



Minutes of the Woking Blackhawks Basketball Club

Annual General Meeting

Monday 17th June 2024, 8.00pm, via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Executive Committee Members: Russell Fernandes (Chair), Brett Greenwood (Head of Seniors & Youth), David Kingstone (Head of Wheelchair), Alex Fogarty (Treasurer), Annabelle Hardiman (Secretary), Roti Awojobi (Deputy Head of Seniors & Youth), Martin Marshall

Club attendees: Jenny Marshall, David Bagwell, Jack Bagwell, Stephanie Sturt, Alex Xenos, Matvey Romanenko, Gerard Sammon, Kostas Papadimitriou, Adam Malloy, David Potier, Jeff Ai, Jermiah Takyi, Curtis Maginnis-Pearson, Paul Kelly, Argyrios Apostolidis, Matthew Trojanovich, Josh Tsang, Melvin Groenveld

Apologies: None

ITEM NO.	NOTES	ACTION
The meeting commenced at 8:00pm.		
1.	<p>Welcome from the Chair</p> <p>Russell welcomed everyone to the 2024 Annual General Meeting (“AGM”) of the Woking Blackhawks Basketball Club (the “Club”) and gave his thanks to all those in the Executive Committee for carrying out their roles over the season.</p> <p>There were no known apologies for absence and the meeting was quorate.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the 2024 AGM, held on 23 June 2023, were considered and accepted as a true record of the meeting.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
3.	<p>Section Updates</p> <p><i>Wheelchair Section</i></p> <p>David provided an update on the 2023/24 playing season and plans for the 2024/25 playing season.</p> <p>With aspirations of entering two teams in 2023/24 a recruitment drive did not bring enough new players into the squad and the Wheelchair Section was only able to enter one team into the British Wheelchair Basketball National League. Retaining their place from the previous season, in Division Two South, the team began the season with a squad of 13 players. Carl Scott remained as player head coach and he was joined by player assistant coach Dean Bradey. Unfortunately, injuries and changes in personal circumstances reduced the team to around 10 active players towards the end of the season. The league format once again required some long distance travel, taking in both</p>	

Exeter and Plymouth during the 12 game campaign, and the short notice rearrangement of two games meant only four games were played before the festive break. After the break, the team struggled to get additional court time to train between a congested fixture list of 8 games combined with player availability. This was reflected in the team's on court performance in what was a competitive league where 5th place was achieved with a 3 and 9 record. With a limited pool of eligible players in wheelchair basketball and therefore challenges balancing the books financially, the team was grateful to receive funding from the Community Foundation for Surrey which enabled the team to play this season. The team is indebted to Alex Fogarty, Blackhawks Treasurer, for her support and drive to lead the application process that secured this funding.

With some sadness, David informed the AGM that the current wheelchair team would not be part of Blackhawks in the 2024/25 season. There had been a Wheelchair Section at Blackhawks for around 14 years since Keith Farmer brought the team into the fold at the time it was outgrowing Rushmoor Mallards – a disability sports club that used to be based in Farnborough. However, the team has struggled to recruit and retain players in recent years, particularly since the pandemic, and the last two seasons have been touch and go whether the team could even compete at all in the National League.

Earlier this year, some of the team were in contact with Surrey Scorchers who were looking to add a wheelchair basketball team to the set up at Surrey Sports Park. Given the recruitment challenges faced by the team, it is clear that there isn't the capacity for two teams in close proximity. An offer had been received from the Scorchers which provided a lot of opportunity for the team, and the current team has decided to move to the Sports Park for the 2024/25 season. The team's time with Blackhawks has been a huge benefit and everyone who has played for the teams over the years is grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Club. In its time as part of Blackhawks, the Wheelchair Section has had some great successes, including two teams for a number of years. Teams have played in Division 1, 2 and 3, and for a few years the Club also entered a team in the BWB Women's League. Successes have included a national finals weekend appearance and four Blackhawks alumni going on to play in the GB Women's Team and secure professional contracts.

David took the opportunity to personally thank the various members of the Executive Committee's that supported the Section over the years. In particular Keith, who first introduced the idea of the team becoming part of Blackhawks, Ian Taylor who continued to support the team in his tenure as Chairman (and regular TO), Phil Parry who coached the women's team for a year, and the section heads who have all done something to support the team. Notable thanks were again expressed to Alex, whose efforts at securing funding kept the team rolling on court for a few years - but also for her help securing funding for a player that enabled them to purchase a made to measure wheelchair and kept them in the sport. Final thanks were expressed to Annabelle, Martin and Jenny who have the team's almost ever-present Table Officials for the last few years.

