

**BATH STREET MARINE TABLE TENNIS CLUB**  
**Minutes of AGM Held 5 June 2024**

Present: Bernard Cooney (Chair), Liz Adams, Andrew Armstrong, Tom Bell, Bobby Blair, Roy Blair, Lesley Blanchard, Robert Brazendale, Ian Brownrigg, Peter Crichton, Brian Crolley, John & Grace Donnelly, Billy Dunleavy, Jenny Givens, Alan Hale, Jean Hale, Keith Hardman, Ellis Haskell, James Haskell, Lawrence Kenwright, Steve McCormick, Liz Neild, Dave Noden, Sam Pierce, Jean Price, Julian Quirk, Steve Riley, Doreen Smith, Dave Stoddern, Geoff Stubbs, Dermot Tierney (also representing Ronan Tierney), Colin Turner, Graham Turner, Bobby Vint, Bob Wolstenholme, Richard Woodley, and Sue Young.

**1. Introduction**

The Chairman commenced the meeting at 7:32pm, welcoming all members present. He thanked members for attending the AGM, and for their continued understanding, allegiance, loyalty and support. He also paid tribute to those who had led the coaching efforts over the past year, making special mention of the new adults' sessions initiated by Dave Aimson. He also thanked the Management team for their efforts over the past year. He outlined the process the meeting would follow and set out the agenda, copies of which had been sent to members. He also pointed out that copies of meeting notes and agenda could always be found on the club website. He reminded those present that only fully paid-up members were entitled to vote where voting is necessary.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Received in advance or offered at the meeting: - Dave Aimson, Colette Connell, Barry Davis, Mary Delamere, Val Delamere, Herve Gillet, Phillippa Harrison, Sue Kirkwood, Ian McElwee, Tony Mitchell, Amir Norouzi, Bill O'Hara, Rick Peake, Steve Rees, Alan Riddoch, Jean Ross, Angela Simkin, and Billy Smith.

**3. Minutes of 2023 AGM**

A copy of the Minutes of the last AGM had been posted on the website. Those Minutes were approved by the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

**4. Matters Arising from Minutes**

None.

**5. Report on Resolution 3 – 2023 AGM**

The Secretary was asked to report on this Resolution. GRT reminded members that at the 2023 AGM the following Resolution was unanimously approved.

*This AGM instructs the Management Committee to carry through the following changes to the Club.*

- 1. To form a new corporate entity.*
- 2. To transfer to the newly formed entity all the assets, property and activities of the present private members club, and thenceforward for the new entity to continue those activities, adopting for its governance the rules and guidelines contained in the current constitution of the club.*
- 3. Once the new entity is formed and assets and activities transferred, to dissolve the private members club, Bath Street Marine Table Tennis Club in accordance with Rule 17 of the club Constitution.*

*These actions to be taken as soon as possible after the 30 April 2023 and before 30 April 2024.*

It falls to me to try and explain why this Resolution has not been fully achieved!

First, allow me to remind you of the reasons for this Resolution. In 2019 when we acquired our new building, we entered into a lease for a site of land on which the building could be placed. That lease was for 20 years and has a fairly heavy rental charge – as you will see from the accounts. As a private members club any liabilities incurred fall on all members, or any one of them (joint and several liability). Thus, for the duration of the lease all members would be liable to pay the rental costs under the lease if the club itself was unable to pay. It was the desire of the Management Team to try and protect the majority of members from the risk of liability. Placing members within the shield of a limited company, limits any individual liability to costs due from the company, or the club.

The good news is that a new company, limited by guarantee, has been formed. We now have Bath Street Marine Table Tennis Club CIC.

Basically, a CIC is a normal company that can be limited by guarantee or limited by shares (ours is limited by guarantee - £1 per member). What makes a CIC distinct is that it has a lock on its assets and is limited to the profits it can distribute to shareholders or members. All assets have to be used for the community purpose; if the assets are sold, the proceeds have to be used for community purpose. If a CIC ceases trading, the assets have to be transferred to a similar asset-secured company.

For various reasons it has taken longer to achieve this first step than anticipated. But work is now progressing well to achieve part 2 of the Resolution. All of the assets of the club have been identified and listed, and work is in progress to make a legal transfer, and to ensure that the Articles of Association of New Co (Constitution) reflect as far as possible the governance of our club as set out in our Constitution.

