

# HACKNEY CITY TENNIS CLUBS (HT) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

**MINUTES OF THE AGM HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2017  
AT THE CLISSOLD PARK TENNIS PAVILION,  
3 QUEEN ELIZABETH'S WALK, STOKE NEWINGTON N16 0BF**

**Present**

**Directors:** Howard Bennett (Chair), Francesco Caselli, David Harrison, Alison Hunter, David Smith

**Members In Attendance (32):** Nilakshi Banerjee, Yvonne Bennett, Ivan Bennett, Fatemeh Beyad, Eric Camara, Jamie Caprice, Krystal Charles, Christian Coombs, Michael Coombs, Jan Coombs, Kara Day, Shaun Doherty, Seth Eadie, Francesca Gray, Don Gray, Katy Guttmann, George Howe, Khalid Hussain, Guy Krenger, Justin Martin, Jo Mason, Ben Mayhew, Marcia Mihotich, Yvonne Milnes, Susana Oxley, Alice Roberts, Phil Semper, Frank Sinkovec, Abu Sufian, Nadia Weekes, Colin Weekes, Josh Whitehead

**In Attendance:** Jennifer Bage (Child member parent), Keith Andrews, David Wilson (David Wilson Consultants Limited) - Accountant

**Apologies:** Maurine Lewin (Director), Daniel Mortlock

Item		Action
1.	<p><b>Opening Remarks</b> Howard Bennett (Chair) welcomed Directors and Members to the AGM</p> <p>He stressed the following issues in his opening remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He thanked Justin Farley and Matheus Riolfi for their roles as Directors.</li> <li>• He outlined the history of HT, it's small beginnings and the scale the organisation has now reached.</li> <li>• That female participation at HT was exceeding the national average but that there was no complacency with this.</li> <li>• That a key challenge for HT is the popularity of its programmes and the high demand for court space with limited resources to work with, but that all efforts are being made to deliver balance across users and HT is exploring opportunities to increase capacity but that these are long-term endeavours.</li> <li>• He thanked all of the board and staff for implementing significant operational changes over the last year to bring systems and processes in line with the requirements of the current operation.</li> <li>• He explained the current situation with regard the tender for the continued running of tennis provision in Hackney on behalf of the borough.</li> </ul> <p>A full note of the opening remarks is appended to these Minutes</p>	

2.	<p><b>Ordinary Business</b></p> <p><b>2.1. Consideration of the income and expenditure account and balance sheet to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017</b></p> <p>David Wilson of David Wilson Accountants Limited presented and explained the accounts of HT to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.</p> <p>He explained that HT accounts had been audited and that they were deemed to be a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs.</p> <p>From 1<sup>st</sup> April HT moved to a new accounting package, Xero.</p> <p>The Income/Expenditure deficit is mainly due to professional fees, largely Trio Plus fees, plus the systems audit of around £5k. Without these costs HT would have made a surplus of around £3k. Programme income has increased as has court fees. Income overall has increased by over £10k, countering this is expenses with coaches costs increasing. All other expenditure is consistent with expectations. Extraneous expenses, such as Trio Plus, are not expected moving forward. Cash reserves have gone down slightly with current net assets of £144k.</p> <p>The question of whether TrioPlus would be used again was raised and it was confirmed that to support the tender submission there is potential for TrioPlus to be commissioned, however any involvement would not be on the same scale as the previous engagement.</p> <p>Room hire income has increased. This is due to the growth in term time ongoing bookings such as baby music, drama, pilates, yoga etc, plus party bookings. HT hopes to further build on this.</p> <p>Coaches costs increased for a number of reasons. With high volumes of children signed up to courses, such as holiday camps, additional assistant coaches have been brought in; coach player ratios have been reduced in some instances for health and safety reasons and to improve the player experience; a salaried coach left the business in the previous financial year, so that person's coaching hours were covered by a self-employed coach; and new courses have been added requiring additional coaching hours.</p> <p>It was confirmed that general public courses were covering their costs and that overall our profit margin on courses has reduced, but that increases in fees may need to be considered in the future to keep pace with coach pay increases and player/coach ratios.</p> <p><b>The Chair asked the AGM to accept the Report of the Directors and Audited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2017. This was accepted.</b></p> <p>Members were interested in seeing further breakdowns of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Court usage</li> <li>• Self-employed vs salaried coaches</li> <li>• Membership income and how this is used</li> </ul>	CC/HB
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## 2.2 Report from the Acting Director of Tennis, Christian Coombs

