

## Minutes of SWF Committee Meeting: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020 7.00 - 9.00 pm

### 1) Present:

- a) Brian Wilson, Paul Francis, Stephen Custance-Baker, Tony Mayer, Peter Kirby, Richard Jackson, David Enticknap (part of the meeting).

### 2) Apologies

- a) Robert Moss

### 3) Minutes of last meeting

- a) Previously circulated.
- b) Agreed as correct.

### 4) Matters arising

- a) Any matters arising are covered in the agenda.

### 5) Treasurer's report

- a) Update on agreed action points:
  - i) Outstanding Cygnet invoice - payment received
  - ii) Affiliate membership fee:
    - (1) **Agreed this should not be reduced**
    - (2) **This and other fees will be set each year and put to the AGM for approval**
  - iii) Access to accounts by Chair
    - (1) No confirmation of access received by Brian
      - (a) **Action: Peter to follow up**
    - (2) Judith Moore Bursary
      - (a) Monies have been transferred and the fund has been separated out in the accounts
      - (b) There have been no transactions this year
      - (c) **The fund will be reported at the AGM and promoted via Cygnet in the new year**
  - iv) Budget
    - (1) Peter presented the budget and made the following points
      - (a) The reserves are high considering we have few fixed costs and an annual turnover of around £2.5k
      - (b) Noted that we have agreed to hold a Development Grant reserve in the region of £2k
      - (c) Discussed options
        - (i) To reduce the reserves by £200 pa over a 10-year time scale
          - 1. This incidentally is the predicted loss for 2021
        - (ii) To plan to spend the money on e.g. seminars, other development activities
      - (d) **Agreed to reduce the reserves gradually** - this gives us the flexibility to spend if the occasion presents itself and to adapt to any change in how clubs are supported.
    - (2) There will be no further SWAN production costs
    - (3) The revised fee schedule was presented - fees represent the amount payable after applying the early payment discount
      - (a) Discussed whether clubs playing GC only would be disadvantaged but agreed that with each fee reducing by the same %age, this should not be an issue
      - (b) Important to distinguish between the SC spring and autumn tournaments and the SC League.
      - (c) **New schedule agreed**

(4) Noted anticipated loss of £400 for 2020

(a) This is considered mild in the light of Covid-19 consequences for play

6) **League Secretary's report**

- a) I have no activities to report as there have been no matches. The only friendly match I was to be involved in (Sidmouth v Taunton Deane) was cancelled when new restrictions were announced. Due in part to concern about perceptions of too many people.
- b) Noted that Camerton & Peasedown ran their GC doubles. This went down well but needed careful management. Congratulations to Brian & Mo who won.
- c) CA tournaments have been taking place with some adjustments.
- d) We have a proposal for a rule change that brings the deadline for submitting match dates forward by 1 week (to Jan 24<sup>th</sup>) and I see no reason to change that.
- e) I have now heard back from the majority of the clubs' Match Secretaries and no-one is opposed to the rescheduling of the 2021 deadlines.
  - i) Discussed concerns that fees need to be paid well in advance of playing the matches - and whether fees should be collected earlier in the process  
**(1) Agreed Stephen and Peter would monitor this and to be discussed further nearer the time**
  - ii) Confirmed that lawn fees will be those set by the CA.
  - iii) Still aiming for finals in Sept 2021
- f) National Short Croquet - no play this year - agreed that the SW qualifying team for 2020 should play in 2021
  - i) **Linda to liaise with John Grimshaw**

