

Oxfordshire Badminton League–Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

After holding the AGM virtually in recent season due to Covid, the AGM was again held in person at The Manor Preparatory School. Although scheduled to start at 7.30pm, as there was known to be major disruption on the A34 south of the M40, it was decided to delay slightly in case it helped clubs who had advised attendance.

1. Chair's welcome

Judy Bendall (Chairperson) welcomed club representatives to the AGM, thanked them for attending and invited them to share the refreshments. She asked everyone to sign in using the attendance sheet and to nominate a representative to hold the vote for their club (using the named card for their club for voting). She said she hoped people had viewed the agenda for tonight, the proposals from the Committee and the Minutes of last year's AGM (in the OBL document library). Judy said comments from clubs were welcome as the AGM is an opportunity to share views and concerns.

2. Attendees and apologies for absence

Fifteen of the eighteen clubs attended so the meeting was quorate. Apologies were received from Windrush. Chilton and St Clements were not in attendance. Five of the eight Committee members were present and apologies were received from Committee members Charles Malyon, Ian Ross and Ian Whitehead.

Club/Committee	Club Attendee(s)	Club vote held by	No. of teams
Abingdon	Peter Browning	Peter Browning	8
Bicester	Duncan Soanes	Duncan Soanes	2
Blewbury	Penny Brassell & Debbie Ritson	Debbie Ritson	0 (1)
Chilton	-	-	1
Evenlode	James Fisk	James Fisk	8 (9)
Feathers	Ken Quick & Stuart Quick	Stuart Quick	4
Gosford Hill	Somesh Sharma	Somesh Sharma	6
Harwell Laboratories	Janet Atkins	Janet Atkins	4
The Leys	Norman Stewart & Millie Steptoe	Norman Stewart	7
North Abingdon	David Rowles	David Rowles	6
Oxford	Tansy Branscombe & Chris Stuart	Tansy Branscombe	6
Oxford University	My Pham & Richie Young	My Pham	2
The Park	Jonathan Ponsford	Jonathan Ponsford	1
Pegasus	Steven Chung	Steven Chung	5
St Clements	-	-	1 (1)
Thame	Rob Sutton	Rob Sutton	2
Wallingford	Karina Lewis	Karina Lewis	3
Windrush	Apologies (from Vijay Desor)	-	9
		29(30)M+14X+13(14)L+19 (22) 3D	75 (78)
Outgoing Committee			
Chairman (acting)	Judy Bendall	Casting vote only	
Treasurer	Ian Whitehead (apologies)	N/A	
Secretary	Janet Atkins	N/A	
League Fixtures Secretary	Charles Malyon (apologies)	N/A	
Committee	Rosanna Berrows Peter Browning, Karina Lewis. Apologies from Ian Ross.	N/A	

3. Minutes of the 2022 AGM held on 18 May 2022 and matters arising

The Leys proposed and Blewbury seconded that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting. Janet Atkins (League Secretary) advised that some actions from the 2021 and 2022 AGMs were outstanding.
Re 2021 AGM

- Links for guidance on governance were circulated to clubs but the action relating to demonstrating compliance with equality and discrimination guidance is carried forward. **Action:** incoming Committee
- League Anniversary event (deferred due to Covid concerns) **Action:** incoming Committee

Oxfordshire Badminton League—Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

Re 2022 AGM

- a. Potential creation of a WhatsApp group for League and Club Fixtures Secretaries carried forward.
Action: incoming League Fixtures Secretary
- b. Action completed as St Clements managed to find a venue for the 2022/23 season.
- c. The action for consideration to be given to using an automated voting system in future was not progressed but will be investigated if AGMs are held virtually in future. Action not carried forward.

4. Chair's report

Judy Bendall addressed the AGM. She expressed her pleasure in once again seeing people face to face then provided an overview of the season and asked for help from clubs to ensure adherence to the OBL Rules and compliance with the guidance on how to input and verify data in Azolve/Just Go. She wished to see improved communication both between clubs and the League and internally within clubs so that captains are aware of relevant communications from the League. She referred to the possibility of OBL offering some assistance with bursaries for coaching and stated that, if the AGM was receptive to this, then the incoming Committee would discuss the eligibility criteria later in the year.