Highlights from the report include:

- With the new accounting system HT is implementing a new class and tracker system which will help to deliver more transparency within the figures enabling HT to better identify financial success of the various areas of HT.
- Two new bank accounts were opened in order to safeguard funds.
- HT adopted a new booking system which has delivered a number of benefits and is in ongoing development. Highlights include the ability to take more funds directly through this system, such as tournament fees. Reporting is greatly improved. A new coach app for register taking has been implemented making improvements for coaches and reducing administration for Operations Assistants. The new booking system also integrates with the accounting system.
- Website management has been brought in-house allowing quicker and easier management and this has an updated and improved look
- Coaching courses have been well attended and for the Summer term were almost fully subscribed with waiting lists on a number of session and Winter courses maintained this momentum
- With the new booking system our user volumes have been reset – however for the new financial year-to-date April-Dec, 5152 unique users are registered for court bookings, and 887 individuals are registered for coaching courses. Please note this does not indicate the full number of players on court, for example, regular doubles users who attend with other players but who don't make the bookings themselves won't appear in the bookings. Similarly, on courses a parent may be the registered user, but have 2 or more children participating on courses.
- School programmes continue with coaching taking place in numerous primary schools across the borough and the schools tournaments being well attended. Schools tournaments are assisted by Stoke Newington School students and junior players of Hackney Tennis. HT coaches also delivered two LTA Tennis for Kids initiatives.
- Holiday camp programme has been a very popular aspect of the overall programme. The first two weeks of Summer Camp filled up within 2 weeks of going online for bookings.
- Competitions – 11 adult teams are participating in the winter leagues, and over the Summer 40 adult and junior events and tournaments took place. HT held its first adult LTA sanctioned tournament and another 10 tournaments, including adult tournaments, are confirmed for the remainder of the Winter season.
- Community programme – New Age Games is very popular and HT has agreed to continue the Wednesday free session during the Winter months to maintain momentum. Tennis Tuesdays women's sessions also continue to be very popular.
- HT is continuing to make use of the spaces in the Tennis Pavilion for different organisations delivering community classes.
- HT retained its performance accreditation for the 10<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. It has recently been confirmed that this is being extended into 2018.
- Adult team programme – Four team training sessions are running at four venues. The Women's Team Training was established with