As a result of the above, David was not standing for re-election as Head of the Wheelchair Section and would be stepping down from the Executive after this AGM, although would continue to support the Blackhawks in the future.

Brett Greenwood provided an update on the 2023/24 playing season and plans for the 2024/25 playing season for both the Youth Section and the Senior Section.

Youth Section

This season, the Club entered 7 teams into the National League and 7 teams into the Central Venue League ("CVL").

	<p>In the National League:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - U12 were in a tough conference - U14 Boys, U16 Girls, U18 Boys all finished third - U14 Girls and U16 Boys finished first <p>The CVL teams were mostly made up of players at the younger end of their respective age groups to provide development opportunities. The U14 and U16 Girls both won their divisions.</p> <p>An interclub league was also run for those who weren't quite ready for CVL, with a number of players moving into CVL and even National League teams during the season.</p> <p>Four after-school clubs have been run on a consistent basis, as well as camps during each school holidays which have been well attended, reaching over 300 kids.</p> <p>The Youth Section has also supported numerous players (U16 & U18) with coaching, refereeing and table officiating courses, all of whom are giving back to the Club by using the skills developed.</p> <p>Trials for the 2024/25 had recently been held, with over 200 active players expected in the season.</p> <p>The relationship with Woking College had been strengthened and there was aspiration to partner together to enter the College National Schools league.</p> <p>There was currently no girls programme for post 16 year olds and Brett was hoping to enter an U18s team into the National League for the first time in the Club's history.</p> <p><i>Senior Section</i></p> <p>Four mens, competing in each of the four divisions, and two ladies teams competed in the Wessex Basketball League. 4 teams and 2 ladies this season. Notable finishes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mens 1: finished 6th in a competitive league, but reached the semi-final of the Cup competition. - Mens 2: Reached the semi-final of the playoffs. - Ladies 1: Reached the semi-final of the Cup competition and the playoff finals, losing out to Winchester in the final. <p>Subs were raised before Christmas to ensure costs could be covered and avoid the risk of the Senior Section folding due to lack of funding.</p> <p>No firm decisions had been taken in respect of the next season, however, a team was expected to be entered into the National League. Information was being gathered about the likely number of players returning for the 2024/25 season.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <p>Alex Fogarty presented her report of the Club's accounts and finances.</p> <p>Bank Balances as at 31 May 2024</p> <p>Main Account: £7,732.80 Seniors Account: £3,995.47 Wheelchair Account: £0 Youth Account: £43,558.80</p> <p>Fundraising</p> <p>£6,222.97 was received in donations over the year, broken down as follows: Wheelchair: £5,000 towards court fees from the Community Foundation.</p>	

	<p>The Club: £500 towards storage costs from Local Giving. The Club: £600 towards courses from South East Regional Management Committee. The rest of the donations were from Easyfundraising and commission for kit bought from KitKabin.</p> <p>Alex urged Club members to consider if they could volunteer with fundraising for the Club. Alex could provide a list of various grants that could be applied for.</p> <p>Accounts</p> <p>The accounts had been reviewed by a Scrutineer and both the Scrutineer’s report and the Club’s Accounts had been made available on the Club website for all members to view.</p> <p><u>Noticeable changes from the accounts last year:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball England issued fines for £260 for non-compliance with game rules. • The Youth Club paid out the Senior Sector (£900) and the Wheelchair sector (£2,900) for the Shooting Machine. • New equipment this season included two new hoops for Woking College to replace ones that were damaged during training. • Coaches fees have increased from £15,403 to £25,590 • Miscellaneous Youth: includes £105 still owed to the club from players / parents for Scorchers tickets. <p>Youth Fundamentals: No longer running at a loss. Income was around £2,500 and expenses (coach and court fees) was circa £2,000.</p> <p>Alex reminded attendees that anyone in financial difficulty and unable to meet the cost of subs should approach their Team Manager or Head of Section, to ensure that no-one was excluded from basketball on a financial basis.</p> <p>Russ shared that Gerard Sammon (Club member) had made a suggestion for the Club to consider investing any surplus funds in any section, as a way of safeguarding assets for any future needs of the Club. The main section that had surplus assets was the Youth Section, where consideration would be given to how to utilise the subs, with options including reducing fees for National League teams, providing additional funding for coaching and potentially supporting the Senior Section.</p> <p>No questions were raised on the accounts.</p> <p>The accounts were approved and accepted for signing.</p> <p>The Executive Committee would meet to consider the appropriate transfer of funds from each of the section accounts to the main account, for the purpose of the contingency fund.</p> <p>Thanks were noted to Alex for her diligence to the Treasurer’s role over the season and all her efforts to seek fundraising.</p>	<p>Annabelle Hardiman</p> <p>Executive Committee</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Amendments to the Constitution</p> <p>Amendments to the Constitution had been proposed, primarily in light of the departure of the Wheelchair Section from the Club. This did not prevent the Club from having a Wheelchair section again in the future, at which point the Constitution would be amended to re-introduce relevant provisions.</p>	

