

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING Wednesday 29th September 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, Val Jeffers

Minutes

1. Welcome

Tom welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 1.05.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from David Ball and Tony Stammers.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 4th August 2010

Everyone agreed that the minutes circulated were correct.

4. Matters arising & review of Actions

4.1 Rotary Club

We received a donation of £55 from the Rotary Club.

4.2 Hoop Drill

We now have a hoop drill thanks to Nigel Clark.

4.3 Timers

We have purchased the timers with several members purchasing their own timers.

4.4 Concrete base outside clubhouse

Since the graffiti on the concrete has now disappeared it was felt that there is no need to paint the concrete. Tom said he would contact Peter Davis to thank him for the offer of painting it and we would further consider the offer if the necessity arises in the future.

4.5 Bowls Club

Further investigation by the bowls club indicated that they would not want croquet played on their bowls green.

4.6 Ladies toilet

Improvement has been actioned by the Council and they are now better.

At his meeting with the Council, Tom thanked them for improving the ladies toilet.

The Council are now looking into improving the gents' toilet.

4.7 Vandalism

The key issue for police officers and PCSO's is alcohol. Under an existing bye law, they can confiscate alcohol from anyone in Page's Park. There will be a piece in the next newsletter on this issue including phone numbers.

5. Secretary's report (including correspondence to Club)

Roger reported that a letter had been compiled nominating John Cundell for a CA Diploma. We had recently heard that John has been given this award for his services to croquet and our club. John will be attending the CA AGM on October 16th, accompanied by Judith to be presented with his award. David Ball will try to get photos of John into the LBO.

6. Treasurer's report

Mention was made of the donation from the Rotary Club.

Tony Wells will ensure that we get the grant application form from the Sports Council.

All expenses claims to Len by 20th October.

7. Membership Secretary's Report

John reported that attendances during 2010 were similar to last year.

John Thorp attended the most over the season whilst David Ball attended the most sessions during a week (7).

There are currently 57 members.

Further details will be in the next newsletter.

8. Social Club

Tom & Richard Keighley met with Town Council Officers on 27th Sept. and the following is feedback from that meeting. Tom explained that the social club starts on 6th Oct for which the pavilion has been booked and for each Wednesday morning thereafter but there was no clarity on what the charge will be.

The Council Leisure & Community Committee will be meeting on 25th October – on their agenda will be charges for the Pavilion.

Richard proposed to the Council that for October we should pay what we paid last year. This was accepted.

Tom will go to the L & C Committee meeting on 25th Oct. to again state our case for a reasonable charge, an hourly rate rather than for an unspecified 'session' rate and make the point that the Social club is not just for our club members but for the community as a whole.

Tom would like to know the maximum we would be prepared to pay per hour for the Social Club -

Len informed us that at each meeting of the social club the income is about £20.

Comparisons were made with Northall & Billington village halls which are both in a much better condition than the pavilion at Pages Park.

Eve commented that the youth club have use of the pavilion at no cost.

The meeting agreed that a maximum of £5 per hour would be an acceptable cost.

Mention was also made that there has been no hot water since June at the pavilion.

9. Facilities & Equipment

9.1 Status with Town Council re formal agreement

Tom reported the following which again resulted from the meeting with the Town Council Officers on 27th Sept.

a) General update on LLTC plans for Page's Park:

LLTC still plan to produce a Master Plan for PP and Mentmore Road Park. There are no plans to remove croquet from PP. A consultation will take place before Christmas, when we should submit/lobby for our requirements, e.g. retention of three lawns but improved facilities? The Committee will need to be ready to respond to the Master Plan consultation.

b) The discussion at the meeting

Was to centre around the draft Agreement, dated 21st June, produced primarily by RK, which was sent by email to LLTC on 22nd June. The Council Officers wished to consider it line by line. Each word was scrutinised and a great deal of detail changes were noted. For instance, LLTC were very reluctant to accept any detail as to exactly what their ground staff would do. Indeed, at one point, the Town Clerk said: "What will you do if we do not do it?"

At this point, they said their preference is not to have an Agreement with LLCC but for LLTC to lease the lawns and club room to LLCC, for a peppercorn rent, and LLCC to maintain the lawns and fencing plus rectify any vandalism.

