

03/09/2018 – STC Open Meeting – 28 members in attendance

Introduction provided by the Chair as to what we hope can be achieved given the knowledge and experience we have amongst all our members.

Grant Campbell hosted the discussion and provided some background for the reasons to have the meeting and that the output from the meeting would be the business plan. Given membership has been falling 28.2% over five years, reducing revenue by 25% and as a result this is now preventing further investment we have a strong motivation to look at all areas of the club.

This includes many areas such as:

- Corporate governance?
- Is the club managed well?
- Are we run in a financially sound manner?
- Can we improve funding opportunities?
- Is the right management in place?
- Are the facilities fit for purpose?
- Are member's experience a positive one?
- Do we represent value for money?
- What is the experience of new members?

He emphasised there were no right or wrong answers.

What type of club are we? Tennis, social or sports? Should there be more activities?

Below is some of the positive comments on all areas we looked at. They have been summarised as a series of bullets.

Club Management

- The club is run by volunteers so there may be holes in their expertise but this is to be expected
- Juniors don't become adult members, so why is this?
- As a member at another club, is the decline mentioned in the introduction due to the club or tennis in general?
- Have a professional club manager to ensure it's success.
- Have other activities other than tennis for children, adding a social element.
- We discussed the declining membership and one reason gather from people who had left, was that they don't have enough time. What this means is, they have found other priorities at the expense of spending time playing tennis.
- Is the committee representative? No, the committee needs to represent all groups at the club. We need to find a way to involve juniors which they feel is relevant. We could involve the parents of juniors.
- We could change the format of the meetings or have action groups which have less structure.
- We need to find ways to help people volunteer their expertise. People don't have to commit long-term. It could be as a one off.
- It should be recognised helpers at the club are involved in all areas such as our teams or involvement with our disability tennis programme.
- Teams could be more accessible.

- Membership packs should be provided without fail.
- Other clubs have non-tennis attractions.

Club Experience

- New members aren't sure what to do. It's a bit hit and miss. No meet and greet. No clear message.
- Lack of direction.
- Coaches could grade new players.
- Simpler information when entering the clubhouse or on the website.
- Use of the website could be enhanced.
- Could improve or add to existing facilities.
- East Dorset Tennis Club also have other activities such as croquet and bridge
- We could have a bar and a larger TV

How can we use the clubhouse better?

- All members believe they get value for money for their fee
- We could offer yoga or pilates which is great for players and non-members
- Space is challenging for extra activities given the traffic through the club house. Perhaps stick to tennis?
- We could rent the clubhouse out for other activities.
- Have a function room.
- Building is temporary so we can't have a permanent licence for a bar.
- Have a cafe run by someone independent of the club. This could attract people to visit us.

Virtual Experience

- Website is not mobile friendly.
- Social media is not being used to its maximum potential.
- Could younger members be used better for this?

Other Areas

- Renegotiate the lease on the basis of building a new club house, with communal facilities towards where the 7th court is planned. Build the seventh court where the existing clubhouse is and then place paddle courts next to the new club house.
- Paddle Tennis facilities which is not nearly as intimidating as tennis. West Hants has built one and it's very popular. It's one of the largest growing sports. Appeals to all ages and could attract all ball sports players.