member under the club constitution. Keys could therefore be allocated to juniors; they would need to use the booking system to use the premises and relevant adults would be encouraged to take out an adult membership if an accompanying adult also wished to play.
- c. An issue had arisen over table maintenance, but this seemed to have been resolved by the property management team. There is now less 'spraying' of the tables, especially with sanitiser, but weekly cleaning continues, and the club has also now acquired specialised table tennis table cleaner to help protect the tables

6. Junior Programme

- a. IB/JG reported that the planned second TTKidz programme due to start on 23 Feb was not going ahead. There had been low take up this time and the children that had expressed an interest had been allocated to one of the other junior coaching sessions for younger children which were going well.
- b. The club is now running 4 weekly junior coaching sessions. These are on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday afternoons and Friday evening for teens by invitation. This is a remarkable development for the club. The numbers were now such that careful consideration would need to be given for any new requests to join a junior session to ensure there was capacity to take in further newcomers. The same applied to the teens session which is now about full! We need to continue our push to have a qualified coach leading each session, supported by the Activators and other adults. It was suggested that there may be a need to appoint someone to coordinate all junior coaching across the club. GT thought this would only be possible by a qualified coach. There didn't seem to be an obvious volunteer for such a role, but all did need to try and work together.
- c. IB/JG & GRT reported on a new development that had arisen from the club becoming a learning destination for the Children's University. Already 1 junior enthusiastically presents their Children's University passport for stamping each week when they attend junior coaching! The new development is that the club has been approached by Lander Road School on the border of Bootle and Litherland with a view to operating an after-school table tennis club in the school. IB/JG & GRT went to visit the school yesterday and met with the Deputy Head Teacher. They are extremely enthusiastic as they have some outdoor tables that so far have not been used for table tennis at all! Initially the club is looking at offering as an experiment a 6-week course based on the TTKidz for schools' programme. This would run from after the Easter holidays until the end of May. Discussions are ongoing and it was agreed this was an exciting opportunity for the club and should go ahead if it is possible.

7. Finance

- a. IB reported that the current balance at bank stood at £42,324. This included the property sinking fund and consideration is currently being given to opening a separate account for that fund. Whilst this looks quite healthy it is in part caused by the grants received. However, there are some costs that the club has not yet met, for example it has so far not had a water rates bill

via Marine since moving into the property (water is supplied through Marine AFC) and the club also faces a rent increase next year and the prospects of increased electricity bills in line with the current price rises that are being widely announced. The slight loss of membership is also a concern as there is a need to ensure that fees continue to raise the amount required to meet all basic costs. Otherwise, the club's financial position is satisfactory and continuing to run smoothly. It was expected that this year the accounts might show a loss as all the refunds agreed in relation to the covid period had now been paid.

8. Current Activity

- a. There have been numerous issues with the new bookings system. It is not working as well as the old making it a little unattractive to members and resulting in administrators not being able to see who is booked in. GRT reported that TTE are aware of the problems and work on improvements is being prioritised, but it is not expected that an improved system will be available before the autumn at least!
- b. The core programme of the club has been working well but there is still availability for members to book and play, especially at weekends.
- c. The open session being led by Tony Mitchell and Sue Kirkwood has also been going well and there are a regular small number attending who are paying a fee. Tony has expressed the desire for this to continue after the league season ends, but still on a once a fortnight basis.
- d. The adult coaching is a little intermittent but continuing.
- e. Communication and media were again discussed. It was agreed that the current services provided a reasonable basis for communication.

9. Liverpool League Update

- a. GT reported on the progress of the 6 league teams in their respective divisions, with particular emphasis on the improvements by the D & E Teams in division 5. One team had reached the semi-final stage of a Divisional Cup, the C Team in the Div 4 cup. And now, we have two teams at the semi-final stage in the Veterans Handicap Cup. All in all, a very satisfactory season so far.
- b. GT reported that the club had been asked to host two Divisional Cup Finals. These are, The Readman Cup (Div 1) on Monday 21 March, and the Stamp Cup (Div 5) on Friday 25th March. For each of these events the club can, if it wishes, charge the league for the use of the premises. It is also asked to act as host and provide light refreshments at the conclusion of the match. Again, any relevant costs can be claimed from the league. It was agreed the club would be privileged to act as hosts, and the Treasurer will consider the issue of costs.
- c. The LDTTL is holding its Closed Tournament on Sunday 3 April, details are on the league website.
- d. GT also reported that the League are canvassing views on a number of possible changes outlined in a note of 22nd February. GT said he would discuss the matters raised with team captains and provide a response to the League.

10. Social Plans

- a. A Quiz & Games night is being planned for Saturday the 2nd April. This will be in the club room. A poster has been prepared which will be put on the club's social media.
- b. Club President, Billy Clayton, will be 90 on 29th April. To celebrate the occasion, a small event is planned for Tuesday 26 April at the club in the late morning.
- c. A possible 2022 Club Tournament was discussed. The consensus was that a single day event would be preferable followed by a Finals Night at Marine. DN will approach Crosby High as to whether there might be a Saturday that could be available for the event at the beginning of September 2022, as a precursor to the start of the next table tennis season.

11. Club Structure & Constitution

GT reported that progress concerning the lease with Marine AFC continued to be very slow. Marine had indicated a willingness to accept a change in tenant but were asking for a form of guarantee (which they don't have now) as well as for the club to meet its legal costs of the transaction. The Club has raised some questions about this with our own legal advisers, Breen's, but again responses are very slow in forthcoming. GT said that the slow progress and conditions being asked for were matters of serious concern. If progress is not made by the end of this year, then the club may have to consider exercising the break clause in the lease, for which the club must give 12 months' notice. No-one really wants this, but it is essential this matter is satisfactorily concluded to provide all parties with the certainty and continuity appropriate.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 10:25pm.

Graham Turner,
Secretary, 3 March 2022