

TENNIS WALES LIMITED (TW)
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY 11th MAY 2024
SOPHIA GARDENS, CARDIFF, AND VIDEO CONFERENCE

PRESENT:

Baroness Amanda Sater – Tennis Wales President
Bethan Lewis – Director TW
Cliff Gardner – Company Member Radyr LTC
Deborah Mahon – Sport Wales
Ellinore Lightbody – South Wales Committee member
Geoff Scott – Committee member and Company Member North (virtual)
Graham Webster – Company Member Cardiff LTC
Glyn Walters – Company Member Garw TC
Hannah Ward – Director TW (virtual)
Jamie Clewer – Tennis Wales Staff Member
Jeremy Cross – South Wales Committee Member (virtual)
Jim Calvert - Company Member Stow Park
John Denton – Company Member Rhondda Cynon Taff
Lucy Cohen – Director TW (virtual)
Lucy Scott – Director TW and North Wales Committee Member (virtual)
Maria Rees – Staff Member (minutes)
Michael Gibson – Director TW (virtual)
Neil O'Doherty – Chair of Tennis Wales
Nigel Jones – Company Member of Glynneath TC
Paul Arkontopoulos – Company Member Dinas Powys (virtual)
Raj Passi – Rhiwbina LTC (Proxy)
Rob Holt - Whitchurch LTC
Sarah Jones – Incoming Independent Chair
Simon Clarke – LTA Councillor (virtual)
Simon Johnson – Tennis Wales Chief Executive Officer
Sophie Hughes – Director TW
Stephen Blunt – Company Member Ruthin LTC (virtual)

The meeting commenced at 10:30 a.m.

1. Welcome

Neil O'Doherty (NO) welcomed attendees to the Tennis Wales (TW) AGM.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from David Clarke - Windsor LTC Penarth, Ann Powell - Allt-yr-yn LTC, Andrea Ludtke – Rhiwbina LTC, Anthony Burden - Mold TC, Linda Sawyer – Wrexham TC, Karen Harrington – Prestatyn TC, Patsy Roseblade – Board Member, James Armstrong – Board Member, Anthony Phillips – Board Member and Nigel Osborne – Board Member.

18 voting Directors and Company Members attended the meeting, with an overall number of votes of 31.

3. Minutes of the AGM of Tennis Wales Ltd held on Saturday 13th May 2023

The minutes were confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were unanimously approved.

4. Annual Report for 2023

Simon Johnson (CEO) acknowledged the full annual report which had been shared with the meeting papers and were available on the website. CEO presented slides on key areas of note from 2023 along with points for the future.

4.1 2023 had been a year of growth in both adult and junior participation, with venues modernising, growth of pay and play and development of great coaching programmes. CEO also acknowledge the growth in teacher training via the LTA Youth programme in Wales, allowing more junior players to participate. CEO thanked the Welsh tennis network of volunteers, parents, players, workforce and partners for their support in driving the growth.

4.2 CEO highlighted the great successes on court by Welsh junior players in major events and at the top of the ITF rankings, including Mimi Xu, Viktor Frydrych and Niall Picherd-Barua. CEO stated that he believed it was the first time that a male and female Welsh player had played at all junior grand slams at the same time.

4.3 CEO thanked Tennis Wales funding partners Sport Wales, LTA and Welsh Government for continued support. Tennis Wales had secured several transformative capital programmes underway at CITCs, parks and clubs. Thanks to the partners and Local Authorities, £3m had been successfully spent in 24 months to transform half of Wales' public park courts. Indoor Tennis Centres had also benefited from capital investment with Swansea Tennis Centre, Newport LIVE and Wrexham Tennis Centre being redeveloped. Investment had also been confirmed for Arfon Tennis Centre in the future. CEO confirmed that the capital investment had helped to substantially grow the organisations finances which was being released back out to the support and open up the sport in Wales.

