



SOMERSET LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 9TH DECEMBER 2020 via Zoom

Attendees :

Nigel Barker - SLTA, Andy Fay - SLTA, John Gould - SLTA, Karuna Tharmananthar - SLTA, Simon Brand - SLTA, Julie Williams - SLTA, Annie Smith - SLTA, Kerry Quirk - Taunton Tennis Club, Sarah Strawbridge - Cheddar Lawn Tennis Club, Paul Rees - Minehead Tennis Club, Poo Jenkins - Avenue Tennis Club (Burnham-on-Sea), Barry Ramsden - Avenue Tennis Club (Burnham-on-Sea), Morwenna Ford - Queen Camel Tennis Club, Peter Scarlett - Queen Camel Tennis Club, Julie Sinkins - Millfield School, Stuart Mark - Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club, Alison Hillyer - Brent Knoll Tennis Club, Zena Hodgson - South Petherton Tennis Club, John Knott - Victoria Lawn Tennis Club, Marcus Fisher - Wells Tennis Club, Mark Brierley - Frome Selwood Tennis Club

Andy Fay welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that James Deem, LTA Participation Development Partner for the South & South West would be joining the meeting at 7.30 pm to give some LTA updates.

1. Apologies for absence

Sue Rackley, Stephen Beach, John Barrington, Neil Driver

2. Minutes of AGM held on Wednesday, 4th December 2019

Minutes of last year's AGM had been circulated. No points were raised. Proposed to accept by Morwenna Ford, seconded by Paul Rees. Agreed unanimously.

3. Chairman/LTA Councillor's Report

The Chairman's Report included in the AGM papers was taken as read.

Andy Fay advised that plans for Wimbledon 2021 are afoot.

The LTA Tennis Awards nominations closed on 15th November and SLTA hoped that a presentations evening will be able to take place during the early part of 2021.

Andy Fay congratulated Grace Piper for a fantastic year, winning various British Tour events. The county is lucky to have her and she's a great role model to the younger players.

Safeguarding - approximately half of Somerset's registered venues have had a safeguarding review and have done well but there is still a lot to do to ensure safeguarding is at the forefront of all we do. Diversity and Inclusion is the next step to make tennis more inclusive.

Andy Fay apologised for the omission in his report of thanking Kerry Quirk who is standing down as Secretary, for all she has done for the county over many years, initially as the LTA County Development Officer and latterly by developing the sport, bringing in coaches and encouraging them to get involved. As a tennis player, she has some outstanding achievements - she represented England in 2019 in Florida and took part in O35s and O40s events at The British Open Seniors Indoor Championships in Cardiff this year. Although Kerry is standing down from the Committee this year, she has kindly offered to continue to be supportive of tennis in the county.

4. County Plan & Communications Update

The County Plan, which had been circulated with the AGM documents together with report which was taken as read, demonstrates how the County is underwriting the roll up out of the LTA vision Tennis Opened Up.

Communications is crucial to the whole strategy to make tennis in Somerset more open and accessible and to assist with this, SLTA have contracted a Social Media consultant who will manage the website and

social media platforms. Simon Brand asked for any ideas on how the county can do better to be put forward.

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report and accompanying papers were circulated with the AGM papers and taken as read.

The past year has been an interesting one financially with the County continuing to receive full grants for competition and county training although, due to Covid-19, expenditure has fallen dramatically due to reduction in costs as all competition except the 18U County Cups was cancelled. Although it hasn't been possible to raise any sponsorship this year, SLTA is in a positive position going into 2021 and it is hoped some income will be received from Wimbledon in 2021.

With the county being in a relatively strong, financial position, it is hoped support will be able to continue to support clubs. £6K has gone to supporting clubs and coaches this year through the Small Grants and Financial Assistance for Coaches schemes. There are 3 major projects for venues in 2021 to improve facilities - Frome Selwood Tennis Club, Wiveliscombe Tennis Club and South Petherton Tennis Club - SLTA are assisting with funding by way of £15K in grants and £15K in loans.

The accounts have been reviewed by the Independent Reviewer, White Bruce Accountants, and were recommended to be accepted. Proposed by Karuna Tharmananthar, seconded by Poo Jenkins, agreed unanimously.

