3. Approval of the Minutes of the 2024 AGM

Merrow Lawn Tennis Club
Annual General Meeting Minutes

5th March 2024
At the MLTC Clubhouse

47 members were present and therefore the meeting was **quorate.**

Ian Campbell, the club President welcomed everyone to the AGM meeting.

1. Apologies for absence
Alison Craze, Margaret Clifford, Kitty Lewis, Caroline Heslop, Philip Burton, William England, Sara England, Jacqueline Davies, Anderw Kell, Delia Searle, Phil Hollands, Graham Hibbert, Joan Plamer, David Clegg, Jo Bennett, Kate Mundy, Steve Mundy, Richard Holberton.

2. Minutes of the 2023 AGM
The minutes of the 2023 AGM were approved.

3. Matters arising from the minutes of the 2023 AGM.
There were no matters arising.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the EGM held on 15th May 2023
The minutes of the 2023 EGM were approved.

5. Matters arising from the minutes of the May 2023 EGM
At the EGM it was agreed that there was a need for the 7th court. It was also stated that if it was established that there would be a lengthy period before a decision as to the clay option could be given by GBC, the membership would be consulted again as to whether the preference was to await this or lay an artificial clay/carpet surface. There was a delay from GBC but the agreement came from GBC at the same time that members voted for a clay court. The build for the 7th court was completed in December.

6. Chairman's Report
The Chairman reflected on the events of the Centenary year and his time as Chairman over the past 9 years. In particular the Covid pandemic and the numerous lockdowns and how that had affected individual members and the club. The development of WhatsApp groups afterwards and the decrease in numbers attending the club sessions. The importance of the club sessions to new members and the suggestion that WhatsApp groups should be advertised to new members. Issues that the new committee will need to consider were raised such as Padel, Pickleball, the access road and parking.
A member had raised a few issues via email and the new committee will look into these:

- Improving the clubhouse.
- Survey of members to get feedback for improvements. A survey of members had taken place towards the end of 2022. A strategy group was looking at the results of the questionnaire.

- Tennis balls deteriorating quickly if there was rain or bad weather and whether the club should consider more weather tolerant balls or the facility to dry balls.
- Honorary membership for members that have been members for over 40 years or who have served as a volunteer for over 10 years.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their support and wished the new Chairman well. He had enjoyed interacting with members the most and look forward to this continuing.

7. Secretary & Welfare Officer Report

There was nothing further to add to the report issued and there were no questions from members.

8. Treasurer's Report

The accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 had been circulated.

The Treasurer highlighted that there was an operating surplus of £19k. This was after charging £12k subsidy in respect of the centenary celebrations. The club now needed to build up its reserves again. It was highlighted that the 7th court cost a lot more than the LTA recommended. The LTA had recommended £70k and in the end the court cost £139k. The club puts money into a sinking fund to cover the costs of resurfacing the courts. The top courts were resurfaced in 2015 and they are reported to last 10-15years. Therefore the club needed to increase the membership rates by 7.5% to achieve a decent surplus.

Q – A member had asked for a breakdown of the £12k social expenses. The Centenary Marquee party had been heavily subsidised. Income for the event was £7600 but the expenditure was over £20k. The food was £4k, Marquee £6k, Band £500, the staff £600. The Vintage Tournament and Junior tournament had cost a few hundred pounds each. The Black Tie event had been paid by those attending and had not been subsidised at all. The Club Finals days were wholly subsidised.

Q – A member asked now that the club had the 7th court will there be an increase in the number of members at the club. The aim was not to increase membership but to give members greater opportunity to book courts. This will be under review though.

Q- A member asked when members were informed of the £140k cost for the 7th court. Members were informed and approval sought at the EGM. Members were informed that two or three years ago the club had received a quote for a 7th court of £80k. The club had received three quotes for construction of the current 7th court. Two were very similar approximately £125k but didn't include taking soil away or access to the site. The third quote was for £180k.

ACTION: The club to obtain up to date quotes for resurfacing a set of 3 courts.