“On behalf of myself and the OBL Committee I just want to say thank you very much to everyone for attending tonight's meeting and especially now seeing everyone face to face, what a change. I really do appreciate you all taking time out to attend our AGM and I do welcome any feedback and contributions.

It has been a much better year, less disruptions from Covid, more matches being played. However I am also hearing and seeing in quite a few clubs less people playing and not as many wanting to join clubs. As highlighted at the OBA AGM this year, numbers seem to be down in our County however this is also being reflected in other Counties and especially for ladies. Schools are reporting that more girls now want to play football and other sports and the number of girls coming into Badminton has really dropped across England.

With this in mind we would like to open up a discussion (after the Treasurer's Report) to offer Bursaries to clubs again, maybe using this for more coaches or coaching/beginners sessions. I welcome any thoughts and, if clubs think this is a good idea, the incoming Committee will decide the criteria and invite applications from clubs later in 2023.

Since concerns were raised with “Azolve/Just Go” we have been in dialogue with Badminton England, raising ours and the clubs' concerns regarding online reporting. Whilst some of these have been or are being fixed, we recognise there are a few more outstanding issues. The League Fixtures Report will go into further details later. Trophies will be presented to division winners during the evening.

However, I would like to emphasise that we need everyone to adhere to the User Guidance which will help reduce problems with the accuracy of input &/or verification.

Please can you remind your captains or Club Secretaries to input your scores of the match promptly and then the opposition teams to verify the result within 10 days. It is really hard to look at the League tables when we have so many results missing and some scores overdue by well over 3 weeks. Also please keep checking player eligibility within your teams and remember the rule if they play up twice then after the third time they cannot play in a lower team, as this has caused a few issues this season.

I would like to talk about our Communications & Admin. Whilst I appreciate it has been very difficult at times to get a team out, we have again had many conceded matches and some at the very last minute. Please can clubs bear in mind the expense and inconvenience this is causing other clubs, through lack of match fees, hall expense, petrol and time. I need to comment on the poor admin within some of the clubs this season which had a negative impact on both the amount of work within our Committee and others to sort out the errors and the accuracy of the League tables.

I would like to say a special thank you to Charles, Pete and Rosie for their support during this year on spending hours at the end of the season chasing results and updating the League tables.

So, my big ask and request again this year is what can we do differently to avoid these issues?

Oxfordshire Badminton League—Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

How can we communicate to you as clubs, and clubs, how can you communicate and encourage your captains and players to all support us by filling in the score sheets correctly especially the correct names, Why do we have “unknown players” on the results sheet, not sending result sheets back on time, using non-registered players and not reporting issues early if the score sheet can't be completed properly?

Club secretaries how can you improve your internal communication within your club? What do you need from us to help support you and how can we change this as Committee members can't continue to spend this amount of time on this next season? I would welcome your views/feedback to support these issues – this is your League, and we all have a voice. How are we OBL Committee doing, and what could we do differently to support the clubs?

On a positive note, we do have a great league, one of the biggest in the country, fantastic people and a very hard-working committee and Club Committees that have done a great job.

It is also with great sadness that Charles will no longer be the Fixtures Secretary as he has moved out of the area and is unable to be here tonight. Charles has done an amazing and outstanding job this season, spending hours of his spare time reviewing all the score sheets, chasing clubs for outstanding score sheets, then contacting clubs to notify them of contraventions of the current rules, emailing and explaining the problems. This is a hard and often thankless job and I don't think people realise the work and effort which goes in to run this league. Charles thank you very much for your hard work and commitment, we will really miss you. OBL has a token thank you for him.

The outgoing Committee has a few proposals for Rule changes and these are shown in the Appendix to the AGM agenda.

Finally, my thanks to my fellow Committee members for their support and guidance, their huge contribution to keeping us going and for the resilience they have shown this year. As you are aware we are volunteers giving up our time to support the League and we really need your help and support to continue this. We are always looking for new people to join our Committee and would be grateful for more support. Many thanks.”

There were no comments raised in response to the Chair's report.

5. Treasurer's report

In the Treasurer's absence, Committee member Janet Atkins (who had reviewed the accounts prepared by Treasurer Ian Whitehead), presented his report. These consisted of an Income and Expenditure statement, Balance sheet and Treasurer's report.