6. Safeguarding

SLTA has undergone a safeguarding review as have a number of Somerset venues. Karuna Tharmananthar thanked all clubs, Welfare Officers and Committees for all the work that has been done which is recognised by the LTA and SLTA.

Safeguarding is a real issue, in the South West region, there have been 38 referrals over a whole range of issues, prevention is key. There is much support available from the LTA. Clubs have an important responsibility to ensure safeguarding within their venues, much is captured during the registration but it is an on-going requirement which can be addressed by constantly looking at how the club is run, good Governance and evidencing processes as should there be a requirement for the LTA to take action, evidence is required. Venues should ensure members feel comfortable raising concerns with the Welfare Officer, County Safeguarding Officer or the LTA. Members should also be made aware that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The County Review was helpful and supportive but challenging. A few virtual meetings have been held for Welfare Officers which have been well attended and these will continue in 2021.

Diversity & Inclusion - Covid-19 has had a severe impact on the D&I programme. The programme, in the future, will include mental health and Visual Impairment. The LTA has a workstream working on Diversity & Inclusion within tennis which is looking at reducing perceived barriers and ways in which clubs can make people feel safe and included.

James Deem, Regional Participation Development Partner for the South and South West, joined the meeting and gave some updates on Covid-19 guidelines, venue registration and safeguarding. He reported that Covid-19 has had a positive impact on tennis and has shown what a safe and inclusive sport it is. Venues that have offered Pay & Play have seen a growth in their membership.

7. Captains Reports

Due to Covid-19 and no tennis for the teams, there were no reports.

8. County Tennis Report including County Training

A report for County Tennis including County Training was circulated with the AGM papers and was taken as read.

Simon Brand thanked everyone who supports County Training; the LTA for the grant the County receives which assists greatly in continuing the programme and enables the County to keep the coaches who deliver excellent training and do a great job keeping the players interested; the coaches for the excellent

training they deliver and who have pledged to remain next year; Taunton Tennis Club and Millfield School, Somerset's only 2 indoor facilities, for allowing the County to use their facilities, without them, county training wouldn't be able to run. Simon Brand advised he has written to parents to also thank them for getting the players to County Training and for their support in making the training successful.

The County's challenge is finding players who can be considered for County Training. Simon Brand and Julie Williams are in contact with coaches and Simon Brand has contacted Club Chairs advising the benefits to children involved in the training but feels there is some reluctance to send players for fear they may not be good enough. Simon Brand stressed the County is looking for players with potential, not only ability.

18U County Cup was the only County Cup event to take place in 2020 due to Covid-19. The boys' team won their Group, 6B and the girls' team were runners-up in Group 2A, well done to both teams.

She Rallies has focused more on training the workforce over the past year. A Pre-Level 1 course was held in October at Taunton which saw 9 attendees and it is hoped this will give the attendees the confidence to do the Level 1 which is scheduled to take place February time.

9. Disability Report

No report.

10. Election of Officers for the ensuing year showing nominations

- a) President - Nigel Barker
- b) Chair - Andy Fay
- c) LTA Councillor - Andy Fay
- d) Treasurer - John Gould
- e) Secretary - Vacant

Proposed en bloc by Kerry Quirk, seconded by Poo Jenkins and agreed unanimously.

Council Members proposed en-bloc by Alison Hillyer, seconded by Morwenna Ford, agreed unanimously.

- f) John Barrington - County Seniors Officer
- g) Simon Brand - County Training & County Cup / Communications
- h) Karuna Tharmananthar - Safeguarding Officer
- i) Julie Williams - She Rallies Ambassador / Coach Development
- j) Neil Driver - Accessibility
- k) Clive Ross - Grants & Loans

11. Election of Independent Examiner

White Bruce Accountants.

Proposed by John Gould, seconded by Andy Fay. Unanimously agreed.

12. Any Other Business

Karuna Tharmananthar thanked Andy Fay for all the work he does for Somerset, both as Chair and LTA Councillor.

Andy Fay thanked everyone for attending the AGM. The meeting closed at 2000 hours.

Signed

Date