



Solihull Arden Club AGM Minutes 2024

Date: Monday 25th March 2024

Time: 8.00pm

Location: Function Room/Fitness Suite

In attendance:

- President: Richard Dumbleton
- Chairman: Alan Robinson
- Vice Chairman: John O'Malley
- Secretary: Natalie Reynolds-Ward
- Tennis & Padel Chairman: Paul Stanley
- Squash Chairman: Richard Lowe
- Gym Chairman: Ken James
- General Manager: Mark Carroll

The meeting was opened by Club President Richard Dumbleton, who announced it was the 51st AGM held by the 'Solihull Arden Club' and welcomed a record number of members to the AGM.

1. Apologies

- Pam Telfer (Treasurer)
- Gary Telfer
- Pet Lions
- Melony Lions

2. Approval of Previous AGM Minutes

- *Mark Carroll proposer of last year's minutes (27th March 2023)*
- *Tim Woodfield seconds last year's minutes*

3. Club Rules & Bye Laws

Richard announced that the Management Committee had made no changes to the club rules and bylaws in the last year

4. Report of the Chairman

Alan advised that this was another very successful year for the club and expressed his thanks to Mark, the team, the Management Committee and all the club members who play and support the club. Alan reported that the club has seen a further increase in overall membership by 23% taking the total number of members to 1,595. The standouts being more than 100 people who visited the



club with interest in gym/fitness only actually joining with Premier membership and many people upgrading from gym only membership to Premier during the year.

These increases have brought in additional income which has enabled us to reinvest in our Club, maintaining and developing high quality facilities for our members as well as starting to build up a reserve in the bank. Alan highlighted a number of areas that had received investment during the year and projects planned for next year. This year included the upgrade to squash court 4 with a glass back wall and new equipment for the gym and fitness suite. Whilst projects on the agenda for 2024 include upgrading floodlights to Tennis courts 4,5,6 & 7 and replacing the doors from the bar out to the patio.

5. Report of the Treasurer

In the absence of Pam Telfer (Club Treasurer) Richard Dumbleton read the accounts. Pam sends her apologies to all members for the lateness of sharing the accounts, this was due to the final report being later than expected. Richard confirmed an independent accounting company continued to manage our accounts in 2023 and the accounts were approved by management committee on 20th March.

Richard emphasised this was a fantastic year for our club with Mark continuing to build the membership and trading income driving record net profits of £105.1k compared to £43.5k in 2022 and £1.4k in 2021.

Richard pointed out the increase to profits are as a result of the increase in membership subscriptions up by £94k, trading income by £7k and sundry income of £13k. He explained this has been marginally offset by increases to £51K in general overheads costs including increases to staff costs (£6K) and maintenance costs (£25k). Richard confirmed the Club had £68K in the bank at the end of the year 2023 and was in a very stable position meaning we have been able to start spending on improvements such as £4k on the squash court upgrade.

Q. Dean McCloud - Why is there such a large stock balance for the bar at the end of the year?

Mark: We purposely over ordered in December in the region of 3 times the usual volume. This was to ensure we did not stock out as Baby Bottles were not delivering over the Christmas Period and we did not want to disappoint members. Stock levels have been run down back to normal levels during January and February. An offer of going into detail was made on Pam's return but was not required.

Q. Dean McCloud: Can you provide full disclosure of the accounts?

Richard: Yes a full set of accounts can be made available on request on Pam's return.

Q. Ian Lightowler: Can you provide details on the equipment leases and what this covers?

Richard: Pam will be able to talk though this as unfortunately I do not have the information. We can arrange an evening so anyone who is interested can attend. **AP1 - Management Committee to make arrangements for a night to overview accounts**

Q. Nick Canning: Should we consider paying off the loans with the cash in the bank to reduce interest costs?



Paul: There is no benefit in paying off the Padel Court fixed loan, however there would be reduction in interest rates if we were to pay off the variable loan. However this needs to be balanced against building a sink fund to cover any emergencies. **AP2 - Management Committee to review when the annual membership subscriptions have come in.**

6. Report of the General Manager

Mark opened by thanking everyone for their support over the last 12 months, reiterating the comments made by Alan and Richard on an exceptionally positive year in terms of membership growth and trading income and that financial stability had been attained.

Mark took us through the Club's progress over the last 3 year starting when he joined in December 2021 and the finances were showing a loss through to today when the club is making a significant profit.

Mark shared that good news that we were now back in a position to be able to open back up the ability for members to book out the function room. This is restricted to members only but the Club has managed to secure the certificates and licences required.

Mark shared his view this Club is a 'club for everyone' and no one should feel discriminated or feel uncomfortable.

