

President's 2021 Report  
**Aberdeenshire Cricket Club AGM**  
June 2022

**Introduction**

Firstly, can I apologise for the late issuance of the 2022 Annual General Meeting notice. It is typical that we hold these meetings during late March, but circumstances have contrived to delay us. Specifically, the production of 2021 accounts suffered from significant delay due to the complexity of data arising from 2021 operations, the need to develop a new accounts format in keeping with the governance changes being proposed at this year's meeting, and the effects of Covid on supplier staff availability.

You will all be aware that 2021 transpired to be another exceedingly difficult year for the Club, primarily because of continuing Covid restrictions culminating in the effective cancellation of all our planned Christmas events. The Scottish Government advised members of the public 'not to party,' and whilst this was eminently sensible advice, it did not constitute a formal policy. Compensation was therefore limited, and the Club suffered significant loss of revenue over the festive season.

We have now endured 2 years of the negative effects of the pandemic, the result of which is that we continue to operate on a tight financial basis. It is no exaggeration to say that we run on a 'survival' basis, but we do have a strong asset base in terms of property, and it may be that we need to leverage that property asset in terms of development in order to safeguard the Club's long-term future at Mannofield. More news of that will be provided at the AGM.

**Finance**

Our financial position is covered in more detail elsewhere, but the difficulties presented by the continuing Covid restrictions led to a challenging time for our day-to-day operations. Whilst the Club made an overall surplus of just over £11k, this was achieved as a result of the property income surplus of just over £47k. Whilst we did not cancel any festive season events, they were cancelled for us, and we lost c£20k in direct booking and possibly as much as a further £15k in bar takings. As with all hospitality type businesses, the festive season is a key component in annual earnings, and this was an unmitigated disaster for us. Had we not lost this income, our profitability might have improved by c£15k, and our cash flow by £35k. Given that we ended the year with an overdraft of c£35k, it is clear that our cash position would have been significantly improved without the Christmas losses, so much so that we may have entered 2022 with a small, or indeed close to zero overdraft.

Equally disappointing was that the effort put in by Chris Quinn-Waugh, Janice Henderson, and Tracy Sheard to organise and prepare for the festive season ended up being entirely wasted.

**Cricket**

Following the complete loss of the 2020 season and the slow lifting of cricket related restrictions for 2021, we looked forward to a competitive league season and hopes of competing strongly for the

title and a return to the Eastern Premier League with a vastly changed team from the one relegated from the EPL in 2019. The season opener on 22<sup>nd</sup> May resulted in a comprehensive victory for Shire against Kinloch followed by another good victory at home to Strathmore with good individual performances with bat and ball from Aayush Dasmahapatra and Lewis Munro. Subsequently the signs of inexperience were beginning to show, and inconsistency became a hallmark of our young team. The first round of the Scottish Cup was delayed to June 6<sup>th</sup> and the long journey to Gala was rewarded with an exceptional win, most notable being 126 from Captain Kenny Reid in our total of 302, and 3-13 from Lewis Munro to bowl Gala out for 208 and set up a second-round home tie against Drumpellier. Unfortunately, we did not progress in a match which we most probably should have won.

Our final league placing was fifth with a record of played twelve, won 8 and lost 4. Final assessment of the 1<sup>st</sup> XI season must be one of missed opportunities, but also a pool of talented young cricketers who gained valuable experience and provide genuine expectations for a more sustained promotion challenge in 2022.

Meanwhile our Mannofield team, captained by Indika Yahathugoda in Grade 2, made an excellent start to their season, and never looked back, becoming Grade 2 League Champions, and gaining promotion to Grade 1, and in doing so providing our Club with a more competitive environment in which to develop our young players. Our results of played 10 won 9 gave us a clear 15 percentage point advantage over the second placed team. Not content with winning just the league and promotion we went on to win the Grade 2 Bon Accord Cup at Mannofield with a team regularly containing 4x U-15/16's and quite possibly setting a record with four father/ son combinations in the same team! Congratulations to all who contributed to an excellent season.

## **Social**

There is no doubt that 2021 proved to be a frustrating time for all members, none more so than those non-playing members who use the Club on a social basis. We continue to be indebted to those who support the Club on a regular basis, including attendance at our beer garden during the summer. In order to deliver a beer garden solution, we were required to apply for 14-day licences on a rolling basis since we did not have an extended area outdoor alcohol licence. We have now rectified this long-standing omission and obtained a permanent outdoor licence. We look forward to being able to serve drinks to the whole of the front of the pavilion, well to the left of the Bradman where the beer garden was situated, and to the Hutcheon Terrace end benches during 2022.

As mentioned earlier, bookings for the Christmas period were strong, although unfulfilled, but we did end the year with a renewed emphasis on event creation, marketing, and delivery, and whilst we did not achieve financial lift off, we most certainly achieved organisational lift off. The portents are therefore very promising for 2022, subject to no more unforeseen pandemic type interruptions.

## **Governance**

At the 2021 AGM membership agreed that the Committee should continue to investigate the viability of the Club changing its status from that of a members' club to a charity, supervised by the Charity Commission with our commercial activities inside a subsidiary limited company (or companies), and subject to the rules of Companies House. This would be a historic change to the Governance of our Club and a presentation will be made at the AGM outlining next steps for the approval of members.

Your committee has been working hard during the difficult 2021 dealing with the myriad challenges presented to it. This work is voluntary, and I should like to take this opportunity to thank committee members for the commitment and effort they have shown in recent times, and ongoing. I hope members can echo this sentiment in the usual manner at the AGM.

Unfortunately, the Committee operates short of its normal resources (ironically, an even bigger commendation for the current members) since we still do not have a Treasurer or a House Convenor. These roles are extremely important in the running of the Club, and we do need to fill them as a priority. Members will be interested to note that if we do agree to convert to charitable status and operate limited company subsidiaries, current committee positions are likely to become directorships in the case of a limited company, and trustees in the case of a charity.

Our view is that all positions will remain unremunerated. However, it may be the case that positions might become attractive to individuals who are seeking non-executive director or charitable trustee positions for career, retirement, or other reasons. This might be specifically attractive regarding the position of Treasurer whom we would anticipate would sit on both Boards as a Finance Director.

Members with appropriate accounting experience, and even board level experience may be interested to join the existing committee to help lead the multiple transformations ahead of us. This matter has now become urgent since it is become intolerable that the Club's finances continue to be managed on an acting or interim basis.

### **In Conclusion**

We have endured an extremely difficult two years, not only at Club level, but also on an individual basis across our membership. We can only hope that the worst of the pandemic is past, but at the time of writing, significant new challenges have emerged and although this report refers to 2021, members will receive a 2022 update at the AGM. Any decision to go to the next step in the Governance change process will require membership to be aware of up-to-date pertinent factors. More of that the meeting.

Despite the difficulties of the last two years, we have survived and continue to survive, but we must continue to be vigilant, especially financially. We are particularly grateful to our Club sponsor, Drum Property, for their continuing generous sponsorship and I am delighted to confirm that Cala Homes joined us during 2021 as sponsor of women's cricket with a 3-year commitment to help us build a strong women's team fully embedded into the Club's activities.

We have also been in receipt of donations of nearly £3k for which we are grateful. There are other donations which do not appear in the accounts but are reflected in the infrastructure at Mannofield. Committee members have been particularly generous in this respect where items such as the new boundary rope, paint jobs, bench repairs, plastic seating, dressing room improvements, sight screen repairs, handyman jobs, and much more have been donated by committee members without the need for cash to pass through our hands. As well as the items themselves, the labour cost saved are significant.

Willie Donald

President