



CLARE PLAYING FIELD

PAVILION & SPORTS FIELD

Annual General Meeting 7.30 pm 8th October 2020 Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Present: Suzanne Culshaw (SC), Charlie Godfrey (CG), Robyn Sheppard (RS), Neil Sansom (NS), Neil Bagshaw (NB), Margaret Godwin (MG)

Trustee Apologies: Ian Carson (IC), Andy Brader (AB)

Public Present: Tony Sheppard

Public Apologies: Keith Haisman

Welcome

CG introduced himself as the Co-Chair of the Clare Playing Fields Association (CPFA) and welcomed members of the public to the Annual General Meeting, which is the third AGM to be held since the current Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) was registered by the previous team of trustees led by Gayle Mallows on 18th April 2017. The previous AGM was held on 28th October 2019 and there were no specific actions arising from the previous meeting to report back on at the start of this meeting.

This meeting was being held virtually in order to comply with Covid-19 restrictions which is permitted by the constitution.

CG noted that the CPFA had held an EGM on 10th August 2020 when two proposals to alter the constitution were passed namely:

- Membership requirements were amended to those on the electoral rolls for Clare **and the surrounding area.**
- The appointment of trustees was amended to **a maximum of 5** consecutive terms.

CG stated that the Trustees would welcome questions throughout the meeting.

Introduction of Trustees and Apologies for Absence

CG introduced the trustees who were present noting that he was also Vice Chair of Clare Town Lions FC and manager of the U18s team, CG explained the respective roles of the Co-Chairs with SC focussed on Strategy and the Community and CG on Operations and Sporting Activities.

CG noted that Mandy Messenger had stepped down after three years of service in July and her role as treasurer had been taken by Margaret Godwin who had joined the team in August. CG acknowledged Mandy for the financial infrastructure that she had put in place that had enabled a seamless transition to Margaret which had been ably supported by RS in her role as Bookings Secretary.

CG noted that IC had joined the team in August as the Trustees were keen for Clare Town FC to be represented; IC currently manages the Reserves team.



CLARE PLAYING FIELD

PAVILION & SPORTS FIELD

CG noted that IC and AB had sent their apologies as they were unable to attend this AGM.

CG thanked NB, NS (who is also Secretary of Clare Town Lions FC) and AB for their support with the general day to day operational issues. Finally CG thanked the CPFA's hard-working caretaker, Tony Sheppard, as well as Colin Atkinson for a whole range of large and small tasks he takes care of for us.

Charitable Objects

CG referred the meeting to the statement on the Charity Commission's website specifying the CPFA's aim to look after the Clare Town Playing Field in order to offer the local people access to a community space and sport facilities.

This is further defined by our Charitable Objects namely:

'To promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Clare and the surrounding area the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of the said inhabitants.'

Overview of 2019 / 20

CG provided the following overview of activities during the period since the last AGM to demonstrate how the CPFA has met its aims and charitable objects. The Trustees had intended to hold this AGM in April or early May to coincide with the financial year end but had decided to delay it until now due to the restrictions and uncertainty caused by the current pandemic.

The Playing Fields themselves are predominantly used for football from August to mid-May each year although the season ended as the country went in to lock-down at the end of March. The two clubs that use the facilities are in an extremely healthy state with Clare Town FC running First and Reserve teams in the Cambridgeshire County League playing on Saturdays in Divisions 1A and 3A respectively.

The First team finished 7th in their division and the Reserves finished 10th having gained promotion at the end of the previous season. They currently have over 60 players registered to play and train once a week. As many fixtures remained unplayed the leagues were decided on a points per game basis.

Clare Town Lions FC currently has teams at U8, U10, U12, and U18 with 52 children registered to play on Sundays in the Ipswich and Suffolk Youth Football League. The previous season was declared void by the League as the majority of clubs voted for that rather than the points per game option. The U14 team folded at the end of last season as there were insufficient players in the squad. The Lions are now looking to start up an U6 team to play in league from September 2021. All teams train on a weekly basis using the Field until mid-October when they move to the Astro at Hundon Village Hall.

Football re-started in August once clear guidance relating to Covid-19 precautions was provided by the FA and the appropriate risk assessments completed with both football clubs. Unfortunately this has meant that the Pavilion remains closed and the changing rooms cannot be used at this time. CG acknowledged the good collaboration between all parties that enabled this re-start and noted that the Playing Fields are registered with the NHS Covid-19 Test & Trace scheme so all visitors can scan a QR code on arrival.



CLARE PLAYING FIELD

PAVILION & SPORTS FIELD

Last year we reported that the Lions had been approached to assist in setting up a Ladies team but unfortunately this did not come to fruition.

The pitches are in a much better condition for the start of the season thanks to the rainfall during the summer months and despite being flooded twice during the winter months. The Trustees had applied to Suffolk FA for some funding for routine pitch maintenance but were unsuccessful; the FA have proposed an extensive scheme to support improving grass pitches across the county but the long-term financial burden for the CPFA was not a viable proposition.