7. Receive and adopt the accounts

- *Ted Collis proposed acceptance of 2023 Club accounts*
- *Pete Kenyon seconds acceptance of 2023 Club accounts*

8. Election of the President, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary

Election of new Secretary Natalie Reynolds-Ward

- *Chris Beal proposer for election of Natalie Reynolds-Ward as Club Secretary*
- *Belinda Faraday seconds election of Natalie Reynolds-Ward as Club Secretary*

9. Election of the Management Committee

No other nominees have been made

- *Pat Lundeth proposes the re-election of the Committee*
- *Mark Collis seconds the re-election of the Committee*

10. AOB



Charitable Trust

Tim Forsyth provided an update on the Solihull Arden Club Charitable Trust. Tim is on the Trust Committee and this was set up last year. Tim went onto described how as a Charity they have far more scope to appeal for funds from authorisations as well as donations from members, helping the club in getting grants and receiving funds for developing facilities. Tim highlighted some of the work that had been done with the NHS and how this could be extended with having covered courts that could be played on all year round.

Questions from the floor

Q. Dave Burnley - Previously people had to commit to a year's membership. Why can we not go back to this or charge more for short term members i.e. those that only join in summer months?

Mark: The problem disappears when we reach capacity at the club and there is a waiting list, However we are aware of the issue, there are a number of options such as higher fees or recovering months missed. On the flip side we need to ensure we don't become uncompetitive. **AP3 - The committee will take this away and agree a solution.**

Q. Robert Witherington – The noise in the bar is unbearable. What are the club doing about this?

Mark: We recognise there is a problem and was made worse when the carpet was taken out. There are solutions that include acoustic (sound absorbing fabric panels). These are not cheap, the committee will review costs and options.

Q. Nigel Busby – Given the increasing number of children and people in the club, we need to review the sauna standards of dress.

Mark: One of the area we are looking to improve next year is the sauna, with entrances straight off the changing rooms. However we will look at putting up some signs in the short term.

Q. Steve Edgeworth – I have seen that planning approval has been given for a kick boxing gym on the club premises, this isn't really in keeping with the club. Should this not have been sign off by the members? And wants financial benefits?

Mark: This is a Jujitsu not kick boxing club and managed by Braulio Estima and is widely considered to be one the best jiu jitsu practitioners and teachers in the world, and runs antibullying classes for children over Solihull. No decision has been made or contracts signed, we did not think it would even get through planning permission which is why we have not brought it to the members to date.

Alan: These plans are in concept stage and are to use a current area of dead space. The area has not been played on for over 4 years and following a report by Euroclay it cannot be resurfaced due to tree roots that have a TPO on them coming up through the court. We looked at how we could create revenue and this will drive £100k in rent over 5 years.

Q. Nigel Canning – Should changes of the level and potential impact of the Jujitsu Building for example not come to the members for a decision?

Alan: It is obvious from the comments the communication strategy has not kept up with the growth of the Club and we need to do something differently. One option is a 6 monthly update on plans



with a Q&A session, the committee will review and feedback to the members. ***AP4 Management Committee to implement an improved communication plan***

Q. Michael Dean – I don't understand why can't we resurface the court. Surely if they develop the Jujitsu building on court it will also interfere with the tree roots.

Mark: Euroclay have been out to review and provided a report that can be shared if required.

Tim Woodfield: To clear up any confusion the building will sit on concrete pads so will not interfere with the tree roots.

Q. Steve Edgeworth – I am not comfortable with the loss of the function room for parties and social functions and would like to understand what benefits are in restricting social events.

Alan: Shared the extensive list of already planned social events. Further, now we have overcome the licence difficulties the function room will become available to members to book events. We do have to balance this with the significant increase to gym/fitness members but there is no reason why we can accommodate both.

Q. Shirley Robinson – The big problem is that there are only 3 people on the social committee and with the increased memberships we cannot manage to put on more events. Is there anyone that can provide some help, resource?

1 person volunteered for this action .

Q. I want to raise the entrance to the Club is a safety and security risk. It is so dark if you are walking to the Club and it doesn't feel safe. Its also a safety issue with cars coming in and leaving not being able to see pedestrians.

Mark: There are some simple cheap solutions we could implement on the entrance so improve the lighting and make pedestrians more visible. We will add it to the management committee agenda.

Richard concluded the meeting and thanked everyone for attending – there was agreement from the floor that the club had had a fantastic year.



Actions

| | Action | Owner | Status |
|------------|--|--------------|---------------|
| AP1 | Arrange an evening session hosted by Pam (Treasurer) to explain the accounts in more detail | MC | Open |
| AP2 | Review options for paying off the variable loan vs building a sink fund when the annual membership subscriptions have come in. | MC | Open |
| AP3 | Review rules for members that are only joining for the summer months. | MC | Open |
| AP4 | Management Committee to implement an improved communication plan | MC | Open |