The League reported a surplus of £414 compared to £20 in 2021/22, due mainly to the reintroduction of team entry fees that were not charged last season as a one-off to acknowledge previous Covid related disruption. Income was £429 with team fees of £390, a £30 charge for non AGM attendance and £9 interest. Expenditure of £15 related to a gift to an outgoing Committee member for their contribution. It should be noted that engraving costs for three seasons (2019/20, 2021/22 and 2022/23) are excluded from the accounts as they had not been incurred by the 31 March but are expected to be about £110. As reported in previous seasons, there may be future website set up costs and annual administration charges. It is also anticipated that when the Covid deferred Anniversary celebration is held that it may require some subsidy.

As at 31 March 2023 the League had net assets of £5,698. Janet advised Ian Whitehead's proposal that entry fees of £5 per team be retained for the 2023/24 season. The Treasurer's report also suggested that as funds were accumulating, the League may once again consider awarding coaching bursaries to individuals from OBL clubs (with criteria to be decided by the incoming Committee including the number of bursaries, amount and period of payment) after relevant evidence had been provided of their coaching activities enabling the Committee to verify that Oxfordshire badminton had benefitted from the bursary.

Questions on the accounts, other than on the bursary suggestion, were invited. There were none so a vote was taken on the Treasurer's proposal to retain team entry fees at £5 per team. All fifteen clubs agreed to £5.

Oxfordshire Badminton League—Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

There followed a discussion about OBL providing bursaries for coaching. Points made included:

- The Leys (Norman) – they currently pay a junior coach from the club resources and are at their maximum capacity of 20 juniors. Using club resources has been viable whilst total membership numbers held up but he is anticipating about a 20% reduction in members this season due to people moving out of the area including going to university. Therefore any contribution to assist with the costs of coaching would be welcome.
- Oxford (Tansy) – they would be happy to hear about financial help towards coaching. However, their biggest challenge has been finding suitable coaches in this area so would welcome information to connect their club with available coaches. Due to the lack of coaches they are considering training up an existing member. She also commented that they have had several “beginners” attend their club and, whilst they are welcome, this has altered the dynamics within the club. Coaching could help develop the potential of these players.
- Evenlode (James) – advised that the course to achieve Level 2 coaching is about a year long.
- Gosford Hill (Somesh) – advised that he has completed Level 1 coaching and has been trying to find Level 2 courses. Those in Milton Keynes (at the National Badminton Centre) seem to be fully booked soon after dates are released, there is very little availability locally and it is not logistically or financially viable to travel for multiple weekends to venues further afield that require overnight accommodation. He mentioned that they have no capacity to coach starter level players but do run a separate junior section.
- Peter (Committee) asked if clubs thought it was primarily the lack of available coaches that was more of an issue than the money to fund coaches. The general view was that any funding would certainly help but local courses were needed to develop coaches from within OBL clubs.
- North Abingdon (David) – said they have received enquiries from beginners wishing to join but the club has no capacity to take them without also having coaches to help develop those players.
- Wallingford (Karina), Evenlode, HLBC (Janet) and Gosford Hill all said they had also experienced issues with trying to source coaches. Some of this was due to which weekday evening they wanted as several of the local coaches are already committed to coaching county juniors on several nights.
- Peter (Committee) said it appeared that there was a tendency to concentrate on juniors to the detriment of adults (who make up the majority of OBL club members). James (Evenlode) mentioned that there are local “back to badminton” sessions for returning/beginner level adults which could be useful.

The clear views from the attending clubs were for a central localised course to coach adults and for a local Level 2 course to train up coaches who already have Level 1 qualifications (as without this they can assist with but not run coaching sessions). Judy (Chairperson) said she would liaise with Julie Bradbury (who is on the OBA Committee and also a highly qualified coach) about local courses for players and coaches and, in view of the positive reception to the suggestion of bursaries, would ask the incoming Committee to look at the criteria for providing bursaries during the coming season.

Actions: 1. JB to contact Julie Bradbury & 2. incoming Committee to assess the criteria for awarding bursaries.

