

Three Mile Cross Bowling Club

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting held October 29th 2023

Present:

Geoff Malham (GM) Chairman

Tony Cook (TC) President

David Hearn (DH) Treasurer

Bill Bissett (BB) Captain

Keith Hall (KH) Fixtures Secretary

Daf Ashby (DA) Membership Secretary

Linda Salmon (LS) Ladies' Secretary

Debbie Bissett (DB) Bar/Entertainments

Michele Vale (MV) Recruitment

Claire Morrison (CM) Communications

1. Apologies

Received from Neil Argyle (NA) and Andy Friend (AF).

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting, held September 3rd, 2023

These were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising, not listed on the agenda

Gap in Hedge: KH reported that two new fence panels had been erected and a request issued for a volunteer to paint. To date no takers to undertake the work. There is a tin of green paint in garage.

Lift of the Green edge: LS reported that the contractor was due to start work early November, once he has sourced a machine to cut and fold back the green. BB added that he had contacted AF on 28th Oct. who reported that the green contractor was due to start work week commencing 16th Nov. Cost involved - £400 for metal supports and materials. Labour free. KH added that green inspections have been stopped following direction from Bowls England. Going forward green inspections will only be undertaken if there are reports of serious issues. KH stressed it is important to the club that we maintain the

green to a good standard, to have a better chance of securing county competitions, which bring in much needed revenue.

Review of Trustees: NA reported that the constitution has been changed to reflect that a review of trustees should be undertaken every five years.

Data protection: DA reported that the membership form for the 2024/25 season will be updated accordingly.

Letter from Eileen Allen: DA reported that she had liaised with Eileen and determined that one person had slipped through the net. Bowling experience of new members will be thoroughly checked in future to ensure we do not have a reoccurrence.

Bar: DB reported that the pipework, beer chiller and taps have been removed. This will have a twofold advantage on electricity saving going forward: nil power required for the chiller and much reduced use of the aircon unit. A new fridge has been purchased; one fridge is now allocated for the barrel of IPA. Care will be needed when lifting the IPA into and out of the fridge as it is heavy. New plinth has also been erected on the stockroom floor to raise the boxes a little higher to ease lifting.

Games for next year: KH reported that he is still working with fixtures secretaries to finalise and would report more as he progressed.

Honours Boards: KH reported that the current boards had been readied to accommodate much needed space for competitions not displayed. Plan being, county comps would be moved to the small board on the right-hand side of the honours wall.

KH was approached by Mike Blizzard at Thatcham who has given a cost of £250 for all honours displayed on the current boards to be transferred to new A3 sized sheets. For annual updates there would be a charge of £75. TMX would need to purchase approximately twenty-four frames to support the A3 sheets at a cost of £35 per frame – Total cost to replace the current honours boards would total £840 + £250 = £1,090.

KH is due to meet Ian (man who has updated the boards previously) on Friday to determine costs for transferring the county comps to the new board and to bring all boards up to date as they have not been updated for last three years.

It was agreed that **KH** would determine cost to update the current honours boards. Once **KH** has a cost for updating the current boards a further review will be undertaken by the committee to determine most costs effective solution going forward – stay as we are or look to change out current boards for the A3 sized sheets detailed above.

Action KH – determine costs for update of current boards.

4. BIAS: CM reported - 43 members responded (65% of bowling members) to the request for feedback on ease of use of the system. **CM's** BIAS report, previously circulated to the committee shows full details. 82% of respondents would like to continue with BIAS, six respondents have no preference. Captains and league managers all indicated they would like to continue with BIAS. **CM's** recommendation is to continue using BIAS at a cost of £5 per playing member. Committee voted to continue with BIAS.

Action - CM to provide members feedback to BIAS developers regarding system improvements.

Additional BIAS features available at no additional cost to TMX – Cashless fee collection and Competition management.

Cashless fee - 27 respondents completed this section - 23 wanted cashless fee collection investigated further. Some members said they did not want cashless management.

Competition management - 22 respondents were in favour of the introduction of competition management.

CM pointed out that members' response to the additional features was very low and asked that we provided feedback on how to move forward. **CM** went on to suggest two options:

- a. continue as we are.
- b. As response was very low regarding cashless, consider the introduction of one day competitions (pairs, triples etc held on a weekend) to trial for next season.

The pros and cons were then debated at great length regarding the cashless system versus payment on the day and who would control the monies, if we went cashless. It was also pointed out we could not have a hybrid solution of cashless and payment on the day, as very difficult to manage.

Conclusion following a vote –

- a. We continue with BIAS for rink booking, league and friendly games, like the season just finished. We introduce competition management but limit to one day competitions.
- b. Cashless will not be introduced for next season. This will be reviewed again for the following season.

5. Treasurer Report: DH referred to his report previously circulated, for full details.

Bank balance as of 29th October stood at £11,683. **CM** had already highlighted that one cost was missing to cover ICO (Data protection fee). **DH** advised direct debit was in place and he would follow up to determine why it had not been actioned. It was highlighted by **DH** that match fees taken and bar takings for games and events were also down for the season just finished, putting greater pressure on finances.

