



Minutes of Board Meeting held 19:00 Tue 10 January 2023 (Meeting held at Clissold Pavilion and also virtually on Microsoft Teams)

Present:

Trustees: Howard Bennett (Chair), Cristian Winder, Maurine Lewin, Lisa Watch, David Pagliaro, David Harrison, Roger Waite

In attendance: James Mills (Managing Director)

Howard welcomed everyone to the meeting. Howard noted that actions points would be covered in James's report and the offer of the Head Coach position to Luke Barker and employment contract had been approved by email.

Howard handed over to James to provide his report.

Managing Director's Report

Health and Safety

On Wednesday 14 December a young man was acting erratically and aggressively towards park goers near the pavilion. James called the police and the man was arrested.

Safeguarding

Nothing to report on

HT Finances

James noted that the court usage has remained much higher than pre-COVID. Howard noted that if the courts at the less popular sites are renovated this would also have a positive impact on usage.

James gave an overview of the report produced by court maintenance company ETC that outlined the court works required at HT's sites. James noted that one court at Millfield has been closed due to safety concerns with root damage.

Knox Cropper uploaded HT's 21-22 charity accounts to Companies House in December. James will upload the accounts to the Charity Commission ahead of the 31 Jan deadline.

David Harrison asked if there was potential to build another court at Spring Hill. Lisa asked how often the courts were used and James said they were only busy at the weekends.

James said he expected the current surplus to be reduced by the end of the year and this year reflects a more balanced year compared to the previous two years that were affected by COVID and the large influx of players to tennis. James said that there is more scope to increase surplus such as growth in camps but explained that this would need to be done gradually.

David H asked if there would be mentoring for younger coaches leading up to the camps to assist with growth. James mentioned that Luke Barker will also oversee the LTA's Tennis Assistants course.



Howard asked why there was a reduction in holiday camp income. James said that there was a reduction in afternoon camps, the extreme heat over the summer, more families going away following COVID and managing numbers to ensure the camps were well managed.

Move to ClubSpark Software

James said HT has had a smooth transition to ClubSpark with only a few teething issues. Some negative feedback had been received from the coaching team that the system does not work well for them, and James will be reviewing with the whole team to find out what the difficulties are. James does not think that the coaches have lost any functionality.

James said that ClubSpark does have some issues which are creating work for the operations team, and he would be raising these with ClubSpark.

David P asked what the coaches' complaints were. James said that the coaches had complained about the ClubSpark court booking app not being effective.

Coaching Programme

Winter term

There are no major changes for the winter term programme. HT will be offering free tennis camps for primary school children receiving free school meals this year with 10 places on offer during the upcoming February half term camps.

Head Coach Recruitment

LTA L4 coach Luke Barker was offered the head coach role and Luke has accepted the position and signed a job offer letter, which will be followed up with an employment contract. Luke's start date has been set as Tue 21st February.

Disability Tennis Funding from Bright Ideas 4 Tennis

Tennis charity Bright Ideas 4 Tennis can provide Hackney Tennis with funding to supply 10 weeks of tennis coaching to 3 local disability schools and additionally would be able to fund the setting up of a regular Saturday disability tennis session at Hackney Downs. James thinks this is a good opportunity for HT to grow its disability programme and have told BI4T Director Danny Sapsford that HT is on board. Pupils will also be provided with free rackets etc, and we should be able to get some free in-house disability training provided to our coaching team too.

Fabian Kum

Fabian Kum coaches at London Fields and is not an HT coach. Fabian is now fully LTA accredited, with DBS, First Aid etc and has told James that he would be happy to join the HT team and start delivering 10 HT programme hours. James asked Board approval to trial this starting after the February half term, and this was agreed.



Facilities

Hackney Tennis Shop Refurbishment

The pavilion ground flooring has been completed successfully. HT now has two high-spec Wilson stringing machines, and four of the operations staff (Moses, Fahad, Sagal and Natalia) attended a two-day stringing course, delivered by ATP tour stringers. Carpentry firm Benjamin's Workshop were due to install the new display and desk before the end of December, but they have delays and will now complete the works in January. Once everything is installed and ready a new shop relaunch will be organised for the Spring.

Pavilion

The Trustees reviewed Fatemeh Beyad's 2022 AGM request to consider using the HT pavilion as a 'Warm Space' for local residents in need. The Trustees reviewed the request, and a unanimous decision was made not to proceed due to concerns with safeguarding HT's players (particularly juniors), ensuring the safety of HT's staff and the close proximity of established public 'warm spaces' (e.g. Stoke Newington Library & St Mary's Church) already serving the local area.

Millfields Court 4

Following advice from ETC that the root damage on court 4 at Millfields presents a health and safety risk we have closed the court. ETC will need to inspect the courts fully and supply a quote for the required works.