

## **Kendal Victoria Bowling Club**

### **Minutes of the Emergency Committee Meeting**

**Friday, 20 March 2020 from 7pm**

#### **1. Apologies**

Received from Geoff Thompson, Alan Medcalf, Sue Hillbeck, John & Jackie Foster.

Present: Steve Cornell (chairperson), Alan Gilpin (secretary), Simon Airey, Paul Crossland, Dan Hartley & Martin Blamire.

In attendance: Dave Hourihan (Trustee) & Alan Sanderson (President).

#### **2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 26 February 2020**

These were proposed to be accepted as a true record by Paul Crossland, seconded by Simon Airey and agreed by all.

#### **3. Matters Arising**

##### **a. (Re)Election of Welfare Officer(s)**

Alan Gilpin stated that he'd contacted Martin Blamire after the last meeting, and confirmed he was happy to continue as primary welfare officer. He also emailed Denise Noble regarding the appointment of Martin Kinley as vice-welfare officer – see appendix 1. We need to double check with Martin Kinley whether he followed this up to get his DBS arranged.

##### **b. Floodlights**

The work is scheduled for Monday / Tuesday next week (23/24 March).

#### **4. Secretary Position / Report**

Alan Gilpin stated that he has resigned his position on the committee, and as secretary of the club, on 10 March, but that the coronavirus outbreak had left the club in a position where it needed a secretary and so he had decided to continue on a temporary basis, if the committee wanted him to do so. He reminded the committee that the club did not necessarily need to replace him at an EGM should they wish to uphold his original resignation, as the rules only state that the secretary role needs to be appointed annually which it was. Steve Cornell thanked Alan Gilpin for the offer of staying on in the circumstances and for the clarification on the EGM, and suggested that the committee accept Alan's offer to continue. This was unanimously agreed.

Alan Gilpin then asked to go through his report before addressing the issues that lead to his resignation, as follows: -

Referees – an email had been received from Colin Haworth, with a poster calling for new referees, which had been put on the notice board.

Insurance – an email had been received from Colin Haworth, informing us that the insurance could now be renewed online. This had been forwarded to Jackie Foster and Simon Airey, and Simon confirmed that this was in hand.

Allithwaite – an email had been received, stating that they got their date wrong for their mixed pairs, and would now clash with our Autumn Singles at the end of August. Alan Gilpin stated that this annoyed him somewhat, because clubs are supposed to take their dates to the Kendal &

District League Executive Meeting and if they got their date wrong then that was their problem, but also that he didn't think it would cost us many entries and that we already had our list out and some entries in, so should keep our date the same. This was agreed.

Safeguarding – A document of key contacts had been received by email, which was passed on to Martin Blamire.

Floodlight League – Lindale have asked to withdraw from the 2020 competition, but are hopeful that Laraine & Bill Keating will independently take the place. A reply had been sent to both parties, explaining that they were already signed up to play in the 2020 season, so would need to find someone to take their place or would be liable for the entry fee, and Laraine had been given until 15 May to confirm either way.

Alan Gilpin then stated that the reasons for his resignation started, really, at the club doubles tournament. He said that a lot of work goes into preparing for the event: getting entries in the close season, talking to the greenkeeper regularly regarding the condition of the green and weather forecasts, liaising with the caterers etc. He said that he was knocked back on the day by the appearance of Lesley Blackstone, who marched straight up to him and asked about renewing memberships for her, and her family – with all that transpired in 2019 he had hoped to see the back of the Blackstones from the club and the fact that they had (albeit legitimately) renewed their memberships meant that he would have to present himself in a pleasant manner towards them for the next 11 months, despite the outrageous letters she had put in last year. He stated that it had really tested his mental health, which had not been great with the busy home and work life he was experiencing at that time. This state of mind did not therefore combine well when the following day (coupled with a hangover), he was made aware of Alan Sanderson's social media posts – see appendix 2 for all social media posts over the period 8-10 March.