The Trustees collaborated with the Town Council towards the end of last year to put a new grounds maintenance contract in place covering grass, undergrowth cutting and line marking. The contract remained with West Suffolk Council for a term of 3 years from April 2020. Following a tree survey organised by the Town Council two neighbours on the west bank of the Chilton Stream had to be identified in February and asked to deal with some dangerous branches. CG acknowledged NS for his fine detective work in defining the boundaries and property owners and noted that the works were completed in July.

The field is used by dog walkers, Stour Valley Community School for football and the occasional budding golfer can be seen practising in the summer months.

With the cancellation of Clare Craft Fair in July the Field was not used for car parking, however, the CPFA are grateful to have received a generous donation for the 2019 event, which attracted over 11,000 visitors, at an event held at the Priory in November.

Prior to the national lock-down the Pavilion was hired on a regular basis for Pilates with classes run during the week as well as weekend workshops by Fiona Palmer with Jo Johnson holding two yoga sessions a week as well. Gayle Mallows also ran her Time for Clay classes on a regular basis and both CADS and Kids CADS held rehearsals. During the year there were a number of private parties and fund raisers, as well as Town Council, Clare First Responders and private meetings. At the present time none of the regular hirers are holding sessions at the Pavilion due to the government restrictions although there is the possibility of a small exercise class starting in the near future.

Over the summer months the doors to the changing rooms were replaced and the exterior woodwork painted and additional insulation, funded by the Coop scheme, has been installed. We anticipate the extra insulation will reduce the electricity costs albeit the true benefit will be hard to judge with the lack of use at present.

The Trustees continued to monitor the condition of the retaining wall at the rear of the building which had developed a large crack and was leaning forward along part of its length. In early September a number of test holes were dug to determine the cause of the failure and a report is due imminently from the structural engineer at AFP Consulting to determine the best solution to ensure the work is both cost effective and secure for the long term.

Sadly the memorial bench for John Humphrey that was installed in 2018 has been vandalised twice and whilst NB managed to repair it the first time it now requires a fully qualified joiner as the original supplier does not provide a repair service.

A further application for funding from the Coop scheme has been made to improve the kitchen facilities. We expect to hear later this month if this has been successful.



CLARE PLAYING FIELD

PAVILION & SPORTS FIELD

CG asked if there were any questions.

Financial Update

MG provided the meeting with a financial update.

Income during 2019/20 was £ 22,096.75, expenditure £ 16,380.73 with an excess of income over expenditure of £5,716.02.

The key sources of income during the year remained the football clubs along with the weekly pilates and yoga classes and the funding from the Coop scheme.

In terms of costs electricity consumption remains significant and as already noted we hope to reduce this with the extra insulation.

In April we successfully applied for a £ 10,000 grant from West Suffolk which is intended to support local community facilities through the pandemic. We will look to carry out a deep clean and replace the carpet in the main hall.

The budget for 2020/21 and 2021/22 will be revised during October and submitted with the Precept request to Clare Town Council at the end of the month. MG noted that the Borough Councillors have funding available and had offered £300 towards the tracing app we had looked at prior to the NHS app being available. Mary Evans, county councillor, also has funding available.

It should be noted that the grass cutting, line marking, and insurance costs are met directly by the Council hence their omission from our financial statement.

Outlook for 2020 / 21

The outlook for the remainder of the financial year is hard to predict but with the current restrictions set to last until March it is highly unlikely that we will see the Pavilion back in use during that time. Along with the football clubs we remain hopeful that matches will continue to be played but this is far from certain.

CG advised the meeting of the Trustees intention to hold the next AGM closer to the end of our financial year in April or May 2021.

Election of Trustees

CG passed the chairing of the meeting to SC to start the process of re-election of the Trustees. We currently have 9 trustees in post and according to the constitution three need to stand down at this meeting but all are eligible for re-election.

SC proposed that Jo Everitt (JE) stand down on the basis that she has not attended a meeting in over six months which is in accordance with Section 15(1)(b). This was approved unanimously. We are grateful to JE for her support of the CPFA over the past 3 years and wish her well. NB stood down and did not wish to be re-elected but has offered his continued support to the Trustees. SC thanked him for his support during his time as a trustee.



CLARE PLAYING FIELD

PAVILION & SPORTS FIELD

RS stood down but wished to be re-elected, SC nominated RS for re-election which was seconded by MG and agreed by all present.

CG, NS, AB, MG and IC were confirmed as remaining in post for a further year.

SC noted that SC, CG, RS and AB will have completed the maximum term at the AGM in 2022.

CG resumed chairing the meeting.

Meeting Close

CG acknowledged the support of Clare Town Council and specifically Cllr Paul Bishop and Catherine Hibbert over the course of the last 12 months as well as Mo Smith and closed by wishing her a long and happy retirement.

Meeting closed at 08.11 pm

Charlie Godfrey

Co-Chair

Clare Playing Field Association

15th October 2020