There is however 1 significant problem. The landlord of our lease of land – Marine AFC – will not agree to assign the lease to New Co, without additional onerous conditions. And The Club cannot sublet the land to New Co – without the landlord's consent. An impasse has for the moment been reached.

For the time being therefore the Management Team has taken the view that the Members Club will continue – with a skeleton membership only of the 3 Officers – and will continue to hold the property and the lease. It will however undertake a new activity of providing facilities for table tennis to be played.

As a result, members and all other property of the club will be transferred to New Co as soon as that can be achieved. And we will continue to explore how to achieve the remainder in the best interests of all members.

Basically, for members, this means nothing changes, except they are protected from any costs associated with the lease. And, providing the rent of the land on which the building is set continues to be paid, and Marine continue to accept it from New Co then we can carry on as normal!

This is not entirely satisfactory, but we hope you will agree and accept that for now this is the best course of action. All thoughts and ideas welcome!

The meeting accepted the report and agreed that the Management Team should continue on the path set out to achieve the club's aims.

## 6. Secretary's Report

The Secretary reported as follows:

It has been an interesting year! In my view, one of the busiest administratively that I can remember in the 12 years that I have held this post! Fortunately, these days I seem to forget more than I remember! It has also at times been a difficult year both in terms of administration and on the table tennis front – especially league table tennis.

We started the year with a Resolution to terminate the members club and transfer everything to a new entity. As you have already heard this has not been fully possible. But gradually we are moving forward.

Indeed, moving forward has been a continuous theme of this club in recent years, and for myself I am delighted that as a club we are continuing that path.

Let's start with our building. It seems that by careful management we have just about kept control of the 'condensation' issue that we had! Indeed, it seems we may have insulated our building too well! By cutting off air flow under the building it has allowed damp to build up underneath which has damaged some parts of our floor! Air vents have now been inserted to allow air flow and this summer a repair will be made to the floor – at a cost! Our property management team led by Keith & Bernard have done a magnificent job, helped by our housekeeping team led by Lesley. It is a major undertaking to maintain a building such as this 7 days a week throughout the year, and we should do all we can to support and encourage the team – all of whom are volunteers.

The full introduction and use of CCTV both inside and outside the building has helped protect the building and keep people safe. We have been able to use this to quickly identify when, how and who, when things go wrong. Perhaps this is an opportunity to remind you all of a few things.

- Security is really important, setting the alarm on departure, ensuring all windows and doors are properly locked. These are responsibilities of the last person out – whatever the occasion.
- If you are coming to play at the building other than at a 'group' activity, you should book a session using the online booking platform. And our diary is still in use, if you have not booked online. If you have any problems with booking online get in touch with me.
- If you need to move table tennis tables, please use two people. The tables we have can be quite hard to manage single handed. Indeed, we had one incident this year where a table was seriously damaged by inappropriate handling. Tables are expensive items of equipment and need to be looked after. Further if you do move or change round a table, please try to put the room back to how you found it afterwards. This is particularly important over the summer. Do not leave it or assume that people coming in the next morning will be able to re-arrange the room.

We are a progressive club. And it has been good news to see our club involved in at least 3 new initiatives over this past year.

- First, through our newest qualified coach, Dave Aimson, and assisted by Steve McCormick, we have been able to introduce and offer for the first time, short courses of adult coaching – aimed particularly at adults just starting out on a table tennis journey. So far, we have run 3 courses, which have been fully subscribed with an average attendance of 10 at each session. Encouragingly 70% of the participants have been female.
- Through the organisation and efforts of Ian Brownrigg and one or two others we have been instrumental in supporting and developing a new North Liverpool 'Mini League' of short format matches, designed for those looking for an introduction to competitive play, who have not yet become regular participants in any main league table tennis. This has been a highly

successful and enjoyable new initiative and has now led to our own internal Mini League running over the summer closed period.

- Our club has, for the first time, partnered with the Liverpool League in an initiative to develop junior players who may be able to go on and represent Liverpool in inter-league competitions. Roughly once a fortnight on a Sunday afternoon/evening two groups of juniors meet at our club under the tutelage of coach Paul Hutchings to receive enhanced coaching and practice that we hope will lead to a significant development of their ability. 7 of our own juniors have been invited into this new initiative, and the benefits are already being seen. Through this initiative, 4 of our juniors were able to represent Liverpool in an interleague competition in the Lancashire & Cheshire League. Ivan, Scott & Kai who played in Junior Div 2 won that division and were presented with winners' medals at the recent League AGM.

