

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING Wednesday 9th June 2010
At 1.00pm - Page's Park pavilion

Committee Members present: -Tom Miller (chairman), Roger Stroud (secretary), Len Buckingham (treasurer), Eve Buckingham, John Cundell, Margaret Lawson, Tony Wells, David Ball & Val Jeffers.

Minutes

1. Welcome

Meeting opened at 1.00pm and Tom welcomed the committee.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies from Tony Stammers as he is not well.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 3rd March 2010

Minutes agreed.

4. Matters arising & review of Actions

4.1 Annual Dinner

This went very well and Tom sent a letter of thanks to the college.

4.2 Open Day

Tom did contact the Mayor regarding the twinning event but event did not happen

4.3 Social Club – venue & costs

There was a Town Council Leisure & Community committee meeting on the 29th March. That afternoon, Tom was requested to make a verbal presentation to the committee regarding our concerns re. Charges for the use of the Pages Park pavilion. For background information, the committee had been given the email that Tom sent to the Town Clerk. This exemplified the necessity of being cautious when sending communications to the Council as they can enter the public domain. At the meeting, the Deputy Town Clerk said that the Croquet Social Club is excellent and the Chair of the committee said the Social Club “was very good” when he had visited earlier in the year.

Regarding costs, the committee wanted to understand the relationship between the costs of running the facilities versus what they charge and the definition of “a session”.

After questions to Tom, the meeting decided that the Croquet Social Club will be charged for January to March 2010 at the historic cost and that their June committee meeting would decide costs for next winter and LLCC will be notified in advance of October 2010.

The L&C committee met again on June 7th but charges were not specifically on the published agenda. However, the website Minutes for their March meeting stated that: a) Tom was present and requested reconsideration of the fees increase and b) that they resolved that the fees for the use of Pages Park Pavilion by LLCC from Jan. to March 2010 be charged at £2.56 per hour.

Hence the rate we are charged is in the public domain.

Tom had kept the Officers, John and Richard K. advised of the situation (email 8th April)

4.4 Hoop guide

This has now been obtained and is being used.

4.5 Hunstanton Trophy Case

David's brother made the trophy case. The committee formally thanked him for doing the job and it was agreed to pay him £50 for doing it.

4.6 Official Opening Day

This went well with the Mayor & her consort.

4.7 Leighton Middle School

Nothing has been heard from Leighton Middle School.

5. Secretary's report

We had received the document from the Croquet Association giving us details of our Public Liability Insurance. This was passed on to Len (Treasurer), who will ask Richard Keighley to review it.

6. Treasurer's report

Len tabled the accounts, as at 9th June, and stated that there is a sufficient balance in the bank.

Tom said he had received an unsolicited email from "Funding4sport", which he will forward to Len & Roger. The general view was this was unlikely to be of value.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

Membership stands at 58 and we have 2 new members.

It was agreed that we should have a 'Come & try day' midway through the season.

It was agreed that anyone joining from now on, in this season, will pay a pro-rata rate.

8. Handicaps – Tom's email of 6th May re. Mix n Match Doubles refers

The position regarding those members who have not played 10 handicap games was discussed. It was confirmed that, for those members, their handicap would be reduced by 2 for the Mix n Match Doubles club competition. Tom pointed out that what is written down right now means that the requirement to have to have played 10 handicap games before being allowed to play in a club handicap competition would perpetuate each year. Len suggested that for next season only new members will have to play 10 handicap games – for existing members they would only have to play 5 provided that they played 10 this year. This suggestion was agreed by the committee. John Cundell stated that handicap games against other clubs will be taken into account in counting the number played.

It was agreed that next year the Mix n Match Doubles should be moved to later in the season.

9. Facilities & Equipment

9.1 General

The new hoop guide is working well.

9.2 Security / locking up

There was a reminder about bringing balls to the club house after each game.

A comment was made that on one recent occasion, the roller shutter doors were down but not locked – members need to be vigilant on these points of security.

On another occasion a chair was left out and fortunately was still there the following day.

9.3 Hoops

David commented that on at least one recent occasion the hoops were not put onto the relevant lawns which will have the effect of setting the holes out of alignment.

Therefore, David proposed that we should mark which hoops (Townsend, Jacques & Davison) go on which lawn.

The hoop make will be labelled on the fences – agreed for action by Len.

9.4 Status with Town Council re. formal agreement

Richard & Tom had a meeting with Pat Kingsnorth & Barry Wardle on 29th March re the formal agreement between the Town Council and the Croquet Club.

