

Great Doddington Club Annual General Meeting

Date: 2nd March 2024

Committee: Steve Taschini, Brenda Hawkins, John Kilsby, Richard Wagstaff, Martin Freeman, Nick Wood, Paul Hewitt. **Trustees;** David Smith, Shirley Pearson.

Management team: Layla Leighton

Apologies: Rick Brawn, Chris Davies, Martin Putman

Introduction and Club President Overview (Steve Taschini)

Steve welcomed those attending and reminded everyone of the situation the Club members faced last February. The club had closed and was bankrupt.

- The club was seriously in debt with an outstanding Covid loan of £40,000
- There was a £20,000 loss in the finances for 2022 and was through-out the year losing £500 per week.
- There was no money in the banks to pay creditors
- All staff had been laid off and required redundancy payments

Since then thanks to the fantastic support of the local community and the extraordinary efforts of a number of people; volunteers, committee members, trustees, trades people and an initial injection of cash, the club has been able to make a dramatic recovery despite challenging economic conditions and a few setbacks that would have seen many similar entities fail.

Steve thanked the many people who have made that possible. There will continue to be challenges but with the support and patronage from the local community the club will survive.

The initial objectives of the recovery plan were laid out for the members to assess how successful the trustees and the committee have been:

- Provide a working and thriving business model
- Repay the Covid loan
- Repay the initial investors
- Negotiate a new drinks contract more favourable to the club
- Provide a catering service
- Bring the club back as a hub for the community
- Refurbish the kitchen and bring it back to a safe legally compliant condition
- Build up a business profile for parties, wakes, weddings etc. to bring in income.
- Refurbish the derelict accommodation to provide a further source of income.

- Revise the oversight and governance of the club with a transparent and accountable committee overseen and guided by a group of trustees to manage the member's interests
- Provide members with a transparent view of the club finances
- Provide members with monthly updates and copies of the committee minutes

Overall the committee feel that the majority of these objectives have either been met or are being managed. In addition, the previous 6 year's accounts have been loaded onto the FCA website and a link will be sent to all members to allow them to review these and the 2023 accounts too which are to be presented today.

Trustees Overview (David Smith)

David welcomed the members to the meeting and said how good it was to see so many people attending today which reflected the success of the club.

The four trustees are there to represent the member's interests, and provide an "eyes on, hands off" review of the club operations and finances. They provide guidance and advice where required.

David thanked the efforts of the community and all the volunteers who made the recovery possible and the efforts of the committee and management team.

Financial Overview (Richard Wagstaff)

Headline figures:

- Turnover last year £214k compared to £189k previous year – an improvement of around 13%
- Net loss for the year was £1.5k compared to a loss of £20K previously. It was noted that the club was looking to make a small profit but encountered some unexpected expenditure towards the end of the year including a replacement boiler at a cost of £3k.
- Gross profit has improved from 50% to 64% in the previous year which is encouraging
- Expenditure for the year was broken down as follows:
 - Stock £72k
 - Staff costs £68k
 - Maintenance £26k (refurbishment of the derelict accommodation was £15k)
 - Contracts (Sky, BT) £7-£8k
 - Boiler £3k
 - Repayment of loans £5k

- A commercial tenant has now been found for the flat which will bring in an income of £800 per month.
- There are currently 400 members compared to 700 in the previous year. This reduction in membership was thought to be due to a large number of “speculative members” when the club looked to be failing.
- Overall this has been a tremendous achievement.
- A question was asked about the balance of the club’s bank accounts – Overall the club has approximately £22k which fluctuates based on the time of the month and the amount of expenditure. This is contained in the current account, reserve account and the Go Fund Me account.
- Income from the flat will go directly into the reserve account.
- A question was asked about contracts. The Carlsberg/Marstons contract had been continued initially to enable us to reach our barrellage targets and avoid penalty payments. However, we have now signed a more favourable deal with Green King who have bought out the penalty charges and have not tied the club in with any required volume sales.
- There are a number of other advantages and improvements over the previous contract. Other contracts were outlined, the committee are firmly in control of this now.
- A question was asked about repayment of the initial investors. Repayment of these will start this year.
- A question was asked about the duration of the Covid loan. There is no set repayment period for this. Repayments so far have been £5k with an outstanding balance of £35k at £500 per month this should be repaid within 6 years.

Entertainment (Brenda Hawkins)

Brenda thanked all of the volunteers and members for their support.

There has been a tremendous effort put into providing top quality bands and other entertainment that has been instrumental in bringing members and non-members alike back to the club and has been instrumental in its recovery. This will continue with many new events planned.

- Many new events are being planned not just bands.
- The Quiz is a big success.
- Bingo continues to do well with a top prize for members of £400.
- We will continue with ticketed events.
- Pool and crib nights are well attended and we are looking to reintroduce skittles and darts teams.
- The refurbishment in the club foyer which advertise forthcoming events and an active social media presence will keep members informed.

Maintenance / Health and Safety (John Kilsby)

There has been a lot of work done to maintain and improve the club which would not have been possible without the support of volunteers and various trades people who provided their help free of charge. John provided an overview of some of the improvements:

- Derelict accommodation was fully refurbished and turned into a commercial let.
- New boiler has been installed after the previous one failed.
- Fire extinguishers service and smoke alarms installed.
- A large number of repairs and upgrades to the infrastructure of the club have been completed.

There are however some big challenges and costs ahead these include:

- Treatment of dry rot in the porch area.
- Repair the car park surface and fill in potholes. We would like to bring the lower car park area back into use.
- Replace and extend the decking area.
- Redecorate the interior of the club.
- Improve exterior lighting.

There are a number of grants available from the council and we are looking to take advantage of these. John maintains a priority spreadsheet for all outstanding repairs. Three quotes are always obtained for any jobs required.

- A question was asked about the lack of lighting at the entrance to the car park. There is no external power and this would be expensive. Currently no solution although we will be repairing the pot hole and replace the solar light already in place but not very effective.
- A question was asked about switching to more cost effective LED lighting. The committee will look into this.

Club Overview (Layla Leighton)

Layla provided an overview of the current structure and achievements made by her team. They provide friendly and efficient service to members ensuring a good atmosphere in the club.

Constructive feedback and suggestions from members are always welcome to help us improve.

The changeover to Green King is a fantastic boost for the club and will bring the following benefits:

- An exciting new range of beers
- New glassware
- Garden furniture (umbrellas)
- Promotional support
- Loyalty schemes
- No volume commitment
- Buy out of existing commitment

We have plans in place to improve the exterior of the club and introduce a sofa area inside as this was well liked previously.

Committee changes, elections and member's votes (Steve Taschini)

The following change to the committee and its officers was announced:

- Paul Hewitt secretary standing down
- Martin Freeman joining as the new club secretary

Votes

- Re-election of the existing committee – **Approved**
- New committee member Tim Elwood (maintenance and repair) and Nick Wood (member liaison) – **Approved**
- Club rules and constitution – **Approved** - A question was asked about the length of tenure of the committee and trustees and the danger of losing all at once. This will be discussed at the next meeting. One suggestion would be a rolling annual re-election for trustees.
- Change of entity name to Great Doddington Club – **Approved**
- Land Sale – small parcel of land at the side of the club – this resulted in a lively discussion. A decision was agreed to look for further legal advice on the introduction of an 'Uplift clause' to protect the Clubs financial interests in case of future development of the site by the prospective buyers. This will then be brought back to the committee and members for discussion and a final vote.

The AGM ended at 11.35.