

Padel committee meeting 8 April 2026

Present : M Brown (MB), R Chipperfield (RC), M Hughes (MH), D Sidaway (DS), L Lazarou (LL)

Apologies: J Samra (JS), N Prosser (NP)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Safeguarding and health & safety

- No update as NP on annual leave

Board matters

- MB updated on board related matters specific to padel

Padel governance

- Need for by-laws to control unsocial behaviour and court abuse

Padel metrics

- March headline data review and February key statistics discussed

Pay and Play

- Ongoing issues with communication and marketing
- Development of a Playtomic style booking within Mycourts

Marketing

- New web page development and timescale
- New marketing structure at the club
- Possible price reduction for off peak hours

Internal leagues

- Completion of first league and prize draw
- New format for second round of matches

Padel programme

- Family padel sessions discontinued and extra padel social
- Possibility of a new Saturday social at 3.45pm
- Cancellations policy for coaches revised to 24 hours

Padel pod and grounds

- Dispensing machine commissioning is urgent
- Digital clock for court timings is out and needs regular checking

AOB

- Pricing increase for members at primetime

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Present : M Brown (MB), R Chipperfield (RC), M Hughes (MH), D Sidaway (DS), Liz Lazarou (LL)

Apologies: J Samra (JS), N Prosser (NP)

Agenda circulated in advance of meeting.

MB welcomed LL to her first meeting.

Last minutes – Headlines reviewed and approved as seen

Safeguarding and health and safety

No update as NP on annual leave. No matters known of.

Padel board matters

MB listed the following issues from the February main board:

Financials were satisfactory given ongoing poor weather; profit of £13.9k to date

Website development imminent on padel page and would need immediate review and response

Still no formal notification of court completion to LTA; this would trigger final 10% of loan but LTA are notoriously difficult to contact (similar situation with Barnt Green and LTA).

Fraudulent use of padel courts was brought up by MB regarding members not booking and using out of hours or using members names when they were bringing guests. Position condemned but no formal policy for sanction; appears to apply differently in various areas of the club. Measures to be discussed to tighten the abuses currently happening.

Padel by-laws

This led to a wide ranging discussion on governance of padel at the club.

It transpires that there are no padel specific by-laws in place. MH would forward tennis by-laws to MB from the website so that parameters could be drawn up and discussed fully next time.

LL, DS, RC and MH all cited examples this afternoon of excess levels of noise and rowdy behaviour on one court alongside people playing shirtless and multiple people sitting immediately courtside. DS and RC further quoted that on Sunday evening extremely loud music was blaring out from one court whilst they were playing. This could clearly be detrimental to members and PPs padel experience at the club.

All committee members have been challenging on an occasional basis but clearly rules and procedures would facilitate this.

RC stated that there is a level of youth culture playing the sport who have not necessarily been members of racket clubs before so rules need to be clearly outlined to enable enforcement.

LL also observed that this behaviour was potentially then drifting onto the tennis courts as some were playing tennis after padel.

It was agreed that MB would draft some by-laws covering on court behaviour (noise, language and dress) and use of music and spectators' behaviour. Once approved (depending on club laws) then the key items would need to be clearly displayed at the entrance to the padel courts.

This would make challenging players easier if necessary.

It was felt that more policing at weekends was required by Pete Kular when these issues were typically more prevalent.

If members were uncomfortable in challenging then they should still report such behaviour to Nikki Prosser if they did not wish to get involved.

New by-laws would need to be communicated to members and PP alike.

Padel metrics

Form of report amended by Steve Chilvers to give comparative month data and had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

MB outlined key statistics which were encouraging given patchy March weather:

Utilisation 36 % (Feb 29%) (cumulative 26%)

Played in month 288 (Feb 217); Guests 146 (108); 22 net new Pay & Play (PP) now totalling 140

Income in month £6.9k (Feb £5.3k) and cumulative £32.9k

First week of April was a record £1.9k. Members up due to league matches, guests down on presumption of abuse of system. PP on a slow rise for participation. As members levels increase this reduces average club income per session which is currently at £16.5 against model of £18 which confirms the criticality of PP levels.

Pay and Play

PP registration numbers continue to rise (up to 144 as of this meeting) and a small number had reverted to being full members.

No communication had been specifically addressed to PPs as MB explained the new marketing structure would cover this and would be discussed later.

All committee members had access to locker codes and there was some support for Pete Kular especially at the weekends to ensure access and other issues raised at the previous meeting.

We know the financial value of PP in the club model so their retention and our commitment to their value is critical. We will need to share more information with them and dependent on court capacity consider PP tournaments and leagues to bring them together.

MH stated that he is currently working with Miles at Mycourts on an open match platform (similar to Playtomic) which might improve the ability of PPs to arrange a wider set of games.