6. League Reports for the 2022/23 season

The Chairperson said that as the OBL Fixtures Secretary Charles Malyon was unfortunately unable to be present as he had expected, Judy therefore invited Peter Browning to present the League Report with input from Rosie Berrows as both had assisted Charles during the season with following up late results and other issues that had arisen.

Peter stated that the Just Go reporting system remains frustrating (e.g. there is still no autofill of player names or sense check validations on scores pre submission, there is limited ability to record 3D results with points and responses from BE to requests for additional information or to fix issues have not been consistently as prompt as we would like). Irrespective of this, there are also numerous examples of significant errors with the input to the system from clubs so Peter asked that those responsible for inputting results and fixtures and for verifying results exercise “due diligence” before submission. This should include ensuring that correct scores and full names for all players are used. One of the benefits of using Just Go is that as all input is in digital form this enables more background checking to be done with less effort than in the past when it was more manual.

Oxfordshire Badminton League—Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

Reports are run of which players (including “unknown player”) have played for which clubs, when, in which disciplines/teams and in which divisions, enabling the League to identify players who appear to be ineligible (either by playing in a lower team than nominated for, playing down after playing in higher team(s) too many times or playing the same discipline for more than one club). Those clubs were contacted for their comments and some end of season adjustments were made to remove points where Rules were contravened.

Peter said there had been repeat offenders submitting late scores and also for several conceded matches. He asked that clubs remember to keep the OBL Fixtures Secretary informed of issues as they arise so that we are aware. Not only are these requirements but early communication may help with resolving such issues. In respect of conceded matches, he informed the AGM that there had been ten conceded matches this season, well above the average of previous seasons. These distort the division tables, directly impact the two teams involved in the conceded match and may also impact other teams indirectly due to potentially altering the relative positions of all teams in a division with consequences for their promotion and relegation. Additionally there is the inconvenience for players and a likely adverse financial situation, especially if the venue was hired solely for a match that does not happen. Rosie made a plea that teams consider sending less than the full number of players (conceding the rubbers that cannot be played) rather than concede a match completely.

Peter asked that clubs give consideration to spreading matches out more evenly through the season, including spacing out home and away fixtures against opposing clubs. His view was that not only would this make the season more interesting it should lessen the impact of injury of particular players on those fixtures. He made it clear that it was not for us to dictate when clubs played but was simply a request that may help reduce the number of conceded matches. He asked that Fixtures Secretaries resist pressure to accept suggested dates for their home fixtures as it was for them to offer dates rather than be told when an opponent would visit. For next season, Peter asked that clubs do not overcommit when deciding how many teams to enter. Whilst we recognise that there are occasionally unforeseen circumstances we want matches to be played not conceded and withdrawing teams after they have been allocated to divisions can result in divisions reducing to below an ideal size with a low number of matches for the remaining teams. Conversely, if clubs are growing (maybe in those towns that are expanding?) then please do consider entering additional teams, especially in the ladies and mixed disciplines.

Peter noted that team numbers were still below pre Covid levels. Despite this there had been some very closely contested positions in some divisions which made the season exciting. In Mens Division 1 three teams were all in contention to win up to the end of the season, with Abingdon eventually taking first place above Feathers and Windrush. He advised that the divisional tables on the OBL website were currently draft (as they had not yet been updated to reflect the adjustments resulting from three ineligible players) but would be updated soon. He thanked all clubs and teams who had participated this season and then announced the winners of each division. Peter presented the trophies and invited attendees to show their appreciation. The League Secretary (Janet) asked that recipients signed the sheet on the presentation table to acknowledge that they had accepted the trophy and would return it to OBL in good condition towards the end of the season. Blewbury asked if the 3D Division 4 trophy they won in 2021/22 was also going to be presented. Peter apologised as he was very sorry to have left it at home but could arrange a convenient time for a handover.
Action: Peter & Blewbury to liaise re if/when the trophy will be exchanged.