I am sure there are other initiatives too, but to my mind these highlight the progressive nature of our club and how we are not content to stand still.

We are a table tennis club. But I am delighted to be able to say we are far more than a table tennis club! This is a place where people are made to feel welcome, which is diverse and inclusive, and where new friendships can be built. Come to this table tennis club, and there is every possibility that in addition to table tennis you will be invited, if you wish, to join in occasional social activities that don't involve table tennis! It may be a meal out, a Christmas social, a boat ride and a cream tea, or a trip into the town centre for some food, fun and alternative sports! Or even getting involved in Marine in the Community. It is a really positive aspect of our club that all of these things have been on offer over the past year. None are compulsory, but never let it be said this club is JUST a table tennis club!

Now, let's turn to table tennis! The year began with a Teens Mini Summer League, providing the opportunity for some of our juniors to prepare for the forthcoming league season and for others to consolidate on the 2022/23 seasons play. We also held our first all junior tournament day. Played at Marine in 3 age groups it was a real feast of junior table tennis. Then there was the day when social play was interrupted by the unexpected visit of Everton legend footballer, Duncan Ferguson. And in the heat of summer, we had two groups of Ukrainian children from their summer club, who, as part of their activities came for some table tennis sessions. It is really encouraging that table tennis for juniors continues to be at the heart of what we are doing as a club. Offering junior coaching sessions, an opportunity to progress to the teens group and to move on and into league and competitive play. It has been great to have James Haskell joining the club coaching team and helping to make a difference to the way children play and enjoy table tennis. And I would like to pay tribute to all who either lead or support our activities for juniors.

The summer was also used to organise and enjoy some friendly matches involving players from Marine and Maghull TTC's, and in the autumn another evening of friendly matches involving a 'University Challenge' with students from Edge Hill University.

Just prior to the start of the League season we held the Annual Club Tournament. Once again using the excellent facilities at Anfield Sports & Community Centre. A slightly lower than normal turn out however, made this a rather costly day! There was however some great table tennis, and new champions were crowned in each event. I would welcome your views on our tournament. Because of cost we cannot go to Anfield again this year, and it looked as if we might not be able to hold a tournament. But a venue at Old Roan is being looked at and hopefully there will be a tournament on 7 September 2024.

For the first time the club entered 11 teams in the Liverpool League for the 2023/24 season, details for each team will appear in the Annual Newsletter that will be shortly released. It is fair to say that with so many teams' administration of the league programme this year has been quite a task. I am

grateful for the assistance Andy Armstrong has provided to me in this area, and to the team captains for all they have done to manage their squads. Injuries and absences have had a significant impact this season, but broadly we have got through! 11 teams also presented the headache of where they all played. With league play only played on weekday evenings and 3 junior teams in the line-up it was not possible to play all matches at Marine, we just don't have the table capacity. Fortunately, we were able to squeeze two of the junior teams into an adult session at Anfield! But it is unlikely that will be able to continue, so some creative thinking will be needed for the 2024/25 season.

Highlights in the League programme were:

- the performance of our A Team in Div 1, who finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, an exceptional achievement; So much so, that team member, Lawrence Kenwright, was recognised at the recent League AGM as the most improved player in Div 1 for the 2023/24 season. [At this point a presentation was made to Lawrence of his award from the LDTTL].
- The F Team in Div 4, a new team and a 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish, again a very strong performance.
- And our Junior I Team in Div 5, who totally unexpectedly took a remarkable 3<sup>rd</sup> place – twice beating the team immediately above them and holding the divisional winners on both meetings. A fantastic performance by the juniors – and here I would like to pay tribute to Mike Taylor, a grandparent of one of our juniors, who faithfully supported just about every match the I team played, and who has now become a very accomplished umpire and scorer!

We managed to achieve 3 semi-final places in respective Divisional Cup competitions. Both our first and A team reached the semi-final in the Div 1 Cup, the E Team reached the semi-final in Div 4 Cup, and the H Team reached the semi-final in the Div 5 Cup. Sadly, we couldn't convert any of those moments to places in a final!