Padel marketing

MB updated the meeting on marketing developments.

New club website launch was delayed until April as too much feedback had been sought that was then hard to easily edit and draft. MB had been nominated to review and redraft the current proposal by the marketing team. MB has sought to simplify the message about padel and the club and emphasise the club's setting and friendliness as a USP.

MB outlined the new marketing structure at the club to be led by Georgia Crowe (G).

The social media day for padel at the club would be Friday; G would produce generic content if no specific ideas were forthcoming.

G would require a minimum of one week's notice for content planning and posters and two weeks for content capture such as images. G would be based at the club on Wednesdays and all email communications sent to her and NP.

MB encouraged the committee to think in advance of next meeting of types of padel content and subjects that we would like to promote. Ideally a rough draft of content could be provided but an outline of bullet points would be equally useful if people were more comfortable doing that.

The committee reconsidered the issue of off peak promotion. DS enquired if there was data and MB had access to reports and heatmaps that showed the lowest uptakes were 7am to 10.45am. RC commented that other padel facilities seemed to fill these slots. After due discussion it was agreed that in the short term we needed to kickstart these slots with a pricing adjustment. LL suggested using a percentage was typically a better hook so it was proposed to trial for say one month a 25% reduction on these times that would apply to members and PPs alike. As it involved financials MB would email execs to try to move it along faster than the normal committee channels and we would then try to promote it with G's help as soon as possible.

Padel internal leagues

MH provided an outline of the latest position on the leagues.

First run of league matches had been completed with 101 matches being played. Feedback had been good and RC felt it had been well run.

As agreed previously there followed a draw among league winners and pairs playing all matches. DS and LL drew out Marc and Billy Hughes for the winners and Guy and Alison Birkett for the all matches winners; £25 to be transferred to each members V1 card.

MH and RC had consulted on the second run starting 6 April and a new structure was proposed to have a premier league and then division columns A and B so that winners of 1A and 1B would be promoted to premier and two relegated and two up and two down in all other divisions. RC stated that these strict rules needed to apply now regardless of matches unplayed. New leagues should allow for quicker promotion and refreshing of the leagues regularly.

Since MH had emailed this format out there had been further interest including from high quality players. After discussion it was agreed that Oscar Searle and Max Thomson should be added to the premier league numbers as it was impossible to accommodate them anywhere else.

The second league would finish mid June and then not run until end of September to enable club championships to be held and leave capacity for players in hopefully the better weather.

There were issues with the use of padel levels and MH was reopting people in and it may take time for the last three months to be updated. Hopefully system will work okay after that.

League administration is time consuming per MH and DS kindly offered to assist if required.

Padel programme

All the amendments to the program were now in place.

Problematic session was still Family Social on a Sunday which was poorly subscribed and often cancelled late by Leon.

This led to a debate on timings of cancellations which was still variable and often too late to be meaningful especially at prime times. It was agreed that the policy was to be at least 24 hours before any session to allow for members or PPs to rebook.

There was no appetite to continue with the promotion of Family Social at this stage but it was felt this should remain an organised session slot as the weekday options had been cutback. Consensus was to run it as another Padel Social with weekend pricing £3/£12PP to apply and for Leon to run it. Numbers would be monitored over next two months and marketed for a start on Sunday 19th April.

MB had been approached by members requesting a padel social on a Saturday at 3.45pm followed by a drink in the bar. It was felt this could be set up to be run informally probably on a rotation basis by members of the committee so pricing could be £2 members. This would be discussed at the next meeting.

Padel courts and grounds

Limited discussion on grounds as short of time but matters had been raised as part of earlier debates.

Full commissioning of the vending machine was critical in the pod to enhance the experience. MB will take up with NP.

Digital wall clock can be up to 4 minutes out and is often at least 2 minutes out; this can lead to confrontations on starting times which should be avoided. Agreed that Dave Pope should get this exact at start of each week and then weekly check it for accuracy.

Decathlon padel rackets are being used in the lockers as we migrate away from HEAD and Steve Chilvers regularly monitors bats and balls.

Any other business

Only time for one matter of AOB which was a discussion on potentially increasing members prices in the prime time weekday evening slots. Soundings had been taken and it had not been received well. All committee members were against changing the pricing model at this stage with various reasons cited. Financials are okay despite the delayed launch and the poorer phase of weather on which we have data. A full year cycle including summer is sensible before we revisit this area. It was felt our attention was better focussed on curtailing abuse and financial loss together with attracting greater levels of PP and getting more revenue from the times when courts are underutilised. This was deemed a more sensible target than to go after loyal and supportive members for marginal gains.

Next meeting

Provisionally set for Wednesday 6 May at 5pm.