	The amendments to the Constitution were approved.	
6.	<p>Election of Officers</p> <p>The following individuals were proposed and accepted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Russell Fernandes • Secretary: Annabelle Hardiman • Treasurer: Alex Fogarty • Head of Youth Basketball: Brett Greenwood • Head of Seniors Basketball: Brett Greenwood <p>All officers were elected unopposed.</p> <p>Thanks were expressed to everyone for agreeing to take on the roles.</p> <p>The Executive Committee was authorised to appoint a Safeguarding Officer(s) and a Data Protection Officer, with the following being appointed as Safeguarding Officers: Mel Jones (Youth); Lisa Bhaura (Seniors). The Executive Committee had agreed not to appoint a Data Protection Officer to date.</p>	
7.	<p>Registration fees for 2024/25 season</p> <p>Fees charged by each Section would be agreed formally by the Executive Committee prior to the start of the next season.</p> <p>It was noted that the Youth Section were likely to stay the same as the 2023/24 season, other than inter-club teams & the U10s that were expected to reduce slightly.</p> <p>A change to the subscription terms for the Senior Section was likely to be made, primarily moving to a September to May subscription, which would reduce the cost overall. The exact monthly fee would depend on the number of teams that would be entered, which was being finalised over the coming weeks.</p> <p>It was noted that Basketball England had significantly increased the annual license fees, both for National League and local league licenses. BE licenses were currently paid for by players.</p>	Executive Committee
8.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Russell gave his thanks on behalf of the Club to all those serving on the Executive Committee for the work they carried out. Thanks were also noted to Ian Taylor for his ongoing support.</p> <p>Russell informed those attending the meeting that a review of the Club's websites was underway, with a view to consolidate the Club's three current websites into a single website, most likely the myclubhouse site.</p> <p>David Bagwell - coach of the men's Div 4 & assistant coach of the men's Div 3 – raised a concern regarding the number of U18's attending men's sessions without any prior notice being given to the coaches. The U18's were very welcome to attend the sessions, however, a level 2 coach needed to be present at any session with an U18, which was not always the case otherwise. Prior notification, therefore, enabled the coaches to ensure in advance that a level 2 coach attended the session. David also requested that consideration be given to putting senior players through a level 2 coaching course.</p>	

<p>David Bagwell also queried a rumour that had been circulating that the men's new National League team would be training on a Friday (which was currently a div 3/4's night). Brett confirmed that this would not be the case.</p> <p>Martin thanked David Kingstone for all the efforts both he and Vicky Kingstone had put to developing the Wheelchair Section over the previous 14 years. It was with sadness that the Wheelchair Section were now leaving the Club, however, the reasons were understood and Martin wished the team all the best with the Surrey Scorchers.</p> <p>Matthew Trojanovich noted his appreciation for the shooting machine that was bought by the Club several years' prior and the mens' teams had started using.</p> <p>Noting the increase in BE licence fees, Matthew expressed a concern for the U10's and U12's in particular and enquired as to whether any support could be given by the Club to ease the burden on players' families. The license fees were expected to be £20 for local league players and £40 for National League players. Brett confirmed that the increase had only recently been announced, however, he was considering options including integrating the cost into the monthly subs so it is spread across the year rather than being an upfront payment.</p> <p>Alex Xenos – Team Manager for men's div 3/4 – requested clarity over the Club's clarity for the Senior Section, in particular whether the Club continued to aim to provide opportunities for all levels. Brett confirmed that this was definitely the case. However, the Senior Section had been running at a financial loss for several years. The finances had been stabilised this year through an increase in subs mid-way through the year, but going forward the number of teams needed to be balanced with the number of players registered to avoid further increases to monthly subs. A meeting would be arranged with the Senior Section in the coming weeks to discuss the number of mens' teams that would be entered next season.</p> <p>There being no further business, Russell thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.</p>	<p>Brett Greenwood</p>
<p>The meeting ended at 8.45pm</p>	