4.4 2023 had been a positive year, with the audited accounts being noted at AGM and approved by the Board at the meeting being held later in the day. CEO stated that turnover had grown from £850k in 2020 to £1.36m in 2023, with a planned loss of £65,233 in 2023. CEO confirmed that the Board had approved a use of surplus reserves in 2023, however, Tennis Wales were working towards a break even budget for 2024. CEO confirmed that Tennis Wales had been able to support an increase in player funding for our top players, and created the 'tie break fund' a grant funding scheme to help diversify tennis in Wales which will be continuing into 2024 and beyond due to its success.

John Denton (JD), queried the sources of income into Tennis Wales and questioned whether Wales should be receiving more from the AELTC and LTA following profits at Wimbledon, better enabling the development of tennis across the UK, as opposed to spending money on new courts at the ground. CEO ran through the 4 areas of income and confirmed that a percentage of surplus income from Wimbledon was allocated to the LTA who divided it up across regions including Wales. NO stressed that Tennis Wales had a good relationship with the LTA and were in frequent conversations regarding an increase in funding, which had proved successful over the years. Ellinore Lightbody (EL) stressed that the AELTC was under pressure to ensure that Wimbledon kept pace with other grand slams, therefore investment into the grounds and facilities at Wimbledon would be essential.

4.5 CEO confirmed that at the end of 2023, the Tennis Wales Board had approved plans to extend its current strategy vision of 'tennis opened up across Wales' until December 2026, to align with the LTA's strategy timeline. Tennis Wales would be committed to the same vision with a slightly evolved mission to 'transform Welsh communities through tennis'. Information on the extended strategy would be circulated over the coming months.

Glyn Walters (GW) questioned the sinking funds for the park sites, and stressed that some members could not understand why so much money was being invested into park sites whilst some clubs struggled to update facilities. CEO confirmed that over 40% of tennis was conducted on a public park sites, following a survey conducted by the LTA, many sites had falling into a state of disrepair and were at risk of being closed. Following an agreement with the UK Government, a large

investment had been secured over a 24-month period for maintenance of public facilities only. With the support of LTA, Local Authorities, and Sport Wales, 43 public parks have been refurbished, allowing more people to access the sport. CEO confirmed that each local authority was handling the management of the sites differently, and a mandatory clause for the funding stated a need for a sufficient plan to accrue sinking funds for future years. Many sites were charging small membership and pay and play fees, which would help to accrue funds, and other free sites needed a commitment from local authorities as to the parks upkeep. CEO stated that Heath Park currently had 5,500 registered members, which would help open the sport to new players as well covering any required spend. CEO stressed that the funding was an incredible opportunity for tennis in Wales, which would have been used in other countries if not taken up in Wales.

Following frustrations by some members of the AGM over lack of funds for facilities, CEO suggested that they contact members of the Tennis Wales team who would be able to look at funding options available depending on the requirement. Many venues had already benefited from the Sport Wales Be Active Fund, LTA interest free loan and other avenues of capital funding.

Rob Holt stated that Whitchurch Tennis Club had benefited from Heath Park, and was looking to establish further links to help promote club further and thanked Tennis Wales team for guidance.

5. Audited Accounts for Tennis Wales Ltd and the Finance Director's Report

The 2023 audited accounts and finance summary for Tennis Wales LTD were received and noted by members. CEO confirmed that the audited accounts would be formally approved and signed at the next Board Meeting.

6. Note the appointment of Sarah Jones as Independent Chair of Tennis Wales Limited.

Following an external recruitment process and approval by the Tennis Wales Board, members of the AGM noted the appointment of Sarah Jones (SJ) as the new Independent Chair.

NO stated it had been a great pleasure to be involved with Tennis Wales and had enjoyed meeting members of the community and working closely with CEO and the Tennis Wales team. NO thanked the Tennis Wales Board and President, Amanda Sater, for their support and tireless efforts to make Welsh tennis great. NO acknowledged and thanked retiring Board Member Lucy Scott (LS), for her 6 years on the Board, and continued efforts throughout Wales.

NO introduced and formally handed over the role as Chair to SJ. As an experienced and passionate Welsh tennis player, sports lead and director at the Princes Trust, NO wished SJ the best of luck in the role.