	<p>Raquel running the sessions. Two teams were winning teams in the 16/17 Winter season, two runners up, and three runners up in the Summer season.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach developments – Coaches have been awarded pay increases in-line with new qualification levels. Two coaches are currently training for new levels. A number of Junior players have participated in the Tennis Leaders programme completing their first Junior qualification including volunteering with Hackney Tennis. Two coaches were also invited to join the LTA performance programme which included travelling to France to work with top juniors and coaches at a major European Junior tournament, and one coach participating in LTA Regional programme coaching.</li> <li>• Money raised from club finals could go towards a club champion board.</li> <li>• HT retained Tennis Mark + status</li> </ul> <p>Issues were raised with the new booking system with users frustrated by two hour bookings being spread over different courts.  <b>CC to revisit this with OpenPlay.</b></p> <p>It was queried if HT is doing enough with the stakeholder groups that LBH is most interested in. OpenPlay is quite good at helping to identify demographic breakdowns, however users do not always indicate categories such as ethnicity. HT's work with schools and Over 50 players were highlighted.</p> <p>It was raised that many adults put in a lot of their own time to run team activity. Does HT have a Volunteer policy? It was suggested that volunteer time is a way of getting capacity into a club, and needs to be officially recognised in reports and accounts and volunteers need to be recognised for the work they do. The Board indicated that with so much focus on the tender and governance there are areas that haven't moved forward as much as they'd like and volunteering is an area they definitely wish to do more with.</p> <p>Improved communication was raised with the need for clear channels of communication for the adult community – who should be the point of contact, and how should they communicate with that person? The Board recognises that this is an issue requiring a new solution – that adult coordinators wasn't very successful – and a new solution is still needed. The tender process is making it difficult to add resources as we are unable to make new appointments under the current conditions.</p> <p>Costs associated with adult team tennis were showing that adult teams were running at a loss. Amount of management time that goes into adult tennis is significant. The objective is to maintain costs and not have costs increase, and if possible find ways of reducing costs. The suggestion of the adult coordinator role being taken on on a voluntary basis didn't receive positive feedback. It was suggested there is a lot of good will amongst team players to manage the teams, however this needs to be managed better to be maintained.</p> <p><b>2.3 Election of members of the Board of Directors</b></p> <p>The Chair explained that Nominations for the Board of Directors had been advertised in advance of the AGM.</p>	<p>CC</p>
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	<p>Of the existing Board of Directors, one third was required to stand down in keeping with the Articles – Justin Farley and Matheus Riolfi had previously stood down, David Harrison also stood down. The Chair asked the Meeting to thank them for their individual contributions to HT.</p> <p>Three nominations had been received by the due date, together with Proposers, and the relevant Nomination Form and Biography. The Chair asked each Nominee to identify themselves to the Meeting.</p> <p><b>The nominees were as follows: David Harrison, George Howe and Frank Sinkovec.</b></p> <p><b>The AGM supported election of the new Board Directors.</b></p> <p><b>2.4 Approval of appointment of the Auditors</b></p> <p>The Chair explained that a condition of the tender will be that an audit of accounts will be a requirement, which means approval to appoint the auditor is required at the AGM or a later EGM. Knox Cropper carried out the 2016/17 financial audit and the Board is happy with the work they have done.</p> <p><b>The AGM supported appointment of Knox Cropper as independent auditors.</b></p>	
3	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Throughout 2017 the bid for the running of tennis in Hackney has been ‘imminent’, however has yet to take place. Currently, the team that will be in charge of managing the tender is tied up with the London Fields Lido issues. Until this is resolved the tender will not move forward.</p> <p>It was originally hoped to appoint Baroness Billingham as Independent Chair as a great contact in tennis – however with the volume of work and personal health issues she felt she was unable to take on the role. The Board discussed in general terms the appointment of an independent chair with Phil Sandilands (TrioPlus), he felt that originally as there was potential for a dysfunctional board an independent chair would be helpful, however with the board working well this requirement is no longer considered necessary.</p> <p>A member raised that there was an element of irony that a number of parent members had not renewed their membership.</p> <p>LBH is concerned that there be competitive opportunities moving forward, which may be Hackney Tennis led or independently managed using the facilities. Hackney Tennis would prefer the affiliation with the adults continue.</p> <p>LBH is focused on healthy outcomes, helping people live independently, a much broader social outcome than just tennis – but recognises that tennis is a real asset that delivers at all levels of the community. Key priorities include over 50s, inactive people and children. LTA is very focused on participation. Important to recognise HT as a service provider delivering programmes on behalf of the council in contrast to a traditional tennis club model which is self-interested. HT operates in public parks with public courts.</p>	

Court maintenance issues, particularly the fences, has been brought to the attention of LBH repeatedly. All Hackney Park fencing repairs are out to tender and our fences will fall into this tender. Likewise issues with the court surfaces are regularly reported but the council has ultimate responsibility. LBH had also taken on responsibility for emptying bins. HT has tried to convince LBH that going forward the winner of the tender should be responsible for maintenance. LBH feel they have more experience of procurement and should therefore do it. As part of the tender HT will put forward a programme of maintenance, although this is no guarantee that our programme will be adopted.

**Hackney Tennis to revisit arrangement for emptying bins.**

Moving forward one of HT's biggest challenge is to deliver balance amongst the areas of the programme. A key goal is to invest in other sites and develop facilities etc. to be able to run tournaments or club matches or courses at other venues and free up Clissold Park. However, we can't force people to go to other venues. It's a balancing act with every single user. Programmes are running at 87% capacity and it makes sense to run more of those sessions which can cater to more people on court and discovering the benefits of tennis. There are requirements to make sure there are enough courts available for public booking at all times. At Clissold Park, two courts are kept available to the public. The only exceptions are during school time when running schools tournaments. When insufficient courts are available, coaches cannot book in advance, but can within the 7 days booking period as a general public customer. LBH has indicated they may want us to bring Spring Field Park courts into the programme. One area we may be able to do something about is floodlit capacity, although the sites best suited for this are Common Land, regardless there could be opportunities to do something here.

To conclude the board wished everyone a great Christmas.

The meeting closed at 20.40pm.

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