But once again the club did excel in the Frank Murphy Veterans Handicap Cup competition. For the 5<sup>th</sup> time in 11 seasons two club teams reached the final of this competition. In that same period (and bearing in mind 2 seasons were lost through covid) the club has won this trophy an amazing 7 times! The winning captain this year was Colin Turner, lifting the trophy for the second consecutive season. Brilliant.

And the season ended with several of our members taking part in the Liverpool Closed Championships. 1<sup>st</sup> team captain, Dermot Tierney reached the final of the Vets Singles, Sam Pierce from the A Team reached the final of the Open Doubles with his partner Connor Whitehead, and 11-year-old Ronan Tierney won the Div 5 open singles (and reached the semi-finals of the U15 singles)! These results for Ronan helped seal him the award at the recent League AGM of the 'Most Improved Player' in Div 5 of the LDTTL.

We now start preparing for the next season.

Over the year we have continued to advertise the club through social media (with over 50 posts to Facebook since 1 Jan 2024 alone, where we have over 300 regular followers) and with our permanent website – where we post club info, news stories, league match results and occasional articles (blog). We have around 3,500 views of our website every year. It would be great to see all club members regularly engaging with our electronic media (all can contribute or comment). We have two journalists who have written articles about the club, and we advertised the ITTF World Table Tennis Day. Our media alone could be a full-time job for someone!

All in all, it has been a very full year, in keeping with a healthy, progressive club. Once again, I commend the club to you, and thank you all for your continuing support of the club and our management team. I am fairly sure that we have more challenges to face yet, but I am confident that with your help and support we shall continue to thrive.

The report was unanimously accepted and approved by the meeting.

## 7. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented a copy of accounts for the period ended 30 April 2024, the signed copy of which is attached to and forms part of these Minutes. He gave the following report.

“Good evening, everyone. I’m here to present the financial report for the year ended 30th April 2024.

In this our fifth year in our current location I’m pleased to say the club continues to be in a good financial position. I should state however, the accounts have not yet been audited. That’s not to say the year has not come without its challenges.

Whilst we are not strictly a profit-making club, we are definitely not, nor ever should be, a loss making one! Tonight, I want to concentrate on our income and expenditure.

I won’t cover everything just the main items. These can tell the story of the year and also can give an indication of the year ahead.

So, to the facts: our total income was £21,581.80 and our expenditure £18,894.06 giving a profit of £2,687.74.

Taking income first. Members subscriptions amounted to £18,028.50 which equates to 83% of our total income. To put some numbers on that, we currently have 101 adult members and 37 juniors. 13 adults left over the year. Last year we had 100 adult members and 54 juniors. This suggests to me we are possibly at our peak on membership level. It’s disappointing to see a decline in junior membership.

At this point I would like to thank all members for their support and commitment to the Club. I know the increase in fees this year was an issue as regards standing orders of some members, but it was vital it was implemented. Without that increase it would have seriously affected our final balance. Your support also extends to the £1,272.70 from the teas, coffees, spot the balls that you buy, and to the £918.52 raised from our fund-raising events. Thank you. We benefited to the amount of £875.07 in interest from having the bulk of our funds in the club’s new savings account.

On to expenditure. Rent £5,500 of the site on which our building sits is set by Marine AFC. Electricity cost £9,160.09, the previous year it was £3,599.49. This was the largest item and biggest challenge. Unit costs doubled from 17.39p to 35.44p.

Other expenditure included £916.09 on equipment which included the purchase of an ex-tournament table. As we are now a CIC which protects our members financial interests rather than a private members club which does not, costs of £792 in professional fees were incurred in establishing the new entity.

To sum up, it’s been another busy year in ensuring the club’s finances are on a firm footing. Although our profit reduced from £5,448.86 to £2,687.74 as a result mainly due to the increased electricity charges and usage, we have still been able to set aside £2,500 into the sinking fund as we are required too by Sports England.

Looking forward to the immediate future there is good news and bad news. The bad news is that we have to carry out some fairly expensive repairs to the floor. The good news is our electricity prices should benefit from a 25% reduction in the contract price which is now 25.73p per unit to Marine AFC from whom we take our supply. Even allowing for this, based on our current usage, this year’s bill will still be in the region of £7,000.

