

Minutes of the 44th RLTSC Annual General Meeting

Held at the clubhouse, 425 Watling Street, Radlett on Wednesday 27th March 2019

Present – Simon Spalter (SS), Chair; Dermot Wickham (DW), Hon Sec; Simon Hancock (SH), Hon Treasurer; Kyri Costi (KC), Squash Chair; Suzi Lynch (SL).

1. Apologies for absence were received from Jackie Underwood (President), Mike Jaffa, Nyall Jacobs, Molly Barton, Marion Barnard, Lorraine Oliver, Susan Garcia, Jane Sheridan and Martin Davis.
2. Minutes of the last AGM were approved.
3. Chair: SS said that the Club had made excellent progress over the past year. The new courts had come in under budget (Richard Glass (RG) would report later, on the costs), a new entry and booking system had been introduced, while Office response times had improved. The Club had passed an LTA welfare and safeguarding audit & SS thanked Clare Sugarman for her help as Welfare Officer. He also thanked John Apthorp for his continuing financial support and guidance. However, SS stressed that RLTSC could only continue as a members' club if more people came forward to help e.g. we have 3 General Committee vacancies. A list of volunteer roles had also been circulated. Looking forward, we were considering the idea of creating a small gym/warm up area and he asked if any members would like to take this project forwards. We will be replacing the squash court floors this year and are undertaking some marketing initiatives. Derek Thorpe (DT) asked what alternatives we had to volunteers; SS replied that we could employ more people, but this wouldn't be a solution as they would be undertaking administrative work. The other alternative would be to shrink the club, which he would be reluctant to do. Teresa Feldman (TF) asked why so few parents volunteered to help at our Junior Open tennis tournament & why the same people had essentially been helping for years; SS replied that only a few RLTSC members actually played in the tournament. SL commented on the very poor AGM turnout, but this was not dissimilar to other local clubs. RG reviewed the court refurbishment project & said that SS had negotiated keenly and hence we had come in below budget. Nigel Booth (NB) asked by how much and was told £154k versus £176k. DT asked who would use the new courts; RG said they would relieve pressure on courts 1-6. SS also mentioned that the old courts had been becoming dangerous and would have needed to be taken out of service.
4. Treasurer: SH mentioned that the Club accounts had been independently reviewed and posted on the notice board. Membership revenues were up, thanks to an influx of new squash members and subscription increases. We now had 307 adult members as against 295 a year ago, although the age profile was a concern. The bar was now on target to break even. Cash had fallen, thanks to the court renewal programme. NB asked why Tournaments & Leagues revenue was down by so much; SH replied that this revenue had been categorised elsewhere. DT commented that many courts seemed to be used by coaches rather than members; SH replied that under the old arrangement, the Club used to lose money on coaching every year, but now Jordan Miles (JM) as employed on a small retainer plus a profit & revenue share. SH also

stressed that club members have priority over coaches if they book a tennis court. JM mentioned that those receiving coaching were Club members, not outsiders. SS said that once Club team matches begin in earnest, court utilisation will look very different. Alan Goldman (AG) asked how much John Apthorp had contributed and was told £60k. SS mentioned that we could have afforded the refurbishment without this contribution, but we would not have installed floodlighting. AG also asked if there was still interest in a transformational development of the club, as had been suggested a few years ago; SS said there was nothing new planned, but the Committee would be interested if a member brought forward an attractive proposition and then helped to make it happen. JM commented that the Coaching revenue figure of £80k was misleading as this included all organised group activities and was not all pure coaching income. The accounts were approved unanimously.

5. Squash: KC said that the latest Squash Committee minutes were always available on the Club web site. We were now running 5 Club teams, as against 4 last year. Gavin Green had brought in several new members, especially younger players & Social Squash was popular, especially on Mondays. The new Saturday junior sessions were gaining traction. The court flooring was last replaced 15 years ago so this was necessary. On-court cameras send pictures through to the bar area and this will be augmented by security CCTV this year. Squash coaching was under review.
6. Officers: all were elected unopposed. Members may be co-opted onto General Committee during the year.
7. Auditor: Daniel Wolfson & Co was re-appointed as independent reviewer.
8. AOB: SS mentioned that annual subscription would be increased by 3%. Jenny Davis asked about membership numbers. Of our 792 members, 307 are adult full/squash, including 64 seniors (65+). There are around 120 junior members, 100 non-playing parent members, 86 minis and 83 youth (aged 18-30). DT asked about the annual “churn” of adult members. SS said 30 was typical and that we had to focus on the retention of existing members, as well as recruiting new ones. NB asked if emails to members could have a title rather than an attachment to open; Jeanette Taylor replied that specific emails did have titles and that it was only the newsletter that required opening an attachment. Most members felt email was the preferred mode of communication and a surprisingly high number used the Club web site regularly. TF asked if Sunday morning social tennis could be mixed. SS replied that members couldn't be compelled to play mixed tennis but that Mike Jaffa, Tennis chair, would be asked to see how this could be incorporated. NB wanted the honours boards restored; SS said there had been a potential issue with alternative uses of the Club room but that the Office asked to consider options.
9. SS closed the meeting at 9:30pm.