7) **Development Officer's report**

- a) Zoom
  - i) Overall, I have been pleased with the quality of our SWF Zoom meetings for clubs. Attendance has been good but I do wonder how well clubs distribute the information to club members?  
**(1) Agreed that wording on invitations is revised to clarify who the target audience is. Linda**
  - ii) I am trying to reflect what is happening at the CA and hope in the future to invite Executive Board members to attend to explain their roles and to hear directly from SWF clubs in a Q & A session.
  - iii) Paul Hetherington (Marketing and Communications) has accepted an invitation for the October Zoom and I am sure his presentation will be well received by our clubs.
  - iv) Agreed that a goal for the meetings is to make this a forum for bringing the CA closer to clubs. **Actions: Paul**  
**(1) Invitations to people e.g. Beatrice, John Reddish**  
**(2) To keep the agenda focussed on SW concerns, clubs to be invited to submit questions beforehand**
- b) CA Development Committee
  - i) The impact of Zoom meetings has made a big change to how this committee operates. In the past, there were only two opportunities per year for clubs to bid for grants or loans. Now the model has been changed to call Zoom meetings whenever new bids are received. This means that each bid is subject to a far more forensic investigation and so we will need to provide a higher level of advice to clubs.
  - ii) The other news from the CA is that more use of the CA's financial reserves for club loans is to be launched. The thinking is that the current return on investment is marginal and that the CA would benefit more from offering interest free loans for clubs to grow membership numbers. This will lead to greater income for the CA, hopefully exceeding income from interest.

- c) CA Club Awards
  - i) Application for these awards will open soon and will need promoting in the next Cygnet. **Action: Paul, Linda**
  - ii) St. Agnes won the Apps Healey Award in 2018 (the awards are made every two years).
  - iii) I feel there is at least one club in the SWF that should apply!
- d) Moreton in Marsh
  - i) I have just made my second visit (again in the rain).
  - ii) The site has now been levelled and fenced (to about a height of 2 metres). This work has used up their original funding £23k plus the CA grant £5k.
  - iii) They have a quote for a substantial clubhouse (£14k) and have an offer for a free metal container for equipment.
  - iv) We had a long meeting to discuss how recruitment and fund raising can be planned this winter in advance of the two lawns opening in April 2021.
    - (1) I have discussed funding with John Reddish (CA Development Chair) and I have the green light to work up an application for a £5k grant AND £5k loan. Clearly this would go a long way to meeting the club's funding for stage 2 of the project.
    - (2) Paul Hetherington has agreed to work with them to secure sponsorship
  - v) I will visit again the Spring when I'm sure they will need further input on the lawns.
- e) South Wilts Cricket Club (Salisbury)
  - i) I was passed contact details, from Peter Nelson, about this club's interest in setting up a croquet club on their substantial sports ground. I have emailed twice and phoned but have had no reply. I will continue to pursue this lead. The club would make an excellent addition to the SWF with its outstanding facilities.
- f) Abbey (Street)
  - i) The club membership has dropped to six (five in the winter) and there has been no play on their lawn this year. Lawn condition is deteriorating. We have been asked to support them with marketing and funds.
  - ii) Brian Wilson has recently visited the club and John Reddish has been in communication with them.
  - iii) In summary, we are not confident about this club's future under the existing structure. However, we are agreed that there is potential for a **new** club in the Glastonbury/Street area.
- g) Peter Moore's donation of a wheel chair
  - i) I met with Peter last week and he showed me the wheel chair he would like to donate to the SWF. It has been adapted for use on a bowls or croquet lawn. It is nearly new and in excellent condition. I have already approached one club to see if they want it on 'permanent' loan.
  - ii) **Agreed this be offered to Swindon on long-term loan and that other clubs be informed of its availability in Cygnet**

## 8) Coaching Officer's report

- a) I have updated the SWF webpage to provide clear information about how we can help clubs without coaches, the coaching resources available regionally and nationally, and how to obtain and upgrade qualifications.
- b) I have sent out my autumn email to coaches to ask about coaching activity this year. Of particular interest will be responses about recruitment and handling of new members - several clubs have reported an increase in new member applications, following on from the early re-starting of croquet compared with other sports.

