

Minutes of BN Men's Section meeting held at 7.30pm on Monday 28th October at Nottingham Proprietary BC

The meeting was opened at 7.30 by Lee Garrett who welcomed all members present to the first AGM in five years of the Men's Section and stated that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to elect new officers to form a full committee.

A point of order was raised by Chris Smith (Arnold Park) who stated that there was nothing in the constitution (2012) to enable the Men's Section to have their own AGM. After discussion, it was agreed that it be called an Emergency General Meeting.

Lee Garrett went on to say it was the first meeting of any kind in five years and he hoped it heralded a new start in Bowls Nottinghamshire with a full committee rather than just a couple of officers.

Roll Call

A roll call of members showed that 16 clubs (of 29) were represented with a total of 28 delegates. Apologies for absence were received from Attenborough, Blidworth and Brierley Park.

Introduction

Lee Garrett introduced Tony Allcock MBE OBE who had offered to chair the meeting. Tony began by saying that he was here to help and that he was pleased to see how many members were in attendance. He said that he had been born on the Nottinghamshire side of Leicestershire and he had been to most of the greens in the County except this one because he couldn't find it tonight. He had been concerned about Nottinghamshire because volunteers are hard to find these days. He went on to thank everyone who had given past service to the Men's & Ladies sections over the past years and that he was delighted that new members had come forward and added that he was glad to be here so that he could provide help and support. He had been given a copy of the constitution prior to the meeting and he was here to see due process is followed. The constitution was created in 2012 but needs updating and some work done to be compliant going forward.

Minutes of previous meeting

There were no recorded minutes as no meetings had been held for five years.

Financial report

Lee Garrett circulated copies of the audited financial report up to 14 June 2019, the point at which Chris Smith had resigned. He added that he had maintained the accounts since that date and an updated report would be available once he had passed everything on to the new treasurer.

Competitions report

Lee Garrett stated that he had fulfilled this role for six years and was pleased to say that the number of entries had increased each year. The two-wood singles competition began in 2012 with 6 entries and was now held over one day at East Bridgford with 43 entries in 2018 and 39 entries in 2019. However, some competitions like the Senior Fours and Junior Pairs were struggling to get significant entries. In 2020 we have £800 sponsorship from generous donors. Semi-finals day will be at East Leake on 5 July and All-Finals day (National and Domestic) on 19 July at Newark Northern. Lee issued a sheet containing all competition dates for 2020. He then mentioned Elliot Guthrie and Jack Emmerson (Newark Northern) who had reached the semi-finals of The National Pairs at Leamington, a fantastic achievement. Lee finished by saying that things were looking good and he was happy to continue in the post.

Midland Counties report

Chris Smith provided a report from Midland Counties. He stated that next year is their 125th year and they are barely surviving. The Secretary had admitted that he was no longer able to do the job but wanted to see them reach their 125th anniversary. Chris added that he had been associated with Midland Counties since 2002 when he was competition secretary and had been the delegate from then on to this date. He said it was a superb organisation, but people needed to appreciate that fact or it would fail. There were six matches against fellow counties, three of which were prior to the Middleton Cup which gave selectors good opportunity to select a Middleton Cup team. Derbyshire and Lincolnshire had failed to fulfil their fixtures in 2019 and attempts had been made to reduce the competition to 4 or 5 rinks, rather than 6 rinks but it would be remaining at 6 rinks in 2020. Chris said he had attended every meeting bar one since 2002 and attended every championships bar two.

In 2019 the attendance at the championships was appalling but Nottinghamshire did very well. AJ Rana (Bulwell Forest) won the 2 wood singles, Oliver Sloan (Newark North) won the Under 25 singles and Arnold Park won the Fours title. Chris closed by saying that he was not standing for re-election.

Election and installation of President

The Chair, Tony Allcock, asked David Guthrie to come forward to be installed as President for 2020. He asked for a show of hands for confirmation, which was unanimous.

Mick Leafe (Arnold Park) said that David Guthrie had been a long-standing stalwart of the County Association and he couldn't think of anyone more appropriate or deserving and it was an excellent appointment.