## **5. Social Media Policy**

Alan Sanderson stated that he has now had chance to reflect on the posts, and whilst he still stands by the points raised, accepted that the presentation was probably not in the best interests of the club. He said that he came to the club on the Sunday after the doubles competition and was appalled by the condition green, so wanted to make members aware of it, and that they had a responsibility to replace divots and look after the playing surface so that we had a good green to start the summer season. Alan Gilpin said that he accepted that whilst Alan Sanderson had a reasonable opinion and point to put to the committee, using social media was not the appropriate way to do it. He continued to say that he had made similar social media errors himself in the past, and had learned from it, and that the social group on there for the club should be used for simply that, social use. He clarified that he had previously been tasked with reviewing social media content and given the power to remove anything he felt was derogatory to the club and/or its members, or if it included expletives. He felt justified in removing Alan Sanderson's posts, but understood on the flipside that perhaps that would get under the skin of the President. He said that he felt all matters of this nature should be put to the committee, but urged Alan Sanderson to talk to people first; had he spoken to the greenkeeper, had he spoken to the chairman – no.

Dan Hartley spoke up, as he had backed Alan Sanderson's post online. He said that he saw both sides, but believed that Alan Sanderson had a right to free-speech with this manner. Alan Gilpin responded to say that free-speech is not a given on social media; your own posts can be reported to Facebook administrators and removed, with potential bans for putting up content deemed inappropriate. On pages and groups, you are at the mercy of the administrators of those pages and groups, who had the right to remove anything they do not like.

At this time, the chairperson said that we seemed to be getting to a close in the conversation. All parties

had learnt something from it but all parties had the club at heart, which is the important thing. He asked Alan Gilpin if he would be able to put together a suggested social media policy for the club to review at the next meeting. Alan said that he could crib this from his employment policy document, as all employers should now have this in place, and that if we followed that at the club then Alan Sanderson would be sacked! He didn't think this was necessarily appropriate in the circumstances, but would put something together for the committee to review.

## **6. Coronavirus and its Effect on the Club**

- a. Friendlies vs Ambleside and Burneside – both have already been cancelled by our opponents
- b. League bowling – all suspended for now (see appendix 3)
- c. Social bowling – a discussion was had about the risks of playing crown green bowls with the coronavirus outbreak. Alan Gilpin stated that the greenkeeper, Alan Medcalf, had emailed his opinion on opening and stated that at this time, he would be happy to do so from early next week, but also that he would understand the decision to remain closed.  
Alan Gilpin and Steve Cornell stressed the importance of providing a venue to allow its members to exercise, as advised by Safeguarding Cumbria's Denise Noble earlier in the week. At the time of speaking, the Government had advised of social distancing, but had not locked the country down. Therefore, it was felt that the club could open for those willing to accept the risk themselves. Paul Crossland added that we could do a "tee time" system for members, to ensure that there were not too many players on the green at the same time, but it was felt that this would not be necessary, as many of our members would be self-isolating.
- d. Open competitions – as the first one is not until the end of April, it was agreed that we could wait for now to make a decision on whether to go ahead or not.
- e. Club competitions – similar to the open competitions, the committee felt there was no need to panic and cancel any events as yet, with the first one not due to happen until 18 April. Dan Hartley added that Ian Gilpin sponsors the Forbes Cup, and was self-isolating, so this competition may need pushing to later in the year – Alan Gilpin suggested that it swapped places with the Bob Kirkby, as none of that family come anymore so wouldn't mind and this was provisionally agreed. Paul Crossland suggested that maybe we could do something on the Tuesdays and Thursdays, with no league bowling to start the season, and Alan Gilpin added that he thought we could run the Moscrop on those nights this year, which was provisionally agreed.
- f. Floodlight league – okay for now, as September is far enough away to assume it will go ahead as planned. Alan Gilpin said that he would email clubs shortly to ask for entrance fees.

## **7. New Membership Applications**

Ian Stanley has applied as a new member, and needs registering with the BCGBA. This was agreed unanimously, and Alan Gilpin passed the application form and cheque for £42 (membership + registration) to Simon Airey, who was covering for Jackie Foster as Treasurer during the coronavirus outbreak.

## **8. Any Other Business**

Martin Blamire stated that he was disappointed that so many teams in the club doubles were made up of members playing with other members. Alan Gilpin stated that he felt the same, especially as the four finalists were all members of the club, but we opened it up to get more teams in the event, and the competition was under review for next year.

Steve Cornell wanted to talk about member renewals, with the Lesley Blackstone being entitled to pay her money despite all of the issues she caused last year, and the impact that was still clearly having on the club following Alan Gilpin's explanation of his resignation earlier. Steve asked whether there was any scope to reject the renewal, but Alan Gilpin stated that we added parts to the rules at the 2020 AGM, but they would not be able to be used until the 2021 AGM.

**9. Time and Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed that we will stick to the existing schedule, subject to having to change due to any restrictions the virus causes (i.e. lockdown scenario).

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:56pm.