- c) The planned Coaches Refresher Workshop had to be postponed. Covid progress permitting, we shall try to hold it in 2021.
- d) Playing to the Rules on line courses commence on 14<sup>th</sup> October

**9) Handicapping Officer's report**

- a) The website now provides links to information about various handicapping questions.
- b) Most of this provides links to other websites so the page will not need frequent updating.
- c) Clear information is given about support for club handicappers, how to resolve handicap queries, and our analysis of the previous year's results to see if handicaps of particular club have drifted out of alignment.
- d) Noted that two Abbey players approached Stephen to secure GC handicaps - this is in process
  - i) It's good to see this enthusiasm from a small club

**10) CA / Federation Focus Group**

- a) Brian reported on some of the themes being discussed
  - i) We seem to be comparatively active in the SW with development support to clubs
  - ii) Leagues have been played in some areas
  - iii) Discussion on CA Affiliate membership and how this relates to Fed membership
    - (1) CA accept full or associate member clubs as members of the CA for Fed purposes
  - iv) All are planning on-line AGMs

**11) CA Feds review group**

- a) Still defining the scope of Fed activity
- b) Looking at clear plans for the future which haven't yet been identified
- c) Considering ways of increasing number of clubs - partnerships with Bowls clubs could have huge potential

**12) SWAN**

- a) Our suggestion to stop producing this as a hard copy has met with sadness but no opposition - see comments received below
- b) **Agreed we consider how to adapt the non-league information it contained** e.g. committee and SWF info, tournament adverts - into a format suitable for our website. Rhona has agreed to continue to work with us on this. Action in the new year.

**13) Cygnet**

- a) 7 issues circulated this year
- b) Next issue due by end of October

**14) Website**

- a) There has been no recent call for a new co-ordinator - there are probably other tasks we need help with
- b) **Agreed these be featured in Cygnet after the AGM**

**15) AGM**

- a) Clubs must have received: agenda, proposals and list of nominations by 18<sup>th</sup> Oct
- b) Nominations for next committee confirmed
- c) Constitutional proposals - draft circulated to clubs for comments

- i) Noted Paul Pristavec's request to consider remaining with a fixed date for returning proposals and nominations rather than the current proposed wording of 6 weeks prior to the meeting
  - (1) **Agreed to remain with original proposed wording to allow flexibility if there is a significant change to the date of AGM**
- ii) **Agreed clubs outside the area can apply for Full Membership but not Affiliate membership**
- iii) **Updated draft #13 agreed**
- d) League rules proposals
  - i) **Agreed as circulated**
- e) Reports from officers
  - i) **To be written by Chair, Treasurer, League Secretary, Handicapping Officer, Coaching Officer**
  - ii) **These should be concise and sent to Paul by 1<sup>st</sup> November (8<sup>th</sup> for Peter) to allow time for formatting as Powerpoint slides**
- f) Report from CA Reps
  - i) **Agreed they are to be asked to present a concise combined report and submit to Paul by 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. Linda**
- g) Practicalities of the meeting
  - i) Paul and Brian will co-host, monitor voting and raised hands
  - ii) Voting
    - (1) Essentially it will be one device - one vote
      - (a) However, it will be possible for one club delegate to carry both votes for that club provided Paul is informed beforehand
      - (b) It will not be possible for a club to carry another club's votes
        - (i) It was felt each club should be able to provide a delegate via Zoom - which can also be accessed by phone
        - (ii) Each delegate will be asked to name their screen with their name and club
  - iii) Attendance
    - (1) In view of concerns at the 100 attendance limit it was **agreed to explore the cost of upgrading the contract and meeting the cost of this.**
    - (2) **Agreed to set up a trial run beforehand. Paul**

#### 16) AOB

- a) **It was agreed that consideration be given to introducing individual competitions within the region**
  - i) Consideration to be given to the practicalities of this e.g. handicap/level, AC/GC, to avoid them being dominated by fast improvers, hosting arrangements
- b) The idea of a most improved player award was also mooted - for further consideration
- c) CA AGM - noted that those attending will only be able to vote postally in advance - this and other concerns have been expressed to Ian Vincent.
  - i) **Email to Ian will be circulated to committee. Linda**

#### 17) Date of next meeting

- a) AGM 15<sup>th</sup> November
- b) **Draft schedule for 2021 to be circulated. Linda**