

Banbury and District Tennis Leagues

Minutes of AGM

27th February 2024

Venue: Brackley Tennis Club

Present

Martin Jukes (Charlbury and League Chairman), Trevor Stevens (League Treasurer), Art Kharlamov (League Secretary), Andi Padbury (Banbury West End), Shirley Griffith (Brackley), Nigel Eaton (Harbury), Helen Harman (Middleton Cheney), Rod Haddrell (Banbury), Ant Pugh (Hook Norton), Richard Kovacs (Warwick), Cheryl Lydon (Deddington), Stephanie Browne (Kings Sutton)

Martin Jukes opened the meeting at 7:34 p.m. by welcoming all attendees and introducing himself as a new chairman nominated by Charlbury TC as selected during the 2023 AGM. He has also pointed out that the next year it would be Deddington's turn to chair the AGM.

1. Apologies for Absence

The following clubs had no representatives attending the meeting: Towcestrians, Byfield, Tysoe, Priors Marston

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (16th February 2023)

The minutes were circulated. They had been previously posted on the Banbury Tennis Leagues website. Martin Jukes asked the meeting to review them and inquired whether there were any questions, comments, or corrections.

There were no questions related to the 2023 minutes. Shirley Griffith (Brackley) proposed that the minutes be accepted. The proposal was seconded by Stephanie Browne (Kings Sutton), and the minutes were accepted by all those present.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes and the Chairman proposed to move onto Secretary's report

4. Secretary's Report

The League Secretary then delivered his report which was accepted by the meeting attendees. A short summary is available on the League's website. Below is the more extensive version of the report and the discussion which followed:

The League Secretary provided an overview of the past year, highlighting the busy schedule of the Banbury Tennis Leagues.

In 2023, a total of 320 matches were played across various divisions, with 1,007 members registered in the Playwaze system, of which 400 were active participants.

The Secretary congratulated the champions and runners-up of the summer leagues and clarified the rules regarding promotion and relegation based on the number of teams in each division.

The Secretary proposed changes to the AGM process, suggesting that proposed division splits for the summer leagues be sent out well in advance to avoid delays in decision-making.

A new scheduling software was introduced, which would streamline the fixture generation process, although some manual adjustments would still be necessary.

The discussion that followed included concerns about the viability of the summer weekend league, as participation had dwindled, leading to the suggestion that entry forms for the weekend league may not be sent out for the next season. The Secretary emphasized the importance of reviewing draft fixtures sent out prior to the meeting and encouraged clubs to provide feedback within two weeks.

Additional topics included issues with results not being posted in a timely manner, the need for better communication regarding match results, and the potential for introducing penalties for teams that fail to complete matches. The Secretary's report part of the meeting concluded with a brief mention of certificates, with the consensus that they may not be necessary, allowing the meeting to move on to the next topic of Treasure's report.

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer thanked the clubs that responded to requests for additional payments of £3 or £6 due to incorrect payments made during the winter season. Although these amounts may seem small individually, they contribute significantly to the overall accounts.

The Treasurer then noted that the accounts appeared unusual, suggesting that the Secretary's fee had tripled; however, this was not the case, as the fee remained consistent but was delayed in billing.

Over the past two years, the Leagues experienced a net expenditure of approximately £400, which cannot continue. However, with an increase in fees by £3 per team, the Leagues are projected to maintain a balanced budget, avoiding unnecessary surplus.

A question was raised regarding the necessity of the £20 per team fee, to which the Treasurer confirmed it was sufficient to keep the finances stable.

The increase in fees was largely attributed to the cessation of summer weekend leagues, which had previously contributed to the league's income.

The discussion also touched on the transition of the Treasurer role, as Carol Spencer was expected to take over, but since no representative from Tysoe was

present, the decision was postponed. In the meantime, the current Treasurer is willing to continue in the role until a new Treasurer can be confirmed.

6. Election of Officers

The meeting proceeded to the election of officers, where it was noted that the chairmanship would rotate annually. The current chair is taking over for this year, and the next chair will be from Deddington, following an alphabetical order. Cheryl Lydon was tasked with communicating this to the appropriate parties in Deddington.

It was confirmed that a representative from Deddington would need to take over the chairmanship next year. The current chair inquired about the timing for updating the chairman's details on the official website, to which it was agreed that the change would occur the day before the next AGM.

The meeting also discussed the location of future meetings, with Brackley being a suitable venue due to its spaciousness. The Treasurer confirmed their willingness to continue in their role, ensuring continuity in the leadership. Overall, the election process was straightforward, with clear expectations set for the upcoming year.

7. Proposals

The meeting then moved on to discuss the following proposal:

Sue Jelfs (Banbury West End):

Our treasurer has been in touch with me and is of the opinion that the floodlit match fees need to be £5 each player next year and even then, that doesn't cover the cost of the match balls. He did go into detail re the cost of energy, but that was the outcome, so I'd like to put that forward please, from Banbury West End.

The Chairman remarked that the matter concerning match balls was not pertinent to the discussion, emphasizing that match balls are a necessary expense regardless of whether matches are played during the day or at night, and that all teams are required to purchase them.

Some members expressed concerns about increasing the fees, arguing that a rise to £5 might deter players from participating in floodlit matches.

After discussion, there was a consensus to maintain the fee at £4 per player, as it had only been raised by 50p the previous year.

The meeting agreed that while the proposal would be revisited in the future, keeping the fee at £4 was a reasonable decision to avoid discouraging participation in the league.

Overall, the discussion reflected a desire to balance financial needs with player engagement.

8. Formation of the 2024 Summer and New Summer Weekend Leagues

The League Secretary has sent the draft proposed fixtures well in advance of the 2024 AGM due to the proposed new process and the Banbury Tennis Leagues' new fixtures generator software, which allows for the quick production of draft fixtures

9. Any Other Business

In the AOB section of the meeting, a member raised concerns about the impact of teams not playing matches on other teams within the division. They shared experiences where their team had played all their matches, winning them, but another team received walkovers, which skewed the competitive balance. This led to a discussion about the need for new rules to discourage teams from forfeiting matches, especially towards the end of the season when some teams may feel they have nothing to gain.

Several suggestions were made, including the idea of introducing a rule that teams receiving a walkover would only earn 50% of the points. However, there were concerns about fairness and the implications of such a rule. The discussion highlighted the challenges of maintaining competitive integrity, particularly for teams at the bottom of the league standings.

The meeting also discussed the importance of encouraging teams to play even when short on players, emphasising that teams should communicate their situations in advance. It was suggested that an email be sent to all clubs reiterating the existing rules regarding match participation and the consequences of walkovers.

Additionally, there was a brief mention of the rules regarding coaches playing in matches, with the consensus that coaches should not participate in the final games of the season to influence league outcomes.

The meeting concluded with a demonstration of new scheduling software, which received positive feedback for its efficiency and functionality.

There being no further business to attend to the meeting closed at 8:40 p.m.