



Suffolk Carpet Bowls Association

SCBA Website is www.carpetbowls.org/suffolk

The Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting of the Suffolk Carpet Bowls Association held on 8th September 2021 at Needham Market Community Centre.

Those Present: Andy Gilder (**AG**) – Chairman, Sally Goodrich (**SAG**) - Vice Chair, Neil Jolly (**NJ**), Paul Daniels (**PD**), Richard Sago (**RS**), Jane Sago (**JS**), Andy Pooley (**AP**), Jim Goodrich (**JG**), Sue Gilder (**SCG**), Keith Hull (**KH**), Clint Watling (**CW**), Ian Hunt (**IH**.)

1. **Apologies** received from Tom Runnacles (TR), Peter Dent (P-D), Peter Elmy (PE), and Adam Hubbard (AH).
2. **Approval of minutes.** There were no minutes (hard copy) of last meeting available to approve/sign by the Chairman at this time.
3. **Matters arising.** AG had looked prior to the meeting at last in-person meetings minutes (March 2020) and apologised to the committee that correspondence he should have done after the last meeting had not been done due to an oversight on his behalf. Due to the time elapsed since, the issue in question was no longer relevant.
4. **Correspondence.** There was no correspondence to report.

5. Chairman's report

Good evening everyone, it is nice to be once again face to face and back to some sort of "normality."

It has been a long time since we were all together and having to call a halt to all our league and cup commitments, a huge but correct decision considering the circumstances. A lot of changes have happened in these past months which have a considerable effect on our sport.

We must start by acknowledging our losses, the people from all clubs who, for whatever reason, have passed away during the last 18 months. It would be unfair to acknowledge a single person, they will be missed by all, especially their families and friends. Our thoughts go with them, may they rest in peace.

At this point I would like to officially thank NJ and PD for their efforts in keeping us all informed of the changes from all the officials on how we can proceed at any time of the pandemic and always keeping their fingers on the pulse. Their work has been invaluable.

A change we must recognise as a committee is the "retirement" of our Match Secretary. JG has done a sterling job over the many years he has been match secretary, he is very much respected by every club and bowler who plays the game and has done a sterling job, thanks for that Jim and it is appreciated that you are continuing as a committee member.

We now find ourselves in a unique situation. We have the opportunity to start again as it were, something which a lot of people and businesses have had to do. We have conducted a survey, which we will discuss later, which has some varied responses from our members. There is a lot of clubs who are champing at the bit to resume competitive bowls, there are a lot of clubs who are sceptical about the restart, there are a lot of clubs who have a very much reduced membership and don't think they can continue as the matches are now.

We now can change, to make the game more attractive to the masses again, change the format. Make it more attractive for the members, not so long for the elderly, still competitive, shorter in length, anything to have people enjoy the game again, or for the first time! Competitions can pick up the slack regarding playing in the "Rinks" format for the county level bowler. This I feel would bring people back to bowls, increased numbers will increase club revenue and the world of bowls would be great again. As a footnote, and I stand to be corrected, if you look at the indoor bowls, normal matches are played over 21 ends, or they are restricted in some way to the number of shots they must get to win. At the world bowls competition at Potters, they play 9 ends, best of 3, with the final end being best of 3 ends, a radical change which is attractive to viewers and players alike.

However we look at things, before or after the pandemic, we must change, if we don't, the sport will continue downhill, no-one replacing those we have lost, membership going down and eventually fading away.