The results by division were:

Mixed	Division 1	Division 2
	Feathers Mixed A Abingdon Mixed A Abingdon Mixed B Windrush Mixed A Gosford Hill Mixed A North Abingdon Mixed A Evenlode Mixed A	Windrush Mixed B Leys Mixed A Bicester Mixed A Gosford Hill Mixed B Pegasus Mixed A Leys Mixed B Oxford Mixed A

Oxfordshire Badminton League–Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

Ladies	Division 1	Division 2
	Feathers Ladies A Abingdon Ladies A Windrush Ladies A North Abingdon Ladies A Evenlode Ladies A Wallingford Ladies A Windrush Ladies B	Gosford Hill Ladies A Leys Ladies A Oxford Ladies A Leys Ladies B Pegasus Ladies A Oxford Uni Ladies B Evenlode Ladies B Harwell Ladies A

Mens	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4	Division 5
	Abingdon A Feathers A Windrush A Evenlode A Windrush B North Abingdon A	Thame A Abingdon B Gosford Hill A Oxford Uni A Bicester A Thame B	Pegasus A Windrush C Leys A Abingdon C Oxford A Wallingford A	Gosford Hill B Feathers B Evenlode B North Abingdon B Windrush D Chilton A Evenlode C	Pegasus B Park A Leys B St Clements A Gosford Hill C Oxford B Harwell A

3D	Division 1	Division 2	Division 3
	Abingdon 3D A Windrush 3D A Wallingford 3D A Evenlode 3D A North Abingdon 3D A Oxford 3D A	Abingdon 3D B Leys 3D A Pegasus 3D A North Abingdon 3D B Evenlode 3D B Harwell 3D A	Evenlode 3D C Oxford 3D B Harwell 3D B St Clements 3D A Blewbury 3D A

Peter asked for feedback from clubs on how the season had gone and if there were any particular issues they had encountered that would be useful to share with other clubs. Responses included:

- The Leys mentioned that their Fixtures Secretary had retired but had found it a nightmare to get confirmation of results from several away teams. Rosie said that the Just Go system required those inputting results to press the submit button twice and that this had caused some problems with people thinking they had submitted when they hadn't and, as the result was not fully input, the away team were unable to verify the result.
- Thame (Rob) asked if there is the technical capability to create push notifications. Peter said that this can be looked at when evaluating new software.
- Gosford Hill asked for guidance on how to use the system. Rosie advised that clubs had previously been asked to refer to the Azolve (now Just Go) User Guidance and suggested this be reissued to clubs for the 23/24 season. **Action:** RB
- Feathers (Stuart) said they would like to see results updated immediately on input (like for County results) rather than have to wait for a result to be verified to be included in the tables. Peter told the meeting that he had created an "OBL Tables" tab on the OBL website that, although still in test mode, did update straight away. He invited people to look at it and provide him with constructive feedback.
- Oxford asked if the Committee could provide any indication of how teams would be allocated for next season. Peter replied that we could not as we did not know which teams would be entered for which disciplines but we would, as usual, start by applying the standard promotion and relegation rules to provide a ranking of teams.

Oxfordshire Badminton League—Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

- Thame mentioned that some of their club members would prefer that OBL used the term “women” rather than “ladies”. Judy volunteered to check if BE has guidance on terminology for the badminton disciplines. **Action:** JB

7. Proposals for changes to Rules or Constitution

No proposals were received from clubs. There were four proposals from the Committee and attendees were asked to refer to the Appendix (which stated the rationale, current wording and proposed wording) before discussion of the proposals.

Proposal 1: to amend S5 of the Constitution to require a minimum of 7 (rather than 8) Committee members whilst retaining a maximum of 10 Committee members. All 15 attending clubs voted unanimously in favour.

Proposal 2: to amend S6 of the Constitution so that the quorum is 50% of the Committee members (rather than 5 members), in line with the 50% of clubs required for an AGM to be quorate. All 15 attending clubs voted unanimously in favour.

Proposal 3: to replace all references to “Chairman” to “Chair” in the Rules and Constitution. All 15 attending clubs voted unanimously in favour.

Proposal 4: where a club has two or more teams in the same division, to extend the period between the “home” and “away” internal matches to late November to enable some matches to be arranged against external teams and so spread out the opposition for a particular team. The requirement for one of the internal matches to be the first match of the season for each of those teams remains unchanged to reduce the risk of manipulating results to the detriment of external teams. The proposal was carried with 14 clubs in favour, 1 abstention and no votes against.