Q – A member asked if we had given feedback to the LTA that their information was out of date. The Treasurer had given feedback to them and the fact that their recommended insurer Howdens was very expensive. The club had recently insured with another specialist sport insurer for £1500 cheaper.

Q – A member asked if the club was planning to replace the other courts with the current surface. There had been no discussion about resurfacing the current courts.

Q- A Member asked what the plan was for replacing the lights on the lower courts. This is being looked at and it is understood that members like the lighting on the new 7th court.

a. <u>Approval of accounts for year ended 31st December 2023</u>

John Nevin proposed the approval of the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 which was seconded by Matt Aitchison. The accounts for the year ended 31st December 2022 were **approved.**

b. <u>Approval of proposed subscriptions for year from 1st April 2024</u>

The Treasurer recommended that the subscription rates for 24-25 be increased by 7.5%.
Q – A member asked if the increase in membership rates would be sufficient. The increase should give the club an annual surplus of approximately £30k. Since 2020 inflation had increased by 21% but fees had increased by only 5.5%.

Chris Smith proposed the subscriptions for 24-25 and was seconded by Claire Arthur. The subscription rates for 24-25 were **approved.**
Thanks were given to Alison Faulkner for their book keeping and Philip Corning who audited the accounts.

9. Administrator's Report

It was noted that the smallest age group of members was the 18 to 34 age group.
Q- A member asked why there had been a large increase in the number of Social members.
Some members had joined to get the benefits from the Horizon membership. The committee will discuss whether this is something the club will allow going forward.

10. Tournament Winners

Members congratulated all the tournament winners. This included Alison Birch and Rob Lamble who recently won the Super Vets Mixed Doubles final.

11. Estate Managers Report

The club gave thanks to David Luscombe who had taken on the Estate Managers role and had successfully managed the construction of the 7th court.
It was explained that the committee were putting together an Estate Plan. This was on top of the normal maintenance schedule. Members were informed that the club had recently agreed with Horizon and the Cricket Club to repair part of the access road and the percentage of the costs each club would pay.

Q – A member asked if the club replaced the lights on the courts whether that would affect the new path being built between the two block of courts. It was explained that the workers would be able to lift up the paving slabs from the path as necessary.
There were lots of questions about the access road; widening the road, pedestrians walking along the road, lighting for pedestrians and cyclists, whether there could be access to the Park and Ride for parking.

Q – A Member asked about having bushes at the end of the 7th court to function as a windbreak.
The committee will look into the costs and maintenance for this.

Q – A Member asked about the emissions from the Horizon building onto the 7th court and whether a flue could be added to direct the emissions away. The club had been in contact with Horizon and were waiting for information from them. The emissions were steam.
Q – A member asked whether the coaches could have a decent shed for equipment to relieve pressure on the clubhouse. The committee would discuss this further.

Q – A member asked for protective padding to be put on the lighting posts on court 7. The club were look into this.

12. Coaching

There were no questions from members.

13. Match Secretary Report

It was highlighted that the club had around 90 players playing in teams. Last summer the club had 12 teams competing and over the winter 10 teams. Some junior members had played for the teams.

14. Social Report

The club had held a number of events over the centenary year which had been organised by the Centenary Committee. There was a plan of events for the year ahead. Thanks were given to the volunteers that help to run the events.

15. Election of Officers

The following officers and committee members were elected unopposed:
Ian Campbell (President), Louise Blakeborough (Chairman), Sue Beardwood (Secretary), Jeff Saunders (Treasurer).
Committee: Matt Aitchison, Claire Arthur, Gerry Black, Katie Brennan, Dave Clarke, Rachael Goodworth, Julie Pearn, James Tufts and Eugenia Wachters.
Jorge martin Munoz by virtue of his position as Head Coach.

16. Any Other Business

<u>Adrian Rees – Retiring Chairman</u>
Alan McCulloch gave thanks to Adrian Rees on behalf of the club for his time as Chairman over the past 9 years. During that time membership had grown, the club had developed its links with the Head Coach Jorge, the 7th court had been built, the clubhouse had been refurbished and the club continued to have its small, local, friendly club culture.

