

RICHMOND SPORTS CLUB

Richmond Archery Club – Richmond Cricket Club – Richmond Tennis Club

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held on Wednesday 14th March 2018 at 8:00pm

Present: Alan Cumbers, Barbara Wanzenreid, Steve Patterson, Sam Berry, Richard Bevan, Helen Prescott, Nigel Davies, Janet Denning, Mary Parry, Lisette Simcock, June Stowell, Verena McCartney, Jeremy Beacham, Barbara Ritz, Vanessa Brown, Julia Dunlop, Germaine Plunkett, Alan Want, Rachel Russell, Karen Hayhurst, Amanda Kean, Douglas Kean, Daisy Airey, Nora Dennehy, Sam Gibbs, Paul Cole, Lynda Fisher, Liam Clarke, Sue Cole, Laura Ritchie, Ailsa Williams, Greg King, Oli Tame, James Parker, Chris Goldie, Chris Austin, Stephanie Bousecarle, Gerard Bousecarle

Apologies: Valerie & Neville Pinnington, Judy Moss, Martin McNeil, Terry Woram, Matthew Dickinson, Sean Austin, Guy Hitchcock, Eric Harvey, Mark Somerton.

1. Minutes of the AGM held on 27th March 2017.

There were no questions or comments on the Minutes of the 2017 AGM.

2. Chairman's Report

Chris Goldie reported that it had been a mixed year.

On the positive side, the floodlights on the tennis courts have been installed and are working. The relationship with the London Welsh Rugby Club has improved. The amateur team has taken on the debt owed by the professional side and is paying that off in stages. The amateur side has attracted good crowds which has been reflected in the bar takings.

A new Groundsman, Bharat Bhandheri, was appointed during the year. On the whole, the grounds have been in good condition although some complaints were received about the quality of the grass tennis courts. Bharat has done his best to address these even though he only started half way through the year.

Financially, RSC has just kept its head above water. The facilities need updating and some work has been done free of charge by a London Welsh supporter. Until the new lease is signed, it isn't possible to obtain grants for a more radical updating of the premises.

The ODPSG general manager, Paul Friel, resigned at the end of September 2017 and at present has not been replaced due to the overall financial situation of ODPSG.

Chris G thanked Ailsa Williams (Chair, Tennis) and Alan Want (Chairman, Archery) for their work during the year. He also thanked the RSC board members and Hugh Thomas and Jeremy Beacham for representing the tennis section at board meetings.

3. Section Reports

Archery

Alan Want reported that it had been a good year for the archery section. The membership numbers were slightly down but this was because the section couldn't provide enough time and coaching for 200 members.

The standard of archery at the club had improved at adult and junior level.

The section had achieved considerable success at tournaments in the UK and abroad.

A project to install a disabled toilet is underway. So far, the section has raised £8,000 of the £14,000 required, and they hope to raise the rest by the end of the year. Alan said he anticipated another good season in 2018.

Cricket

The year was a disappointing one at adult level as the section lost around 15-20 core players, which affected the team's performance.

The first team came fourth in its division; the second and third teams were mid-table in their respective divisions; and the fourth and fifth teams had availability problems and were both relegated from their respective divisions. There have been a number of changes to the team captains with Greg King taking over the first team, Charles Schofield captaining the third team and Sam Gibbs taking over the fifth team. Under their leadership it is hoped that the teams will improve their performance during the coming season.

The junior teams have all done well. The under 10s won the Middlesex trophy for the first time and there has been a huge growth in girls' cricket.

A Director of Cricket was employed for the first time. Financially this didn't work as well as anticipated so there is room for the section to improve in 2018.

Tennis

Ailsa Williams reported that it has been a good year for the tennis section. Permission was granted by Richmond Council to install LED lights and the project was completed in June. A launch party attended by the mayor was held in September to mark the completion of the project. The lights have been funded partly by members fundraising and from a grant/loan from the LTA.

Membership is up by 14% on last year and the income from subs was £67,000. An online membership renewal system was introduced in the Spring. It has proved

easy to use and has reduced the administration for the office staff. A court booking system has also been introduced.

The number of teams has increased, there is now a men's fourth team and a senior midweek team. The Box League has continued to expand.

4. Partnership Report (Old Deer Park Sports Ground Ltd, ODPSG)

Chris Goldie reported that since the departure of General Manager, the staffing structure at the club is being re-organised. There aren't sufficient funds available to replace Paul with a full-time manager at present but ODPSG had hoped to appoint an Assistant Bar Manager, however, so far it hasn't been possible to find a suitable candidate at a price we can afford. The ODPSG Board is looking at how the duties and responsibilities can be shared by the three current staff members, Julie Joel, Michelle Morris and Gilly Stracker. All three have done a great job keeping the place running and Michelle has done excellent work in attracting bookings. Gilly has announced her intention to leave the club after many years of service; her post will be advertised in the near future.