DH proposal for fees is the following – Increase annual fees by £15 and all games by £1. Justification - affiliation fees for playing members is to increase by £2, County fees are expected to increase by £2 and as BIAS is to be retained the costs will be £5 per playing member.

DH has also considered the increase in utility costs (Electricity and Gas). Our old contract has shielded TMX from some of the increased charges seen in the last twelve months by us all. The contract has now come to an end and the new contract terms have increased costs. It is estimated that costs will increase by £800. The water meter has also been replaced, so our water bill will increase considerably for next season; expected increase being £1,000.

DH stressed that the increase in fees is necessary to ensure that TMX stays afloat. With the increases proposed; if match attendance, event attendance and bar takings remain as it has been this year, we are still likely to be £700 worse off this time next year. With proposed increases, our end of season bank balance is forecast to be just sufficient to see us through the winter months, if we do not have large unexpected bills.

Given the criticality of the situation the committee's recommendation is that **DH's** proposal to increase annual subscription and match fees should be supported. This will be voted on at the AGM.

Action – DH to prepare statement for the AGM.

Alternative revenue - The committee will investigate alternative means of bringing in much needed revenue. This will be a point for next committee meeting, where individuals' findings will be reviewed. Members are also encouraged to put forward ideas to the committee. **Action – All**

6. Boundary Dispute

BB updated that the boundary subcommittee scheduled a meeting for the 26th October to meet with Bill Rhymes (BR). This followed much chasing by **NA** as **BR** had not provided TMX with any update regarding his Index search or had he requested a meeting. **BR** updated on 25th October that he would need to postpone the meeting as Tony Lewis (BR's friend who accompanies him to meetings) was unwell.

BB saw this as yet another delaying tactic and advised the boundary subcommittee that in his opinion we should draw a line under this and propose to the TMX committee that we should serve notice on BR to remove all his property from the area beyond the hedge that he has fenced off. In addition, **BR** should remove the fence he erected and remove any other structural changes he has made and make good.

BB also reported that a working party had cleared the ditch some weeks ago and tidied the hedge and grassed area between the ditch and the Taylor Wimpey fence. The area BR has fenced off has also been cleared of weeds.

BB went on to say that there is no evidence of BR having had a vehicle in the area for several months. The only evidence of use is that there is what looks like a cement mixer, on top of which there is some wood and rolls of barbed wire.

NA and **BB** have discussed and neither have any idea as to why BR is still not making himself available. BR does in his infrequent email's state that he wants to resolve amicably, but he does not make the effort to meet.

Ian Clarke's view is that that we serve notice and put up a boundary fence to prevent BR from entering our property.

Rod Fenner is of the same opinion and has said so for months, that TMX should serve notice on BR and fence of the area to prevent access.

NA agrees with the above individuals' views.

Recommendation of Boundary subcommittee: TMX to serve notice on BR to remove all his property from the area beyond the hedge that he has fenced off. In addition, BR should remove the fence he erected and remove any other structural changes he has made and make good.

TMX committee accepted the subcommittee proposal. **NA** to write to BR serving notice to vacate and remove all property within two weeks of notice being served.

Action NA – letter to BR

7. Data protection (standing item)

CM updated - nothing to report on this occasion

8. Kennet League

Terry Wardle (TW) in his capacity as KL manager will be attending the league AGM in the coming weeks. Nigel Cabeldu has issued a paper on proposed changes to the league format for the 2025/2026 season. Current format will stand for the 2024/2025 season. Nigel's paper will be discussed at the KL AGM, therefore TW was keen to determine TMX's view prior that meeting to voice our views.

Main changes to KL up for debate:

- a. Female members eligible to play.
- b. Format to be adjusted to six triples instead of four rinks.

Committees view after much debate:

- a. Female members are already committed to their own matches so would not be able to support.
- b. Remain with four rinks. Rational - format is ideal to introduce new players to the game, positioning them at 2. KL is seen as a game you aspire to play in and as such the format should be kept as is, differentiating KL from other leagues.

9. Safeguarding Officer (SO)

Bowls England (BE) have advised that all affiliated clubs must have an SO in place by 2025. BE website has all pertinent information required by clubs; procedure to follow to include training, club audit, job description etc.

Marilyn Legg (ML) has been nominated for this position during next season and has asked for clarity regarding roles and responsibilities of the SO.

The role holder will need to ensure TMX have a safeguarding policy in place. The policy will need to be written, the website updated and all relevant posters displayed. It is believed all policy documents, posters, job descriptions etc needed for a club to comply, can be accessed on the BE website.

Once all policies are in place the SO's main responsibility will be to ensure all processes are in place, so that all members are clear on how to deal with an incident to include reporting to the SO any incidents they are witness to. It is then the SO's responsibility to take up with the relevant authorities.

Given the work involved a further discussion is needed with ML to detail what is involved and to agree how all points are to be actioned to comply with BE's requirements.

TMX will pay for SO training.

Action - NA/BB – Follow up with ML

10. AGM

NA reported that the AGM will take place on Sunday, November 19 at 10.30am. NA also reported that the constitution has been updated. Committee is happy with the draft agenda content. Finalised agenda will be issued on 12th November.