The vote on proposal 4 was taken following a discussion in which the following points were made:

- The Leys asked if both the matches may still be played at the start of the season. Peter confirmed they could.
- The Park asked why the proposed wording used “the last Sunday” rather than a specific date. The Secretary explained this was to give all clubs an equal chance of a full week of potential court time rather than, depending on which day a club played, favouring those with sessions earlier in the week in which the month ended.
- Thame asked if there was actually a problem that needed addressing. Peter said that, especially for those clubs with several divisions with more than one team, the current rule means that they may not be able to schedule any matches against external teams until at least late October which then condenses the effective season.
- Evenlode thought the proposed change would help, especially if some opposition wished to arrange fixtures in late September/early October.

8. 2023/24 season

The timeline for the fixtures process is anticipated to be:

- Late May/early June – entry forms issued by OBL to clubs
- 30 June – deadline for clubs to return team entries with payment
- 31 July (latest) – Committee to have allocated teams to divisions and notified clubs to arrange fixtures
- 30 August – deadline for clubs to have input their home fixtures to Azolve/Just Go and submitted the proforma of all fixtures to the OBL Fixtures Secretary

Clubs were reminded that the league season ends on 31 March. As this is Good Friday it may be that some schools or other venues are not open for some of later March so this potentially earlier cutoff should be allowed for when scheduling matches to ensure that the 31 deadline is met. The season starts on 1 October although clubs may, if both clubs agree, play matches in September.

9. Election of the Committee for 2023/24

The OBL Constitution now requires a minimum of 7 and maximum of 10 members, including Chair, League Secretary and Treasurer, with the Committee able to co-opt additional members. No nominations were received in advance from clubs. All the existing Committee except Charles Malyon were willing to stand for re-election. Jonathan Ponsford (The Park) volunteered to stand for election to the Committee. The acting Chairman passed control of the meeting to the League Secretary in the Treasurer’s absence. The Chair was

Oxfordshire Badminton League—Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

returned unanimously and Judy resumed control. The Officers were proposed and seconded then elected as a group before the general Committee members were proposed, seconded and elected as a group.

- Chair – Judy Bendall was proposed by The Leys and seconded by Blewbury.
- Treasurer – Ian Whitehead was proposed by Evenlode and seconded by Thame.
- League Secretary – Janet Atkins was proposed by Evenlode and seconded by Feathers.
- League Fixtures Secretary – Rosanna Berrows was proposed by Abingdon and seconded by Evenlode.
- General Committee members – Peter Browning (also Website Administrator), Karina Lewis, Jonathan Ponsford and Ian Ross were proposed by Feathers and seconded by Thame.

10. Any Other Business

Judy thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the AGM and expressed her hope that attendees had found it helpful. She then asked if any clubs had items for AOB and the following were raised:

- Oxford (Tansy) asked for clarification of scoring if a player was injured during a match as there was uncertainty when it happened this season. The Secretary advised that the rules were updated last AGM, including making 3D consistent with scoring incomplete games in the other disciplines (i.e. the score achieved in any started but uncompleted game will be preserved for the conceding side unless solely due to lack of time).
- Oxford (Chris) wondered how OBL intended to address the concerns raised by Thame earlier in the meeting about the use of “ladies” or “women” as he thought it unlikely that BE would cover this. Judy said they would take a view, potentially canvassing the views of clubs, depending on any guidance from BE.
- North Abingdon (David) referred back to the earlier discussion about catering for less experienced players wishing to join a club and said they were willing to direct them to another club if approached again.
- Evenlode (James) informed the AGM that there are three friendly clubs operating in Abingdon (Mike’s Abingdon club, Oxonions and another which plays at Our Lady’s Abingdon school) and one in Eynsham. The Leys (Norman) added that there is also one in Carterton. James wondered if it would be helpful to list these clubs on websites. Peter commented that he thought they may be shown on the OBA site (a subsequent check proved negative). Peter said that OBL could include a document on the OBL document library page of those friendly clubs who asked to be listed and/or create additional links on the OBL links page. OBA could be asked to list clubs aswell. **Action:** Clubs/OBL web administrator
- Thame said that the floor in their venue had recently failed a “slip test” and so was wondering what the insurance position might be if people continued to play (e.g. summer club) in the period until it is rectified. They had tried to obtain clarification from the operating body but so far with no success. The venue is in a school and is used by pupils and other external hirers. The situation was concerning to many of those at the AGM (including Oxford Uni who asked if there was currently any insurance cover) as the fear was that, having failed what is presumed to be a safety test, the club Committee and almost certainly also OBL, owed a duty of care to those who wished to play. If a venue was not safe then people should not be allowed to play even if they stated they wished to do so at their own risk. There were clearly implications for the coming season – as a minimum the timing of home fixtures and if the club’s teams could be accepted as entries. It was agreed that the League Secretary would contact BE’s insurers to seek clarification of the insurance position as a matter of urgency. Thame would continue to seek advice on insured use of the venue and the timing for remedial work from the operating body. Pegasus mentioned that their venue sometimes had noticeable dust on the floor and that they had raised their concerns with the operators of the venue. Many attendees commented on the very dusty condition of the previous St Clements venue (Matthew Arnold School) and how some players refused to play away matches there. The club apparently raised their concerns on several occasions with the school but there was little improvement and the club regularly swept the floor prior to their sessions.