It has been a challenging year financially. RSC and London Welsh Amateurs (LWA) now make equal contributions to ODPSG indirect costs (previously the arrangement was 7/12s LWA, 5/12s RSC). Expenditure has been higher than anticipated, mainly due to the higher than anticipated costs of refurbishing the Groundsman's bungalow, which were not fully covered by the insurance policy; and increased maintenance/repair costs to the Pavilion.

The clubhouse is in need of updating but until the lease with the Crown has been signed there is no possibility of obtaining any grants to carry out the necessary works. The negotiations with the Crown are nearing completion. One of the main sticking points has been agreeing the turnover threshold for additional rent payments and what is and isn't included. We are arguing strongly that Member subscriptions, and hence Shareholder contributions to ODPSG, should not be included: only commercial income should be included.

On the positive side, ODPSG has signed a licence agreement with Broomfield House School worth £15,000 a year for the use of some of the ground facilities. ODPSG has also found occupants for two offices, each worth £6,000 a year. There is still more office space that can be let. ODPSG is considering how best to generate revenue from the former hockey pavilion. It is not in a good state of repair so will need to be refurbished.

Dexters held their function at the club again last year, with more than 1,000 people attending: it brings in valuable revenue for the club.

Chris Austin has formed a Grounds Committee comprising representatives from all sections. It will meet regularly to set a budget for each year and draw up a schedule of works for each section.

Chris Goldie thanked James Parker and Chris Austin for their work during the year.

Questions from the floor

Is the place being run by Steve, Julie and Michelle?

Michelle, Julie and Gilly are the core management team with help from Steve.

They have all done a great job in keeping the place running since Paul's departure.

Julie has done a great job in running the bar, but isn't it risky not replacing Paul Friel?

We are all very grateful for the work done by Julie and we will do everything possible to make sure she is happy and feels rewarded for the extra work she has taken on and is supported in this role. Both Julie and Michelle have indicated that they are happy to take on more responsibilities. The staffing structure is under review to make sure we have the right skill mix.

What is happening about getting membership cards printed? Some members are still without them.

There were problems after Paul's departure with getting names sent to the printers in Ireland. Chris Goldie suggested that Membership Secretaries should send the list of missing cards to the office so that they can be processed.

What is the deficit left by the London Welsh professional side?

The amateurs have inherited a £25,000 debt, which is being paid off in instalments.

Why is it taking so long to get the lease signed?

ODPSG Board has been pushing to get the lease signed, but it has been a long drawn out process. There have been delays in getting a response from the Crown's lawyers on a number of issues. Some of the concerns have been regarding our turnover threshold and who would take on responsibility for the lease if the RSC were to fold. We are keen to protect RSC's status as head leaseholder and have suggested ways round this.

Who is organising the lettings?

Michelle Morris, and she is doing a really good job.

When our rent was £250 pa did we have more money in the bank?

We haven't put money aside, but we cut our cloth accordingly. We haven't traditionally been cash rich. The partnership contributions haven't been increased for some years but it is costing more and more to run the facilities. We are now looking at generating extra income through renting of office space etc. to pay the increased rent. Once the lease is signed we will be talking to the Bowls Club and reviewing their facilities and the rent they pay to us.

Do we have problems getting bar staff, there seem to be a lot of different faces at the moment?

We have four regular fairly senior people, but the others are often working in their holidays from university so there will be a high turnover of occasional staff.

Whose responsibility is the Ha-ha?

It is our responsibility under the terms of the lease. The retaining wall has collapsed. Chris Goldie and Gwyn Williams (LWA) have been discussing with local people about the rubbish thrown in there and looking at whether it might be possible to restore it in conjunction with Richmond Council and Kew Gardens. The cost would be in the region of £350,00-400,000.

5. President's Shield Awards

These awards are presented to members who have been nominated by their sections for work they have done to support the club during the year.

For Tennis, the award went to Amanda Kean, Membership Secretary, in recognition of the work she has done introducing the new online renewal system.

For Cricket, the award went to the Colts Chairman, Richard Zotov who together with his wife Susannah has been responsible for a huge increase in the numbers of colts.

For Archery, the award went to Kevin Varney for his work with the juniors and running beginners' courses.

6. Treasurer's Report

We are still awaiting a decision from HMRC regarding our CASC status after the change of entities, so the draft accounts have been prepared in the name of the RCC. We hope to get a decision from HMRC soon. The accounts have been audited but are not yet complete as we are awaiting the partnership accounts figures.

