

**MINUTES OF THE COURTS WORKING GROUP
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2023
AT 10AM AT THE CLUBHOUSE, TROTTISCLIFFE TENNIS CLUB**

PRESENT:

Trottscliffe Parish Council Attendees:

Richard Vallance (RV - Chair), Louise Leyden (LL)

Trottscliffe Tennis Club Attendees:

John Bennett (JB), Tony Piper (TP)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Louise Goldsmith (Clerk)

14/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

15/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None.

16/23 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was resolved that RV signs the minutes of the meeting held on the 7 June 2023 as a true and accurate record.

17/23 OPEN SESSION

No members of the public present.

18/23 SCHOOL USE OF THE COURTS

JB advised that the school is using the courts for the after school tennis club. The tennis club have asked for confirmation of the dates the school will require the courts. Concern was expressed about the financial viability of allowing the school free use of the courts. RV reminded the group that the landowner has always stipulated that the school is to have free use of the courts. The Clerk suggested that if there was a financial issue that the Parish Council might consider subsidising any loss of revenue.

19/23 TENNIS CLUB

TP reported back from a Special General Meeting held on the 26 June 2023. The meeting was called to allow for a discussion and a vote on decisions about the coaching arrangements for the club and voting rights of guardians. Concerns have been raised about both the Club Constitution and health and safety since the meeting. In response to this the Tennis Club Committee has appointed TP to become President charged with ensuring that the club is run in line with the Club Constitution and to act a conduit for members to express any concerns. TP will not be a member of the Tennis Club Committee. TP has drafted a new Safeguarding Policy and will be prepare a new Club Constitution to clarify the use of online and proxy voting at General Meetings. TP agreed to share a copy of the new draft Club Constitution with the Parish Council. TP advised that there continues to be some disaccord with existing Members but that much progress has been made in tackling this. There has also recently been two accidents and concern has been expressed about accountability. Membership has fallen by 25% and now stands at 150 members. However, it is hoped that the new coach, Frankie Faulkes, and her desire to forge relationships with the community will increase membership. There are currently just four members on the Tennis Club Committee and there is a drive to

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obtain new members. A new Welfare Officer has been appointed and the Tennis Club Committee is in the process of getting safeguarding training confirmed. The LTA Youth Start programme which ran in the summer was well attended and the Club has launched a new Autumn Junior Programme which is currently under scribed. A Junior Camp for the Autumn half term has been organised. The Club has asked the school to advertise the Junior Camp. The Tennis Club Committee is reaching out to the local schools to attract new juniors as numbers have fallen slightly. It was suggested that the Club reaches out to both Primary and Secondary schools. However, the Club would like to come to some arrangement with the village school to rekindle Junior membership and formal coaching. It was agreed that it would be beneficial for the new tennis club coach to meet with Lucy Henderson, the headteacher, to discuss a way forward.

20/23 PUBLIC USE OF THE COURTS

TP reported that on average there are 12 public bookings a year with a higher proportion of these being in the summer.

21/23 NETBALL

The Tennis Club has agreed to pay for the netball posts for the MUGA for the netball club to use.

22/23 MUGA ON THE RECREATION GROUND

It was noted that the MUGA is to be officially opened by MP Tom Tugendhat at 2.30pm on Friday 29 September 2023. All the local organisations, school and residents have been invited to attend.

23/23 MAINTENANCE OF THE COURTS

It was noted that the maintenance of the courts surface is ongoing. The remaining lifespan of the courts surface is being considered along with funding requirements for a new surface. The Tennis Club has installed wifi in the clubhouse. The only other pressing issue is that an area of decking near to the village hall is starting to rot.

24/23 PROPOSAL TO SUB-LEASE THE COURTS

There was some discussion about whether a new lease or some form of other agreement was required. The Parish Council has appointed a solicitor and will take legal advice on the best way forward as the current lease with the landowner needs to be reviewed and renewed as well as putting in place an agreement with the tennis club to include maintenance arrangements.

25/23 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Nothing additional.

26/23 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 2pm on Wednesday 21 November 2023 in the club house.

There being no further business the meeting closed 10.58am

Signed: Date:

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