Finally, I would like to thank Jenny Givens for her work in recording all the details and keeping the

records of everything involving our financial transactions. Thank you for your attention and if anyone has any questions I will try and answer them.

It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the accounts presented by the Treasurer be adopted.

## **8. Election of Officers**

- a. President – there was no new nominations for President. The Chairman reminded the meeting that, in effect, Billy Clayton remained as honorary President of the Club. Members unanimously agreed.
- b. Chairman – The Secretary invited the current Chairman to momentarily stand aside and then invited nominations for the post of Chairman. Bernard Cooney was nominated and unanimously re-appointed Chairman and restored to lead the meeting.
- c. Secretary – Graham Turner was nominated and unanimously approved.
- d. Treasurer - Ian Brownrigg was nominated and unanimously approved as Treasurer.
- e. Auditor – Tony Mitchell was nominated and unanimously approved as Auditor.

No general committee members were elected in view of the ongoing plan to bring the members club to an end and transfer all members to the New Co.

## **9. Life Membership**

There were no nominations for new Life Membership. The Chairman however paid tribute to the ongoing role of current Life Member, Tom Bell, in assisting with the maintenance of the property.

## **10. Finance Resolutions**

The Chairman introduced Resolution 1, which related to fees for 2024/25.

It was noted by the meeting that the proposal effectively meant no change to the current fee levels. The Treasurer confirmed this was the case and indicated that he believed the club could get through the next year with fees at this level without adverse effect on overall balances.

The Resolution was unanimously approved by the meeting without further debate.

## **11. Appointment of Team Selection Committee**

It was agreed that a group consisting of the Club Chairman, Secretary and the previous season's (2023/24) league team captains should form an initial selection committee. The main purpose would be to consider and decide on the Club's entry to the L&DTTL for the forthcoming 2024/25 season and then to look at the potential constitution of each team. An initial short meeting of this group was to be held immediately following the AGM.

## **14. League Matters**

The Secretary reported on the following issues:-

- a. The LDTTL AGM was held on 30 May, he and Andrew Armstrong had represented the club. Most of the meeting was routine. In relation to proposed League Rule changes, only one was passed, and that was a proposal from BSMTTC to make a small change to the Rules for notifying dates for cup matches. A number of club members were presented with awards, as already mentioned in the Secretary's report. The League is also looking further at development

and a considerable amount of work is in progress to move the League forward.

- b. There is the possibility of some competitive league table tennis over the summer, and more details are likely to emerge from the League Secretary in due course. Members were encouraged to keep an eye on the League website.
- c. Entries for the 2024/25 league season have to be made by 1 July, and hopefully the Team Selection group will be able to assist with that.
- d. GRT also reported that, to his great surprise, he was awarded with the Ken Armson trophy by the League. This trophy, which is only presented occasionally, gives recognition to the tremendous progress that the Club has made in recent years.

**15. Any Other Business**

- a. Sam Pierce asked if there were any plans for a new set of club shirts for the new season. The Chairman advised that the current sponsorship arrangement had come to an end, and that the set of shirts that came from that had not been very popular. It was agreed that Sam should look into this matter and report back to the Management Team.
- b. Dave Noden asked about the likely impact of the proposed move of Marine AFC to a new ground. The matter had been in the press and on social media. Chairman reported that it was not yet known what Marine's plans were for the current site. Until the situation is clearer not a lot more that can be done. One possibility is that the club's lease might be terminated. It was recommended that the club should stay in touch with both Sefton Borough Council and Sport England to keep them onside should there be a development that adversely affects the club.
- c. Tom Bell reported that he had recently been in contact with former member Albert Parker who wished to be remembered to the club. He now lives away from this area, but his age and health issues mean he is no longer able to enjoy table tennis.
- d. The Chairman raised on behalf of Dave Aimson, a suggestion that for future adult coaching courses there should be a charge for participation. It was agreed this was a reasonable suggestion.
- e. The Chairman also brought to attention an unexpected donation from a new member. The donation was given in recognition of the work on adult coaching and will be used to support coaching.

There being no further matters the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20:50.

***These Minutes approved at AGM dd mmm 2025 ..... (B Cooney – Chairman)***