

# **CHELTENHAM WHADDON BOWLING CLUB**

27 November 2023

## **AGM 96: OPEN FORUM**

### **Introduction**

1. This document is a summary of issues raised at the Open Forum which followed our AGM on 10 November 2023. Some of the questions from members were answered at the time and require no further action. Other members made suggestions and highlighted matters of concern, which the incoming Committee needs to address and follow up with appropriate action. The agenda for our next meeting on 7 December 2023 will include an item to debate and prioritise the issues raised.

### **Financial Deficit**

2. Micky Martin asked what action the Committee proposed to take to ensure that the deficit we incurred this year would not increase in the future. The Treasurer, Dave Simmons, noted that 'one-off' items had made up a large part of this year's deficit, but we could not ignore increasing costs, mostly in our energy and water bills. The AGM had already agreed to increase subscriptions and bar prices had gone up to maintain the average margin of 40%, which would go some way to offset the anticipated rises. We had a good program of social events which made substantial contributions and he urged members to invite friends and families to attend these. The Committee would also review our outgoings regularly to try to cut costs wherever we could.

### **Match Results**

3. David Hearle suggested that captains should post results of club games, perhaps a board in the lobby, as we go through the season. This would engage members in any successes (rather than relying on the summary given at the AGM). We also now have WhatsApp groups, where team captains could post match results and reports and they should be encouraged to use this.

### **Use of Car Park on CTFC match days**

4. Carol Savage asked whether the hiring out of the club car park as a fan zone was at the expense of losing bowls matches. The primary purpose of the club was to allow members to play bowls and we should do nothing to disrupt this. The Secretary, Andy Todd, replied that so far the arrangements had gone well and only one game had been lost, but would probably have gone anyway as the opposing club was unlikely to raise a team. In future, we would try to avoid home fixtures on Saturdays during the crossover periods at the beginning and end of the bowling season (April and August – September), since we didn't know until mid-summer the exact dates of football matches.

5. Derek Fry expressed concern that, having extended our licence to cover the use of the car park for sale of alcohol, we could be in danger of losing it for the clubhouse, if there were any disturbance or trouble among fans. Andy replied that the catering company employed trained staff and numbers were monitored by football club stewards who were always present and thus far no problems had occurred. David Hearle noted that there had been one objection to the extension and we had accepted police and council conditions to avoid nuisance: as long as we fulfilled these obligations, it was very unlikely that our licence would be withdrawn.

6. Mike Newman asked that members should be informed when the catering company decided not to use the car park. There were matches when very few away fans were likely to attend and it would not be worthwhile to set up the fan zone. On these occasions it would be possible for members to use the car park, rather than having to find alternative parking. Andy agreed to ask the company to let us know in advance of any date when they would not be present.

## **Catering at Home Matches**

7. Referring to the Club's intention to resume offering teas after home matches next season, Jacqui Simmons said she hoped the club would not be expecting members to provide sandwiches and cakes at no cost, especially since it tended to be the same people who volunteered. She proposed an automatic payment of £5 for anyone providing sandwiches and cakes to cover their costs, which the club should pay automatically. It would be up to the member to accept or decline the payment. The meeting was in favour of this arrangement and after some debate agreed the £5 would be a reasonable amount.

8. Dave Hooper had noticed that more clubs had been offering teas in the past season and we hoped that other clubs would reciprocate, when we reverted to previous, i.e. pre-Covid, practice. He hoped that more members would volunteer to help out with catering in future.

## **Management Committee Members**

9. Julia Gray inquired about the role of the 4 members elected to the Management Committee, who had no specific role, unlike the club officers. Andy explained that they are there to act in the interest of ordinary members, to represent their views and act as the main means of communication between Committee and members. The Committee intended to put up a board showing officers, with a picture and a brief description of responsibilities, so that members would know who the officers were and what they dealt with, which should be in place by the end of the year.

## **Induction of new bowlers**

10. Paul Leake had concerns about the induction of new bowlers over the past season, which for him had been somewhat lacking, for example, in terms of being taught about how to score and measure, etiquette around the green and coaching generally. He thought that the club have a more organised and structured system in place to make sure that new bowlers learnt the essentials to prepare them more effectively for club games. In discussion we accepted that we don't make the best use of our coaching resources and the Committee would develop a plan for coaching before the start of next season. Carol Savage said that the approach and how new members were taught was at least as important – we should not expect new members to absorb everything straight away and when they erred, we should offer advice sympathetically.

## **Social Media**

11. Julie Beaven thought we could make even more use of the WhatsApp groups that had been set up in the last few months. It could be a very useful medium for members to ask for help on any subject relevant to bowls and the club. She appreciated that not everyone at the club was familiar with it but we should be offering help to those who wanted to become involved.

## **Open Forums**

12. Though it was the first time we had held this type of forum; Dave Simmons thought that the discussions had been very useful and wondered whether we should hold similar sessions more frequently than once a year. The meeting was in favour of the suggestion that we should have 2 -3 per year and at least one just before the start of the bowling season.

Andy Todd  
Hon. Secretary