In his report, Chris Austin highlighted the fragile nature of our cash flow. This partly reflects investments in Fixed Assets for all sections; it also reflects increased running costs in all sections, especially cricket. The main drivers for that were the higher than expected cost of maintaining the second ground at Christ's School and a lower than forecast income from Colts camps. The Cricket Section is reviewing its budget closely for 2018 with the aim of increasing income and containing costs.

Overall, membership was up slightly in terms of numbers and subscriptions.

The Tennis Section has increased subs rates to provide for a "sinking fund" to maintain the floodlights. The loan for the lights is being repaid in 6-monthly instalments over ten years from mid-2017. The Archery Section's net running costs were slightly higher than in 2016, reflecting increased activity across all categories. The subs level was down slightly but the section maintains a high level of membership.

The bar and catering profit was £19,676 net¹. This is a significant drop compared to recent years, reflecting a dip in commercial bookings during the summer. The Middlesex 20:20 match attracted its highest crowd ever (over 4,000), and the day was very financially successful with takings of £38,000.

The net surplus after depreciation and allocation of the Tennis Sinking fund was £8,827.

The new lease with the Crown will see the annual rent rise from £250 to £25,000 (for two years) then £50,000.

The ODPSPG board is working on options to generate more commercial income in order to maintain and enhance facilities.

The priority for the coming year should be to restore a reasonable cash balance. This can be achieved partly through tighter control of running costs but because of the huge increase in rent it is the recommendation of the RSC board that subs for all sections should be increased.

The Cricket section agreed to increase membership fees by £10 across all categories. The section will also be looking to increase the level of match fees.

The Archery section will increase fees by 15% over a two-year period

The Tennis section felt that after a rise last year it would be counter productive to put fees up again as a recent audit has shown that they are already high in comparison with other local clubs and could result in a loss of members. Ailsa said that the section would raise a further £7,800 through an increase in membership and/or fundraising.

Social membership will rise from £25 to £35.

Chris A asked that all sections send him a budget with a month-by-month forecast of expenditure for the year.

The Honorary Auditor, Hayden Bebb, has agreed to continue for another year.

Questions from the floor

Why do the accounts show tennis subs at £57,230 when it should be £67,000?

Chris A explained that £9,800 of tennis subs was directly earmarked as a contribution to the Sinking Fund (which is £13,800 per year).

The Tennis Section requested that the gross Subs income be recorded in Note 1 to the Financial Statements; and that the gross contribution to the Sinking Fund be recorded as Tennis expenditure under Note 6 [*in the draft Statements presented to the AGM, only the balance of £4,000 had been recorded as a Tennis expense*]. Chris A agreed to amend the presentation in the Financial Statements accordingly.

¹ At the time of the 2018 AGM, the Bar Profit figure was £20,748. This was subsequently adjusted when the ODPSPG Accounts were finalised. This change, and some other minor adjustments, meant the net surplus for RSC reduced from £10,244 reported to the AGM, to £8,827.

Will the Director of Cricket be staying on this year?

Yes, and he has been running winter cricket camps. But lessons have been learned from last year and a tighter control will be kept over coaching costs.

Can all sections work together on social events that will bring in more revenue for the club?

This used to happen in the past, but we can look at ways of getting this going again.

Cricket nets will be held on Wednesdays in the summer, so it should be possible to generate enough people between the sections to get the barbecues reinstated. A taskforce with representatives from all sections could be established to work together to run events that will generate money for the club.

Chris A noted that, as a rule of thumb, all social events should be budgeted to break even.

When will we be able to put money on our membership cards? This would encourage people to spend money over the bar.

We hope that this will soon be possible, and we will be encouraging all members to put £25 onto their card at the start of the season. This would help ease our cashflow problems early in the year.

7. Approval of the Financial Statements for the year ending 30th September 2017

Approval of the Financial Statements was proposed by Sue Cole and seconded by Vanessa Brown. The accounts were duly approved by the meeting.

8. Election of Officers

The following officers were duly elected:

Deputy Chairman:	James Parker
Honorary Secretary:	Nora Dennehy
President of the Club:	Alan Want

9. Any other business

The following questions were asked from the floor

Does our insurance premium cover all buildings and contents and public liability?

Our insurance covers all liabilities. The squash courts should be covered by the ODPSG insurance, but the squash club members may not be included. Chris Austin will look into this.

Why is a camper van permanently parked in our car park?

It belongs to a former cricket club member who spends a lot of time and money at the club. He's been allowed to park here on a trial basis but we will endeavour to move the van to a less prominent location.

Lisette Simcock thanked those who had nominated her to be a Vice President.

Ray Smith thanked the board for their hard work.

Laura Ritchie noticed that the PAT testing was out of date and asked whose responsibility it was to make sure it was done at the appropriate time.

It has been Paul Friel's responsibility but the schedule for testing will be checked and carried out as necessary.

10. The AGM closed at 9:45pm.

**Nora Dennehy
Honorary Secretary**