6. **Secretary's report.** There was no report available.
7. **Treasurer's report.** PD showed the current status of our accounts to the approval of the committee. Although assistance had been given to the clubs over the past few months by way of waiving fees, we had funds left although we would have to be wary of the monies available. The true effect of the pandemic may not be evident until next year.
8. **Match Secretary's report.** JG gave his final report to the meeting, nothing to report. He then reiterated that he was standing down from the post as this would be the ideal time for a change. JG would be willing to work with the new Match Secretary in the beginning to ensure a smooth transition. AG thanked JG for all his work for so many years in doing the job and thanked him for remaining a valued committee member.
9. **County Captains report.** TR had messaged that there was nothing to report.
10. **ECCBA report.** NJ advised that the ECCBA were planning to have an initial meeting in late October, date to be arranged. NJ also stated that he was withdrawing from the position of SCBA representative on the ECCBA committee due to his commitments elsewhere in the bowls world. A replacement to be discussed.
11. **ECBA report.** NJ advised that the next meeting (online) is on 18 September, NJ & PD to attend. The National County competition, set for Potters in November21 had already been cancelled. The ECBA Festival of Bowls, also at Potters in May22 remains & the Nationals for November22 is provisionally booked at Potters. However during the pandemic, Potters have changed their business model to all inclusive packages only. This has resulted in a £65/person increase for the Nationals weekend, against the November19 cost. This information had been provided to the Suffolk Squad Selection Committee, with a request for preliminary feedback before the next ECBA meeting.
12. **Committee Members.** The committee was asked if they were prepared to stand again as members, ahead of the forthcoming AGM. KH advised that he was standing down. He was thanked from the chair for his work on the committee. PE has resigned. The position of ECCBA representative was discussed, due to the work done by the ECCBA being mainly county bowls business, the feeling of the committee was that this should be selected from those more in tune with the county team, i.e., Captain or selectors. JG position of Match Secretary was also discussed, it was the opinion of the committee that this is given some thought, for the next meeting.
13. **Results of the survey.** Current results show that there are a mixture of clubs out there who are at different stages. Half have started, half have not, some are still waiting to start & some are champing at the bit to start competitively again. Overall from replies, most clubs will have restarted by October. One big issue to be considered is membership/playing numbers of the clubs.
14. **Proceeding from here.** The committee had a lengthy discussion on what we do now. All clubs must be catered for, large, small, well attended and those not so well attended. The decision of the committee was that we cannot start as we have run in the past. We must allow clubs to start at their own pace. To this end, as a starter we will send out a link where clubs can register if they are willing

to start playing matches again. A list of those clubs can then be sent out, with the aim that they can contact any of the clubs on that list to arrange friendly matches between themselves in the short term.

The committee agreed that we must investigate changing the format of which we bowl but to do this we need information. The committee decided that we need to send a second questionnaire to the clubs asking them if they wish to play competitively in the short term & about their playing numbers. That information can then be used to discuss a change to the format & potentially setting up geographical leagues this season. It was agreed this needs to be done ASAP, so it can be further discussed at the AGM. Then within two weeks of the AGM, we will hold a further committee meeting to discuss the results and arrange leagues and a format to be played, possibly by the start of November and run to the end of April. Then if all is well, start Summer league 2022 as we know it.

15. **Any other business.**

JG reported that Potters had changed their business policy on their breaks which will affect the county National competition.

SAG reported that she still had all the trophies from last year at home, it was agreed that hopefully they could be used for future events.

CW suggested that all positive points from this meeting be put on our social media (Facebook) site.

NJ suggested a reminder email be sent to clubs regarding the AGM, NJ to action. AG to action AGM preparation & liaise with P-D.

NJ raised the question of our Closed Championships (Singles, Pairs, Triples, Fours), as it is likely that Champion of Champion events in 2022 will go ahead. It was generally agreed that it was too soon to run our events in 2021, but we should aim to hold them in 2022. NJ agreed to review our existing bookings at Needham for 2021 & 2022 & come up with a revised calendar. In addition, we will need to start making such bookings for 2023 & 2024, so NJ will set up a meeting with the Needham Community Centre manager to cover all of these.

NJ referred to our Club Contact List, in that historically we held postal addresses for club contacts. With most of our club contacts now on email, having postal addresses is no longer appropriate. It was agreed that NJ will alter the Club Contact List & provide the amended version to P-D.

Please remember 27th September!!!! - AGM Needham Market, 7.30pm Your Views Count.

Meeting closed at 21:11.

Date of next meeting to be confirmed.