

IRVINE SPORTS CLUB BOARD MEETING on THUR. 19th JAN. 2023

Present: R. Kidd, J. McGarry, A. Rennie, S. McCallum, A. Wilson, M. Nish, M. Ingram,
A Keenan

Apologies: L. Williamson, G. Russell

Finance and Banking

The finance report covering the period until the end of December 2022 had been prepared by Glen and issued in advance of the meeting. The overall profit during the months of November and December was approximately £15k but during that time the club had received a VAT refund of approx. £11k and a grant to purchase Microsoft training equipment of £14,625 and these funds need to be used for that purpose. Therefore the club probably only broke even during November and December.

A Rennie reported a greater concern regarding significant sums being sought by HMRC in respect of PAYE and VAT. The PAYE is a combination of a historical dispute about payments and some recent gaps in payments. A. Rennie is liaising with the club accountant about how best to proceed with this. The VAT issue is linked to the electricity and gas payments which the club makes to Engie, our energy provider. The club is a charity and has traditionally been given exemption from the VAT on energy(5%). However it appears that HMRC/Engie are now disputing that we are entitled to this exemption on the basis that we are also a business and they are looking for back payments of this VAT going back to 2015. Glen has been liaising with Engie to see if there is a compromise position based on an apportionment of our income between business and charity activities.

Staffing for reception duties, cleaning and locking up

It had been reported at recent board meetings that the funded work placements which the club has been able to take advantage of in recent years are no longer available and the final two placements which the club has (Jade and Sarah-Jane) will finish at the end of January. This will leave the club with a challenge to fund staff for a range of duties, particularly reception and cleaning. Glen has been pursuing alternative funding for this linked to the club providing additional services for the community (e.g. a warm room) and Glen, Bobby and Andy have arranged a meeting to try to see how we can ensure adequate cleaning of the club rooms. In the meantime Andy and Bobby will assist Glen with locking up duties.

Co-opted directors (two spaces are available)

It is hoped that the two remaining spaces on the board can be used to attract people who have certain expertise or skills which could assist or enhance the work of the board e.g. fundraising or finance or marketing or building maintenance. It was agreed to defer any appointments to allow board members time to reflect on any possible appointments.

Development Manager's report

Glen was unable to attend the meeting but had issued a comprehensive report to all board members in advance of the meeting. Replacement of the clubhouse roof remains our no 1 priority and Glen is continuing to liaise with companies which will assist us in arriving at a workable technical solution and thereafter he will pursue funding. As previously stated staffing is also a concern but Glen is optimistic that grants which he has applied for in respect of the club providing additional community services will be successful and assist with this ongoing challenge. A full report on how staffing can be funded in the short term should be available for the February board meeting.

Upgrade to cricket changing – update

M. Ingram reported that the work is 90% complete but there are a small number of outstanding issues including installation of an alarm in the disability toilet and resolving the corridor issue caused by a structural pillar. In addition one of the metal security grills still has to be moved and it is proposed to increase the slabbed area outside the building.

Asset transfer of strip of land from North Ayrshire Council – update

A Rennie reported that he has been contacted by a new lawyer(Ken Thompson) who will now be dealing with the asset transfer on behalf of the club following the retirement of the previous lawyer(Alan Reid). He said that North Ayrshire Council has been in contact with him about concluding the transaction and that he will now try to progress the matter.

Playing Sections and Gym

Archery – It was confirmed that the sports club has no objection in principle to the previous shooting area being let to archery for some 'one off' events but any arrangement would be dependent on the needs of other sections, particularly cricket. In addition it was considered inappropriate for a group which is no longer a playing section to have a large storage container situated on the sports club ground and archery should make arrangements for its removal. A. Rennie will contact archery and ask for a response.

Cricket – will be holding a brunch in February but unable to hold it at the club as a result of no suitable date being available.

Football – In the new registration period the club has registered 106 players covering six age groups with 7 teams operating. Matches have restarted after the winter break and the Ladies team won at the weekend. Following a 'mini-kickers' event at the Circuit 8 girls signed up for the 7's team. A summer camp is being arranged for 31st July to 4th August and the same provider will deliver 5x3hr sessions between 26th March and 7th May and will also provide training for coaches. The playing season for ladies' football is going to be aligned with the playing season for men's football.

Hockey – The section is still actively recruiting and four more players have started. A hockey project in partnership with CAMHS is being planned for the summer. Urgent repairs are needed to the hockey goals which have been vandalised following a previous refurbishment and it was agreed to provide funding to make the goals operational again.

Rugby – The 1st XV played at home the previous Saturday and lost. The Ladies team lost in the final of their league in December and will now progress to play an 80min game on 5th Feb. and they will also play in the Bowl Competition. The juniors will play Greenock on Sunday. A four day summer camp is being arranged for 24th to 28th July and the club has applied to hold a ‘tartan touch’ event (introduction to rugby) in the summer.

Running – The Cyclists v Harriers and the Christmas handicap events were both held successfully including a Christmas handicap event for the growing junior section. The new banner has been erected on the front of the clubhouse.

Request from CDG for ISC to arrange for the height of the manhole at the bottom end of the club to be raised by about 1metre.

A Rennie gave an explanation of how rainwater drains out of the playing field into the river and illustrated this with a diagram. When the river is low rainwater from the playing field enters the river via a ‘flap drain’ valve at the base of the manhole and when the river is high the ‘flap drain’ is forced shut preventing water from the river coming back up the drainage system into the playing field. If rain continues to fall when the ‘flap drain’ is shut there is nowhere for the water to go and this will cause inevitable flooding to the playing field – and there is no way of preventing this. It has been suggested that when the ‘flap drain’ is shut water from the river can come out of the top of the manhole and make the situation worse – hence the request to increase the height of the manhole. The board decided that there is no evidence that this happens and, even if it did, it would have minimal effect compared with the flooding caused by the ‘flap drain’ being shut.

Request from CDG for ISC to create a clear section at the top car park to allow emergency vehicles quick access(when the ground is suitable)

It was stressed that the board is committed to ensuring good access for emergency vehicles but there are limitations to what the club can achieve – it does not own the top car park and for much of the winter the playing field is too soft for an emergency vehicle to drive over. It was agreed to attempt to get advice from the emergency services about any improvements which the club could make.

Request from North Ayrshire BB Battalion to hold fun runs on the mornings of either 18th or 25th March.

This was a regular event pre-covid and only the perimeter of the field is used and the numbers are quite small. This was agreed at no cost to the BB.

Request from Irvine Vics 2011’s football to hold an Easter camp during the day

More information was requested on numbers and facilities needed and A. Rennie was asked to find out more information and share it with football. Irvine Vics subsequently withdrew their request to hold the camp at Easter and said that they were now considering a summer camp, and will get back in touch if necessary.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 23rd February