SJ thanked NO and introduced herself to members of the AGM. SJ stated that tennis had been a great part of her life and she was passionate about giving back to the community.

7. Note re-appointment of Independent Directors James Armstrong and Patsy Roseblade for a second three-year term.

The AGM noted the re-appointment of both directors for a second term.

8. Note re-appointment of Director Bethan Lewis for a second three-year term, following re-election at the South Wales AOM.

The AGM noted the re-appointment for a second term.

9. Note appointment of Director Geoff Scott for his first three-year term, following election at the North Wales AOM.

The AGM noted the appointment of Geoff Scott (GS) and retirement of LS.

10. Approve proposed changes to the Articles of Association as per pre-circulated papers.

The 5 proposed changes to the Articles of Association were approved with no objections. Changes included:

1. Clause 1.33 added referring to “The Game”, to covering tennis, padel, and all it's variations;
2. The word ‘tennis’ amended to ‘the game’ throughout the majority of the document;
3. Clause 20 amended to extend the maximum term time for the Tennis Wales President from 3 years maximum to 6 years maximum, to be consistent with Board and Committee Members;
4. Clause 12.9 altered to make clear that the maximum term for any Tennis Wales Director is 2 x 3 year terms.
5. Clause 18.2 amended to allow a member of the Tennis Wales North or South Committee to be re-elected onto the committee after concluding their 2 x 3 year terms. Committee members must take a minimum of one year break from the committee at the end of their 6 years before they can be re-elected. Re-election will be completed annually, and they should not be re-elected over any other suitable new candidates. The maximum term for a committee member is 9 years.

Jim Calvert (JC), stated that he had no objections, however, felt it strange to list padel, when the articles had already stated ‘tennis and all its variations’. Sophie Hughes (SH), confirmed that though she agreed with the comment, the wording reflected the LTA definition and had been used for consistency. **Decision: Articles of Association changes approved.**

11. Elect President Baroness Amanda Sater for a fourth year.

No objections to the re-appointment of Baroness Sater were raised. **Decision: Appointment Approved.**

AS thanked members and formally welcomed SJ as Chair. AS confirmed that she had loved her time to date in the role, and was honoured to continue for another year. AS highlighted visits to several tennis and padel venues in 2023, meeting with various members of the Welsh tennis community and watching some fantastic competition, with visits to the Welsh Tennis Championships in Penarth, Wheelchair tennis in Newport and the junior Four Nations in Wrexham.

AS gave thanks to the many volunteers for their passion and dedication to the sport, and congratulated Glyn Walters for being shortlisted for a national LTA award. AS also acknowledged the superb work from the coaches, who worked tirelessly in all weathers.

AS confirmed, she had been particularly impressed by park refurbishment project, offering a fantastic opportunity to play tennis for communities throughout Wales. AS acknowledged the investment made and the work being done to complete the project in a short amount of time. AS requested, that her thanks be passed onto Pam Griffiths.

AS stated, that she was proud to accompany LTA President Sandi Proctor, on her visit to sites around Wales and thanked NO and members of the Tennis Wales Board for their efforts and responsibility taken. AS highlighted the work done by members of the Tennis Wales team and thanked Jamie Clewer for organising and accompanying her on the many visits around Wales.

12. Re-appoint auditors Watts Gregory for a further year.

SJ thanked Watts Gregory for their valued efforts in the provision of advice and the auditing of the Tennis Wales accounts and proposed that they be appointed for a further year. SJ confirmed that Watts Gregory had recently merged with the MHA group.

Watts Gregory was unanimously appointed for a further year.

13. Note current registration fees as set by the LTA.

The attendees noted the 2024-25 registration fees for Places to Play - £135 per court including Padel (£68 gross courts) capped to 12 courts and £68 per court for LA/Parks and Operators.

14. Any of business

14.1

JD questioned whether there was a plan for any new indoor courts throughout Wales. CEO confirmed that this was on both Tennis Wales and the LTAs radar, with discussions ongoing.

14.2

Graham Webster stated that following travels around Cardiff, venues had never looked as good as they currently did, with a real improvement being made.

The meeting concluded at 11:45am.

DRAFT