Election of Officers

The following Officers were elected for 2020

Hon Secretary	David King-Taylor - by a majority with 2 votes against (Arnold Park)
Hon Treasurer	Frank Wallis
Match Secretary	Lee Garrett
Competition Secretary	Lee Garrett
Yearbook Editor	Frank Wallis
Midland Counties delegate	David King-Taylor

Bowls England delegate Russ Chamberlain

Prior to the election of the Bowls England delegate, Chris Smith stated that he had been the BE delegate since 2002. He said he had enjoyed working with BE and BN and had missed only one meeting be it at Worthing, Solihull, Coventry or Leamington. He had also served on two national committees. He added that he had no intention after all that time of standing in a ballot to retain the position and he would step down in favour of Russ Chamberlain.

Bowls League representatives

Brian Littleton (Notts Constabulary) and Mark Egginton (Langwith Junction)

Mark Egginton had withdrawn his nomination and was replaced by Mick Leafe (Arnold Park). Both delegates were accepted unanimously.

The Chair Tony Allcock - closing remarks

Tony thanked everyone for coming today and showing their support for BN and a new team of officials. He said he would be available to offer help any new officer until April 1, the day he retired from BE. He said there are a number of new challenges for National Governing Bodies, not just in bowls but in lots of sports. There were many things we never got involved in that we now have to consider. Safeguarding affects everyone now; children & adults, it's the way the law is now. Clubs just want to play bowls but we are now living in a world with so many challenges, saying that you now need a certificate before you can eat a sandwich at a bowls tea.

Clubs need to affiliate with BE so they can reap benefits and gain support. BE receive daily phone calls from counties as they have no officers and don't know who to contact for information. In the past we always got volunteers, choices for President, Captain and so on but that's not happening now. The volunteer is now a dying breed and, with respect, we get what we are given.

Whilst people are willing and try to do their best there are a lot of shortcomings that we don't see. BE are dealing a lot with clubs and offering support. Insurance for clubs is so important and we need to make sure it is in place to cover clubs. There are many challenges but the majority of us just want to play bowls. BE are hosting the 2022 Commonwealth Games at Leamington and that will give some TV exposure. For affiliated clubs, it is most important to welcome new members. If you tell them to wear ties and blazers, you may as well close the door, you are finished. It is a major job to encourage more participation. To keep clubs going, dress may have to go out of the window. This is not disrespectful but there is a need to make sure overkill is not going to get to modern people. Formats may need to change as younger people don't want to play 21 ends over 3 hours. Junior pairs matches have been reduced to 18 ends and the number of entries has increased. There is a need to balance tradition with future needs. BE have made a large investment in greens maintenance to support clubs looking after their own greens. Discipline is another issue as there is an immense amount of people falling out all the time. Affiliated clubs also get the benefit of a legal advice phoneline.

Another large investment has been made in coaching to ensure new players are taught correctly. If people are taught correctly then they are going to get better. In reality, people tend to get better and then, all of a sudden, a lot go downhill so it is important to embrace coaching. A Safeguarding for Adults programme is very beneficial and well worth doing. We need to get the message out that it's not just about Leamington and competitions. A lot has changed and moving competitions to Leamington was a "no-brainer". It's a changing world and people don't want to go to Worthing and spend a day travelling there and back for one day's play. A lot of money is being put into relaying the greens at Leamington. At this moment, two greens have been dug up. Going forward the Commonwealth Games should ultimately lead to better greens. The green on which National finals played are played are having floodlights installed. In future, BE may wish to shorten the National Championships which currently run over a 4-week period, which takes a lot of time for players, officials and administrators.

Chris Smith in response congratulated Tony Allcock on a superb career including winning numerous World Championships and then becoming Chief Executive Officer for Bowls England and on behalf of everyone present thanked him for what he had done for bowls and wished him a long and happy retirement.

The chairman then handed over to the President to close the meeting.

David Guthrie said it was a great honour to be President of Bowls Nottinghamshire. He said he had been involved with bowls for a long time and he would put his passion into becoming President. He was looking forward to it and will try and help everyone.