Actions: 1. JA to contact BE’s insurers and 2. Thame to make contact with the venue’s operating body.

Judy advised that the Committee would now hold a brief Committee meeting to discuss actions arising from the AGM, the coming season and the date of their next meeting.

Oxfordshire Badminton League—Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on 17 May 2023

The meeting finished at 9 pm.

Janet Atkins
League Secretary, Oxfordshire Badminton League
29 February 2024

Appendix - OBL 2023 AGM – Proposed Rule Changes from the OBL Committee

OBL Constitution sections 5 & 6

Rationale – to try to ensure that the Committee is quorate for meetings for the coming season. The proposed reduction in the minimum number of Committee members recognises the lack of new volunteers in recent years. The use of a percentage of members for being quorate rather than an absolute number would enable the Committee to make decisions with the smaller number of members.

Proposal 1

Current section 5. The Committee shall consist of minimum of 8 and a maximum of 10 members, to include Chairman, OBL Secretary and Treasurer, who will be elected each year at the AGM. The Committee shall be empowered to co-opt additional members. The Chairman will have the casting vote only, on all matters at the AGM and Committee meetings.

Proposed section 5. The Committee shall consist of a minimum of ~~7~~8 and a maximum of 10 members, to include Chair~~man~~, OBL Secretary and Treasurer, who will be elected each year at the AGM. The Committee shall be empowered to co-opt additional members. The Chair~~man~~ will have the casting vote only, on all matters at the AGM and Committee meetings.

Proposal 2

Current section 6. A quorum for the Committee shall be 5 and a quorum for General Meetings shall be 50% of the Clubs in the League. At General Meetings each Club shall have one vote.

Proposed section 6. A quorum for the Committee shall be ~~5~~50% of Committee members and a quorum for General Meetings shall be 50% of the Clubs in the League. At General Meetings each Club shall have one vote.

Proposal 3 – OBL Constitution and Rules

Proposal – replace all references to “Chairman” with “Chair” in the Constitution and Rules.

Proposal 4 – OBL Rules, section D 5(b)

Rationale – to assist with the logistics of organising matches between a club’s teams in the same division and to reduce the time period that elapses before playing teams from other clubs. The current proposal maintains a restriction on the deadline for the second internal fixture to preserve the underlying intention of the current rule that requires clubs to play their internal fixtures before playing those of any other club in that division in an attempt to reduce the possibility of potential manipulation of results for the club’s overall benefit and/or to the detriment of other clubs.

Current D5 (b). Where a club has two or more teams in the same division, the home and away matches between those teams shall be played (i) before any matches are played by those teams against any other club’s teams in the same division and (ii) by 31 October. The penalty for not doing so will be that both teams have a zero score imposed for any inter-club matches that contravene the rules.

Proposed D5 (b). Where a club has two or more teams in the same division, ~~the home and away one matches~~ between those teams shall be played ~~(i)~~ before any matches are played by those teams against any other club’s teams in the same division ~~and (ii)~~ with the return match being played by the end of the last Sunday in November by 31 October. The penalty for not doing so will be that both teams have a zero score imposed for any inter-club matches that contravene the rules.