Adrian was presented with gifts from the club.

The meeting finished at 8.55pm

Alison Faulkner
Club Administrator
Members present: R Lamble, A Cole, R Jones, N Amato, S Beardwood, T Dewey, S Duncan, K Brennan, P Tappin, C Arthur, S Luscombe, D Luscombe, H Sickmuller, A McCulloch, J Nevin, C Campbell, J Pearn, R Goodworth, M Aitchison, D Clarke, S Parker, S Parker, G Black, S Simnett, C Simnett, E Wachters, A Hall, A Crolla, D Birkett, J Barnes, H Marlow, C Smith, P Morton, R Gray, J Middleton, L Payne, J Dickson, A Man, L Blakeborough, R Harris, J tufts, D G Wright, J Saunders, A Faulkner, A Rees, I Campbell.

5. Approval of the Minutes of the EGM 19/11/24

Extraordinary General Meeting
Monday 19th November 2024 7.45pm
In the Clubhouse

MLTC Members present: Matt Aitchison, Claire Arthur, Sue Beardwood, Alison Birch, Louise Blakeborough, Katie Brennan, Catherine Campbell, Ian Campbell, Jo Derry Bennett, Alison Faulkner, Rachael Goodworth, Rose Gray, Tony Hall, Richard Holberton, Rob Lamble, John Nevin, Julie Pearn, Jeff Saunders, Delia Searle, Hans Sickmuller, Peter Tappin, James Tufts and Eugenia Wachters.

	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from D Birkett, G Black, P Burton, D Clarke, M Clifford, S Duncan and R Roche. **The meeting was quorate.**
1.	**Approve the Club Rules** The reasons for revising the club rules had been shared with members as part of the meeting documents circulated with the agenda. **Q – A member asked if there would be Proxy voting just for electing the Officers of the club or for all items voted on at a general meeting.** Proxy voting will be possible for all items voted on at a general meeting. This will be clarified in the final published version of the rules. Closer to the AGM the process for proxy voting will be advertised to members. A member pointed out that rule 9 stated that all new members shall pay the joining fee and appropriate subscription in full and rule 12 states that the committee may adjust subscription rates for a new member joining the club after the start of the membership year and felt that these two rules contraindicated each other. It was explained that rule 9 meant that a member cannot pay their membership fees in instalments, it must be paid in one payment. It was agreed to make this point clearer in the club rules. **The new Club Rules were unanimously approved subject to the above amendments.**
2.	**Change The Legal Status of the Club** The reasons for changing the legal entity of the club had been shared with members as part of the meeting documents circulated with the agenda and were highlighted to the meeting.

	The committee was recommending that the club changes to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). If agreed, the club needed to work through the process with a lawyer. The process would not happen quickly and that is why the club also wanted to update the club rules now and not wait until the process of converting to a CIO. **Q – A member asked if the LTA recommended a particular status.** If a tennis club was starting today then they would be an incorporated organisation. The LTA explains the different types of incorporated structures that clubs can be on their website. We have been unable to find a specific number for the number of tennis clubs that are CIOs. **Q – A member wanted to make sure that the club's land was safely managed within the new club structure. For example if the club was approached to sell off its land who would make the decision.** A CIO is a legal entity that can hold the land. As part of the conversion process the Trustees will pass the land to the CIO. As a CIO members would continue to appoint the Officers of the club. The land could only be sold with the members agreement as is currently the case. There will be a new constitution for the new legal entity which will be developed with lawyers. The Treasurer was happy to talk to any members that had any concerns or questions. Members were advised that there was lots of information regarding CIOs on the Charities Commission website and gov.uk. It was agreed that prior to the final agreement to change the legal status of the club there would be a final vote by members. It was suggested that the committee provide a Q&A document to explain certain scenarios e.g. How do committee members get voted in? What would happen if the club was approached to sell the land? The club had been quoted £2,000 by a lawyer to undertake the work to convert to a CIO. **It was unanimously agreed that the club pursue the proposal to convert to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) subject to final approval from members.** The meeting finished at 8.10pm.