



SOUTHBOURNE TENNIS CLUB

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING HELD 29TH APRIL 2019

Held in the Club House on Monday 29th April 2019 chaired by the Chairperson Susanne Grainger.

Susanne Grainger (Susie - SG) took the chair and 33 other members were present.

The Chairperson welcomed all attending.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from several members, and a significant number provided Proxy votes to other members to vote on their behalves.

AGENDA/ REASON FOR THE MEETING

The reason for the Extraordinary general meeting was;

“To Receive, Review and formally adopt the revised Memorandum and Articles of Association and Club Rules”.

SG introduced Steve Place (SP) from BCVS (Bournemouth Council for Voluntary Services) and John Grainger (Club Member), who has been instrumental in preparing the necessary revisions to the clubs Memorandum and Articles of Association and Club Rules to facilitate potential charity status.

SG explained the background to why the club committee are recommending that we apply to change status to become a charitable organisation.

SG re-capped that the AGM (2018) gave unanimous agreement that we should aim to be a charity and that how, with the good work we do with the community, being a charity will be helpful from a fund raising perspective.

Steve Place (SP)

Steve Place – BCVS introduced himself and explained that he is not from the Borough Council, but from an independent charity. BCVS provide advice to charitable and volunteer groups.

SP explained how charitable status opens up much greater access to grants from trust funds which only give to charities. E.G. 3 local trusts - Talbot Village trust, Valentine Trust and The Cooper Dean Trust give in the region of £1.5m a year to charities and currently, as STC is not a charity, we are not eligible.

SP explained that Sports clubs are tending to move to charities – for example East Dorset Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club went through this process 18 months ago and that most Bowls clubs now have charitable status.

SP explained how our Memorandum and Articles of Association is out of date as, for example, it states that Proxy voting is not allowed. Since 2006 however it has been a legal requirement that Proxy voting be available.

John Grainger (JG)

JG talked through examples of how the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Club Rules have been updated, for example;

- Conflicts of interest policy
- Language more appropriate for a charitable organisation
- Changes to the rules to allow discounts to be available for membership as agreed by the Board of Trustees.

Questions were taken and discussed, including;

What the impact on the club might be (answered by Steve Place)

What does it mean for the club?

Opens funding doors, capital and outreach programs.

It will change our pool of grant funding from a low level of only 5% of organisations that give grants to non-charities to a significantly larger 95% that give to charities.

A question was asked regarding our funding, and whether members fees effectively subsidise Tennis in the Community. The primary concern being that a greater need for Community involvement at the club could require a greater subsidy.

Keith Mitchell (Former Club Chair) responded that because we do community/ disability programs this brings us funding and support from other organisations. When the club house was completely rebuilt 5 years or so ago, the community work we do was a large part of the reason we were able to raise enough money for this.

Susie Grainger expressed her sadness that we may not be communicating with everyone as well as we would like and that some of the membership were not aware of some of the issues being discussed, when they had been discussed previously and reported in chairpersons update emails and AGM minutes.

JG also explained that we aim to set our fee structure at a sufficient level for the club to be financially viable but also to have as many people playing at the club as possible.

Steve Place added that being a Charitable organisation is not likely to add to our requirements to do more with the community/ disability programs as he feels we already do sufficient of this, but that Charitable Status probably more accurately reflects what we already are and what we already do.

Dave Sanger (DS) explained that from his understanding East Dorset Tennis Club has had reasonable financial benefit from converting to a charity themselves – 4 courts were recently re-laid.

In answer to a question about whether the “essence/ feel” of the club will change – DS and SG both explained they feel that being a charity will not change the essence/ feel at all – as it will not need to change what we do on a day to day basis.

A member asked SG – Why would we not do it?

Steve Place answered this for SG. One downside would be if the club members intended to sell our club to a private company – for financial reward. Once we change to a charity this is not possible.

There was discussion regarding whether there are other options than converting to a Charity?

Again Steve Place handled this. Other options have been considered, specifically Community Amateur Sports Club status and C.I.O. (Charitable Incorporated Organisation).

Steve Place explained and expressed his view that charitable status is the best way forward for us. However, at a later date, there may be benefits in converting the charity to a CIO, however you have to be a charity first to do this.

Voting

Memorandum and Articles of Association

A vote was held on amending our Memorandum and Articles of association to the revised version. 17 Proxy votes were received and several of the members who were initially attending were not still in attendance at time of voting as they had joined the club session underway on the courts.

The motion was voted in favour of amending our Articles of Association with 47 votes in favour, none against and no abstentions.

Rules

A vote was held on amending our Club Rules to the revised version.

The voting outcome was the same, with 47 votes in favour, none against and no abstentions.

Ratification Vote

Finally, the Chairperson offered attendees at the meeting a vote to ratify our decision to move to charitable status. The motion was put that the club will apply for charitable status and attendees were asked for approval.

46 voted in favour, nobody voted against this however there was one abstention.

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Daniel Light, Secretary

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Dated

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Susanne Grainger, Signed as a true record by the Chairperson

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Dated