The Council Officers were prepared to put both the lease and agreement options to Elected Members of the Council but wish to have everything signed off by 1st April 2011. Therefore it was agreed:

- Tom would put the lease option to the LLCC General Committee for consideration
- Richard/Tom would modify the Agreement in line with the discussions
- Council will forward to LLCC a draft lease by end October
- All will meet again in early November so that Tom has a clear picture of what the 2 options are, in order to be able to report to the LLCC AGM on 12th November.

Following Tom's report, the Committee then discussed the options in detail

During this discussion Val did agree to write to Ascott Hall (Rothschilds) regarding the possible setting up of a croquet facility in their grounds.

Also, Tony agreed to write to the Heath & Reach Sports Club regarding potential for a croquet facility.

There was a discussion on potential lawn maintenance costs where various committee members would try to ascertain costs from a variety of possibilities.

It was agreed that at this time Tom would respond to LLTC along the lines: We have little enthusiasm for the idea, not least relating to the age profile of the membership - we are actively exploring various possibilities – we are adamant that the Club could not consider being responsible for any vandalism.

Even though he will not be Chairman after the AGM, he is willing to carry on with the discussions with Town Council regarding the formal agreement, if the new Chairman and the Committee wish him to do so.

9.2 Risk Assessment

Tom submitted a 2nd version to the Council and pointed out that we can cope with all elements that Council came back with. However, he advised the Council that the matter of the roller shutter risk assessment from them was still outstanding. The Town Clerk agreed to chase this. Tom also made the point to the Council that it would be difficult if there were to be two risk assessments – council's and ours.

The Risk Assessment is now in the hands of our committee, as Tom has gone as far as he can in finalising it and, therefore, he will email the 'final' version to the Committee. .

10. Fixture's Secretary's report

10.1 League Teams

Tony reported that our Team A & Team B has worked very well, and has confirmed to the league that we will continue with both teams.

10.2 Indoor Croquet at Soham

Tony reported that the next session of Indoor Croquet is on 14/ 15 November and that there are 4 more places.

10.3 Hunstanton Challenge

The Hunstanton Challenge will carry on next year and Tony will make the necessary arrangements.

10.4 Littlehampton

Littlehampton would not be booked for next year as there were concerns on the costs charged by the Littlehampton Club generally.

10.5 Ryde Isle of Wight

There is general enthusiasm from the committee about this possible excursion - Tony has emailed the Chairman of their croquet club.

10.6 Hamptworth Winter Croquet - Details of this will be in the next newsletter

10.7 Hunstanton Open Weekend

Roger reported that he will be sent the entry form and will forward to all those in the club likely to be interested at the time.

11. Events

11.1 Annual dinner

David Ball & Len have collected information on a number of options and it was decided that Len, David & Val would form a sub-group to sort it out.

11.2 AGM

11.2.1 Hall booking

Len has booked Northall Village Hall from 7pm to 10pm.

11.2.2 Information Pack

Roger reported that he needs the Chairman's & treasurer's reports to complete the pack which will be sent out by post to all members.

11.2.3 Officers / Committee / Roles

Our club needs a Chairman as Tom has said that he cannot continue in that role after the AGM.

Margaret suggested that she would come off the committee if a replacement could be found. It was decided that John Thorp would be approached and asked if he would like to be on the committee.

11.2.4 Cups & Shields

John is organising the engraving and other aspects of this task.

11.2.5 Invitations

Tom will write to Marjorie Cliffe and Mr & Mrs Clark inviting them to the AGM.

11.2.6 Food

It was agreed that Val will organise catering for the AGM.

11.2.7 Raffle

Tony Stammers will be asked if he can organise the raffle.

11.3 Events in season 2011

It was agreed that our annual dinner would be in late March.

12. Any other business

12.1 Peg System

Peter Davis had devised a peg system to assist in choosing who to play with whom on which lawn. This was looked at and it was agreed that we would keep our current method. Peter would be thanked for a significant effort in setting it up and informed of our decision.

12.2 Leighton Buzzard Observer

Tony Wells felt that we do not get enough coverage in the LBO.

12.3 Polo Shirts with LLCC logo

John said that Judith has found a shop in Dunstable and is getting prices and samples.

12.4 News letter in colour

Some club members had asked John if they could have their copy of the club newsletter printed in colour. John indicated the cost of doing this would be high and suggested that we would do this for any member who requested it provided they fund the additional cost at an extra £5 per annum.

Finally Tom announced that this meeting was his last one as Chairman and thanked everyone on the committee for putting up with his idiosyncrasies.

Meeting closed at 15.35pm.