11. Disabled facilities

David Brown (DBr) has asked that disabled facilities be reviewed and he has made several suggestions on how wheelchair access to the club could be achieved. DBr also pointed out that the speedbumps and ramps currently in place cause issues to wheelchair users.

BB reported that he had already discussed with Mark Holder a change to the speed bumps and building an oversized speedbump directly outside the main clubhouse door to align with the entrance to the green. This speedbump would be made level with the clubhouse porch and the slabs around the green, thus giving flat access between green surround and clubhouse. This change would help lesser able members and guests to access the club, as well as implementing wheelchair access. Potentially this work could be undertaken by club members. Material costs would need to be determined.

BB has also been investigating where we could install a disabled toilet. Having looked at sewer access, in his opinion the toilet would need to be installed in what is now the home ladies changing room. The toilet would measure 2.2m x 1.5m in accordance with regulation, taking up around one third of the room. There are two options to access the toilet.

- a. Use existing doorway – need to increase width of door to 900mm. Noting door to access the toilet needs to open outward this would take up more space within the ladies changing room. As toilet would be unisex it also creates access clashes.
- b. Cut a new 900mm outward opening doorway to allow access to the unisex toilet, where the current window is. Nil clashes regarding access to the toilet and the less impact on usable space in the ladies changing room.

As all changes to improve access and toilet facilities will incur considerable costs, the committees' view is that whilst this something we should do, TMX cannot commit to the spend at this current time. However, we should investigate whether we can secure a grant for the work.

DB pointed out that in 2007 TMX applied for and secured several grants. **DB** also suggested that **DH** approach **DB's** wife Jennifer for ideas on who we could approach regarding grants.

Actions –

DB – forward **DH** the details she found regarding grants secured.

BB - meet with a builder to discuss changes and secure a cost.

BB - call Basingstoke bowls club to determine what was involved when they secured their grant for the install of disabled facilities.

DH – investigate what grants we could apply for and once **BB** has costs make necessary applications.

12. Officers reports.

DH – nothing more.

KH reported the following

- a. 2024 season starts on 22nd April with a mixed game at Tilehurst.

- b. TMX venue for Sussex v Gloucestershire men on 12th June.
- c. President v Captain - subject to change, but currently 30th June.
- d. Several friendly fixtures are still work in progress to determine format and whether they will continue as per previous years.
- e. Hosting of Berkshire County competitions – to date nothing issued by the county.
- f. TMX venue for Berkshire v Wiltshire ladies 2nd August.
- g. Finals weekend 7th and 8th September.
- h. Candlelight – tbd
- i. Trying to get Berkshire VP'S game arranged against another county – date to determined.
- j. Open days - **MV** updated that dates are not yet set, but she is trying to bring it forward and hold over two weekends in May.

Action - **MV** to advise KH of dates.

CM – nothing more.

DA – nothing more.

DB – pointed out that for events to continue and be viable we need more club members' support. It was highlighted that with the increase in costs for heat, light and power, profits were dwindling. Upcoming events are to be monitored regarding efforts involved to put on each event versus monies brought in following all costs.

Debbie and Pamela also wish to point out that if events planned for this year are not well supported, they will review as to whether it is worth their while to continue next year.

DB also asked that **DH** assign a minimum of 20% and maybe even 25% of the profit for each event for utility costs. In doing so we are demonstrating to the members the actual profit made for the club. **DH** agreed to action going forward.

CM questioned if we should have an item on the AGM agenda to highlight the need for support for club events. It was agreed that **DH** will stress at the AGM the need for much needed member's support.

DB went on to say that presentation evening planning and implementation has gone well and all going smoothly. She has approached several of the local businesses and secured around ten prizes to include wine, fuel, flowers,

reduced costs for MOT, vouchers, reduction in car service costs and a planter. This will reduce the amount TMX's needs to commit for the purchase of raffle prizes. Only last-minute shopping now required.

CM asked if we needed to list companies who had donated prizes as she understood **DB** had told the companies we will highlight to our members on the evening, who has donated prizes.

CM pointed out we have not had a programme for some years. **DB** suggested we make up some form of acknowledgement for the evening.

Action – CM and DB to review and agree format and who will produce.

Action DB - set a date for cleaning of club and kitchen and ask for volunteers.

BB – nothing more. Captain's report to be given at AGM.

TC - As outgoing president he wishes to donate to the club, which he will agree with DH.

TC also thanked all committee members for their ongoing support and commitment to the club.

13. Any Other Business

KH - updated that he expects to be notified the trophies are ready for collection in the next week.

BB - Regarding election of officers at the AGM - pointed out that **DB** has been nominated to manage the bar. She will take on the role if voted in, on the proviso that committee members form a rota to ensure that, on each occasion the bar and clubhouse are in use for matches and events, there is at least one individual nominated to ensure the bar is secured, clubhouse alarmed/locked and appropriate gates locked. No objections on this point.

14. Date of Next Meeting

This was agreed for Sunday, February 11th at 10am.

There being no further business, GM closed.