Whilst there were no official minutes, Tom has circulated his note of the meeting to the Officers, John and Richard.

P K gave a general update on the future plans for Pages Park indicating that Pages Park will become more of a leisure park rather than a sports park.

During the meeting BW gave excellent comments about the croquet club. He said there are no plans to move LLCC from PP but the Master Plan may suggest otherwise. Both sides reaffirmed that the agreement should simply formalise, on paper, what the Club has enjoyed in the past. It was agreed that as the Town Council are the Landlord they would come up with the 1st draft.

Subsequent to the meeting Richard & Tom offered to LLTC that if it helped the croquet club could produce the 1st draft. PK accepted this offer.

Richard has produced our 1st draft and sent it to Tom 24 hours ago. Tom explained that the main elements were: basis as per what currently enjoyed / 7 years initially with 12 month's notice on either side / key issues are levels of maintenance & annual costs increments.

Tom proposed to the Committee that:

- a) He considers the draft & reverts to RK
- b) RK & he progress with the Officers plus John
- c) He then reverts to LLTC noting that any final draft will need to come to this Committee before formal submission to the Council

Len thanked Tom & Richard for their involvement in the negotiations to date and proposed that the Committee leave the matter in their hands, to progress as they see fit. Tom much appreciated the sentiment conveyed but said he would want to use Len, Roger and John as "sounding boards" on the draft's contents.

[Post meeting note: After making his own comments on the first draft, Tom circulated to L, R & J, which furnished extremely useful comments. Our first draft to LLTC was sent on 22nd June]

9.5 Sports Council

Tony Wells was at a recent Sports Council Meeting where there was general dissatisfaction regarding the policies of the Town Council to sport in the town. The Sports Council has sent a formal letter to Sport England to find out what Leighton Buzzard should have in sports facilities for a town of this size.

9.6 Risk assessment

This was on the agenda at the meeting with the Council – they want us to change a few items on our assessment. We are waiting for the Council's Risk Assessment on roller shutters. Tom will produce an updated version but in such a way that it remains a "living document", in order to show that the club has actually done something.

The Council did state that they are not electrifying all roller shutters.

9.7 Vandalism

John Cundell mentioned about the note he sent to the local Neighbourhood Policing Organisation who had stated earlier this year that there was very little vandalism in the area of Pages Park. John's note clearly indicated that vandalism is still a problem in the area. The report has been acknowledged but there has been no comment or response to points made.

10. Fixture's Secretary's report

10.1 Inter-Club Shield or Championship

On June 21st there is the Inter Club Shield match vs. Nottingham.

10.2 Friendly & League matches

Wrest Park was slow in responding – on June 25th there is a league match at Pages Park, LLB vs. Wrest Park.

11. Events

11.1 Garden Party

John has produced an invitation sheet based on last year for Saturday 7th August at Diana's house.

11.2 Woodcraft folk – young people's organisation – Tom's email of 4th June refers Margaret Brown had sent an email to Tom asking if the group, she is involved with, can play croquet on Monday June 14th from 6.15pm to 7.45pm, with assistance from volunteers from our club. There would be no charge. The committee agreed to this. John Cundell suggested that there are sufficient volunteers to help. Refreshments will be provided for the children by their leaders.

11.3 Leighton Linlade in Bloom

Margaret Brown asked if the club could be playing croquet when the judges come to Pages Park. Tom has agreed subject to the Committee's confirmation today. This was duly given. Judging day is on Thursday 15th July early afternoon.

11.4 Rotary

Tom was approached by Ian Stephens, of the Leighton Buzzard Rotary Club, for them to use our club facilities for a social event. John agreed a provisional date of Monday 12th July at about 6.15pm for about 1 ½ hrs.

It was decided that we would ask them for a donation to our club for laying on the event, the amount to be at their discretion. Club members will be asked if they could be available to assist on the day.

11.5 Ladies Doubles 12th June

John described the organisation for this competition – cakes will be made for this event.

12. A guide to golf croquet

John & Richard have updated the CA Guide and the club will keep an archive copy signed by both authors.

13. Any other business

13.1 Membership List

John Cundell will circulate a new list of members

13.2 AGM

Whilst the AGM is a long way off, Tom suggested that early consideration is given to potential committee vacancies.

13.3 Littlehampton Trip

There was concern expressed about the cost of £15 per head (for lawn charges + fish & chip supper) charged by the Littlehampton Club. No one stayed for the second day due to further charges that would have been incurred.

Meeting closed at 3.05pm.