

Minutes of the DLTC Committee Meeting

Thursday 4th March, 2021 – 6.30pm

Present

Chair – Martin McCarthy (MM)

Sarah Maxfield (SM), Mike Robinson (MR), Gill Ross (GR) Ged Salisbury (GS), Debbie Turner (DT) Kev Waller (KW) Carl Wyatt (CW) and Tracy Wyatt (TW).

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Helen Devy.

1) Update on Club Maintenance in advance of Club Re-opening

CW, the Club groundsman, was in attendance at the meeting to provide an update to the Committee with regard to work that needed doing in advance of the courts re-opening on 29 March.

CW outlined that he had been in contact with an electrician to repair the floodlights and a quote had been provided. It was reported that it was cheaper to repair the wiring and use LED lights moving forward, rather than to replace the ballasts, which could prove very costly. He was also going to repair the faulty light in the carpark and the lights in the corridor. Members queried the difference between repairing the wiring and replacing the ballasts, and CW confirmed he would look into this and report back.

GR queried where they were with the new nets. CW informed Members that these had been received and he and Dave Cole would fit them in the next couple of weeks before opening.

KW reported that Courts 4, 5 and 6 would be cleaned in some capacity before this date, and three quotes had been received. The first quote wasn't viable as a result of the depth of the pile of the courts so this was not a feasible option. The second quote, would provide a 'half clean' at a cost of £4.5k which would use a machine to clean the courts and then replace the sand. The final quote included the use of a moss and algae killer, which would involve doing the work ourselves. This would be the most cost effective option, and the money otherwise used could be saved and put towards replacing the courts in the future.

The Committee had an in-depth discussion about the options provided and it was felt that Option 3 was the preferable option. Once this had been done, it was hopeful that if it was observed, the Club could do this independently in future to keep costs down further.

Additionally it was proposed that some chemicals for the hard courts was sourced which KW and other volunteers would undertake.

AGREED that:-

- 1) CW report back with the quotes in regard to the electrical work; and
- 2) Option 3 be the recommended option for ensuring the courts were cleaned and ready for opening on 29th March, 2021.

2) Staffing Updates

MM thanked MR for all the work he had done with Head Coaches Jake Prime and Toby Mettam in ensuring everything was sorted and ready to commence when the Club reopened. Squads would resume and coaching sessions available as normal which was hugely positive.

MR reported that the issue of creating separate bank accounts for Club and Coaching had been discussed with JP and TM and if this would be easier moving forward. However, TW indicated that this may not be the best option and could end up being more problematic. As many payments were made in different ways, this could blur a lot of lines, and could be a lot more straightforward from an accounting perspective if there was only one account, however TW would look into this.

MR reported that JP and TM still had not received their contracts for 2021/22 and further to discussions at the last Committee meeting queried if they had been paid their retainer. TW confirmed that they had received the share profit and retainer to the end of December 20, and they would be paid the additional 3 months at the end of March in advance of the new financial year.

A brief discussion followed, in terms of the payment rates for coaching staff, and MM reported that he would look into this with the LTA in order to ensure everything was appropriate.

MM reported in light of a new employment opportunity, GR would be leaving her post as Club Administrator. MM conveyed his sincere thanks and appreciation to GR for all her hard work and time that she had put into the role, and paid tribute to her efforts in 'keeping the show on the road' during the last year of lockdown.

GR commented that she was happy to stay on in the post until recruitment had been carried out, in order to hopefully carry out a full handover to the new post holder with a period of transition.

MM reported that this was a good opportunity to look at this role and develop it further with the role undertaking a 'stewardship' role as well as club administrator. There were so many more facets to the club that could be promoted and utilised and now was the opportune time to do it as the town headed out of lockdown.

The Committee agreed that a thorough job specification be created and could be the ideal role for a number of people wanting a part time job. It was suggested that this could also pull in the aspect of bar management to tie all areas together.

Discussions followed, and it was proposed that a job be created with a clear job description and advertised accordingly, with a trial period proposed for an 8-week period from 1 April. It was hoped that somebody might step forward with an expression of interest in order that a meaningful transition could be undertaken.

AGREED that all updates be noted and the process for the recruitment of a new Club Administrator be moved forward accordingly.

3) Clubhouse and Bar Updates

MM reported to the Committee that GS had expressed his wish to stepdown from his role moving forward and thanked him for all the work he had done in the past. Moving forward, MM asked DT if she would be prepared to take on the work GS has done previously in terms of supporting the bar staff and the club house. DT and MM had discussed this previously and DT indicated that she was happy to do this role. GS would give a full transition and work alongside DT in the coming weeks to pass on all relevant information and knowledge.

It was agreed that upon opening, hopefully with good weather, the Club would be entering into the busiest time of the year and it was imperative that they hit the ground running, and were ready to open their doors as soon as allowed to do so. The bar stock would be looked at in order to ensure better choices of wine, prosecco and spirits, and ensure there was fill range of snacks, drinks and ice creams for the younger Members. Additionally it was proposed that moving forward, the 'Junior Night' on a Friday be promoted, with the provision of pizzas or a bbq after to encourage members to stay down with their families and have a drink.

In terms of Bar Staff, a discussion was held as to who was coming back or if anyone had indicated they no longer wished to work, as it may be that recruitment for new staff was needed. Additionally, there was some training that may need to be carried out in order to ensure that all aspects of the job were understood.

AGREED that the updates be noted.

4) Any Other Business

MR reported that in light of GR leaving her post, this would mean that the role of safeguarding officer was also vacant and needed fulfilling as a matter of urgency.

MR also added that there had been some discussions with JP and TM regarding coaching uniforms. There was a view that people attending the club needed to know who was in charge from a coaching perspective and with this in mind they had looked into purchasing t-shirts and hoodies. TW advised MR to liaise with JP and TM and she could order, or simply refund once purchased.

GR gave a brief update in terms of membership and informed the Committee that all those who had renewed their membership in January had now either been refunded or paused their payments and they would be advised when to resume. The website had been updated accordingly.

A discussion was held in terms of court bookings and how these would be managed moving forward. In the past there had been a lot of 'no shows' when it had been free and as a result it was felt that the charges should be reintroduced when the club reopened to prevent this happening.

The issue of social tennis was raised and MR had indicated that he would pull something together and promote it to Members, old or new. There was also the proposal to purchase a set of balls and rackets purely for social tennis in order to ensure that the prospect was open to all.

Finally, GR also raised the issue of marketing and PR and advised the Committee of some avenues she had been exploring. Some artwork had been created with a view to placing an advert in local publications in order to raise more awareness of the Club and its facilities. Facebook advertising was also a good avenue and not too costly but effective in terms of reaching out to people. MM commented that he would speak to Isobel Hossack and enquire if she had any contacts at the Free Press with a view to doing a piece on the Club to further broaden publicity.