

The Northumberland Club
Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday 15th February 2024 at 1830 in the NLTA office

In attendance: David Breakey (DB), Heather Dean (HD- Minutes), Mark Haigh (MH), Rachael Oswald-Wilkins (RO), Mike Smith (MS – Chair) and Fiona Twaddle (FT)

Also present Mandy Tulip (MT) General Manager and Chris Lott (CL)

1. Apologies for absence:

Martin Clark (MC), Ryan Doran (RD) and Alison Duncan (AD).

2. Minutes from the last meeting and matters arising:

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be accurate.

Matters arising

- Quotes have been obtained for remaining driveway area of the car park. 8 tonnes of aggregate has been deposited.
- The new clock is now here.
- Social calendar

3. MT report

Repairs and upkeep

- Andy has received 4 quotes for the window for the fire exit door unit replacement. Steel doors would cost around £2400 and a UPVC one ~£2100. The door being alarmed was also discussed- Work deemed to be essential.
- Regarding the glazing in the reception area, DB Glaziers have given a quote of £300-£350.
- New path required from rear fire exit.
- Light repairs to main sports hall - we are currently waiting for parts.
- CL reviewing repairs to indoor dividing nets.
- New plastic is to be fitted to the bike shed.
- To review waste arrangements for third party tenants.
- Holiday camps - all are full for the half term holiday with no scope for any extension.

4. Safeguarding

Safeguarding training to be organised for new committee members.

5. Finance Update

- RO stated cash balance positive.
- The club is looking to be making a reasonable profit and while we are not profit focused, it is good to show that we can do it.
- The audit is now booked and the meeting with the accountants planned for the end of April. The quote from the accountant seems reasonable however, a few mistakes regarding the payroll just need to be sorted out (e.g. pensions). RO suggested but we monitor the tax and VAT paid.

6. Planning Update

- MS explained that the planners replied to the club on the 14th of February and they met today, 15.2.24.

- It was agreed to withdraw the tennis floodlights to court 4,5,6 section from the planning application as permission would not be approved due to the protection needed for the bats and the impact to the wildlife being too great.
- MS felt that NCC were very supportive of padel but that there were a few environmental elements that still needed to be investigated further - flood risks, light spill etc. MT has amended the light design which she has forwarded, along with the ecology report. Acoustic fencing will be factored in with planting around.
- MS discussed the idea of extending the fencing to create a fence or screen to ensure players have to come more into view of the reception in order to get to the padel courts.
- Courts 4, 5 and 6 are to stay as clay now that the lights are no longer able to be installed.

7. Club Strategies

MS asked the executive what they want to achieve at the club. The club has a healthy budget, where should it be spent? Each sport then gave a brief summary/health report as follows:

Racketball

Current players very happy with the provision, a strong group of regular players but not really attracting any newcomers. To run another fun league within the club and attracting new players.

Squash

Has seen a big resurgence; we now have six adult teams three of which will be in the top division next season. Hoping to run a school outreach programme around Easter and keen to keep links to Newcastle University.

Badminton

Juniors section is poorly attended. Club play numbers have dropped. Explore opportunity to attract new juniors and intermediate adult players.

Tennis

Discussion was then had about adding to our coaching panel for tennis. Need to support development of players for higher teams, to consider an advanced coaching session.

Pickleball

The sport is growing and advanced sessions are going well. As a way of development, we could consider entering leagues. Explore coaching qualifications for some of our tennis panel to upskill in Pickleball.

Fitness

The club has a good offering but very 'during the day' based owing to court availability in the evenings. Explore evening provision.

8. Any Other Business

- An increase in membership fees was discussed for the new financial year in line with increasing costs, mainly salary increasing with national minimum wage rises.
- Capital Expenditure Planner - agreed further transfer to sinking fund.
- The removal or refurbishment of the decking was also discussed and Andy will investigate this.
- 60 chairs have been ordered for the main lounge.