

## **TWICKENHAM RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Parkfields Hampton on 12 September 2018 at 7.30pm.

Chairman: Martin Taylor

Present: 25 Members

### **Apologies for absence**

George Hall

Siobhan Gamble

Kevin Hyde

Leen Broekhuizen

Andrew Goddard

Sean Brereton

Peter Thomas

Leslie Hill

### **1. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 13 September 2017.**

The minutes of the 2017 AGM were read and approved

Proposed- Jim Peters

Seconded- Brendan Griffin

Agreed - unanimously

### **2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **3. Financial Report for period ended 30 June 2018**

The Hon. Treasurer presented his report.

We made a loss of £2,297 this year compared to a loss of £13,321 last year. Please note that this loss represents the consolidated results of Twickenham Rugby Football Club Limited and Twickenham Rugby Football Club (Trading) Limited, collectively still known as Twickenham Rugby Football Club.

#### **Summary for the year:**

Whilst our bar turnover and associated profit is still not back to previous levels, turnover was up

by £12k resulting in a profit of £2,700 compared to a loss of £2,700 last year. We continue to work with Dennis to find new ways of increasing turnover. As an example, we have planned out the year and identified free Friday evenings where floodlit matches can be played. These have been allocated to the various sections of the club and we are hopeful that as well as being great, fun evenings, they will also generate extra bar revenue.

We have also asked Dennis to resume overall responsibility for the catering activities. Dennis previously managed both the bar and kitchen as clubhouse manager and we feel this model is best suited to deliver synergies in costs and increase underlying profits. Catering and clothing both reported profits for the year although they were both down on last year. The economic climate presents a challenge in these areas and as with the bar, we are looking at what we can do differently to increase these valuable contributions to the club finances. Thank you to Siobhan for her continued efforts and to Kathy and the kitchen team who have decided to move on to new challenges after 5 years with us.

Whilst our nominal rental value from the playgroup has remained consistent, cash flow problems have meant they have not yet been able to settle the last few invoices. (We often have cash flow problems ourselves but have historically been able to obtain short-term loans from various members to enable us to meet our day to day commitments). I have taken the prudent approach of providing against these invoices, the cost of which is included in admin expenses. The provision is slightly larger than our overall loss and shows that had everything gone to plan, we would have had a minimal profit, which is roughly what we budget for. We are working with the playgroup to find a solution that continues to provide this much needed income.

I seem to say this every year now, but the financial highlight for the club was the excellent Minis' festival and the revival of the Juniors' festival the day before. In very difficult conditions, the organisers were able to retain the sponsor and indications are that next year's events will be even bigger. I continue to be impressed at the organisational skills involved in running such an event and the fact that handover always appears to be seamless. Huge thanks to the organisers and the support teams. Not only is this event a massive boost for our coffers but always showcases what a fantastic club we are.

I am pleased that we were still able to retain our two main club sponsors, Supermassive Games and the Albany along with Mantle FP, Maylim and the individual team sponsors. We could always do with more sponsors so please do get in touch if you know someone who might be interested.

Subscriptions were £34k this year, which is an increase of £4k on last year and represents good collection rates along with higher subscriptions in a number of categories. I hope you all agree that we are still offering excellent value for money and continue to pitch ourselves at the lower end of our peer group clubs.

### Future developments and challenges

The incorporation of the club and transfer of the assets and liabilities was completed last year and I have filed the first set of formal accounts for both companies along with the necessary tax returns. The structure is not perfect and nor are the compliance requirements however it is a necessary evil in order to maintain our CASC status.

Our other main challenge is that typically our operational cash flows are just sufficient to cover our normal operating costs. This means that when we have unexpected one-off costs, we have to find other ways of financing the cost. With the “new” clubhouse now over 10 years old, additional funding will need to be found to meet these costs going forward as our maintenance costs increase.

### Senior subs

Our previous rules stated “at the Annual General Meeting in each year Members present shall be invited to approve or disapprove the recommendation of the Committee for the Full Membership subscription”. At last year’s AGM we increased the full membership subscriptions to £156 and I am not proposing another increase this year. Whilst our financial results are not where I would like them to be, I have been reminded on many occasions that we cannot always ask the members to fill the gap. The fact that there is a gap means that we all need to find ways of generating income from external sources.

### Thank you – standard annual paragraph but very sincere

As ever there are too many people to thank individually so please take this as a general thank you to everyone who has contributed this year. We are a club run almost entirely by volunteers and we would not be able to continue without all of your contributions.

Approval of Financial Report Proposed- John Clissold

Seconded- Ian Leggett

Agreed-unanimously

#### 4. Centenary Club

Lynn Monk presented the report of the Centenary Club. Founded in 1967, the club’s centenary year the club has currently 198 members and provides funds specifically to facilitate improvement to clubhouse and grounds. It is currently holding funds of £5362. There is currently a vacancy for 2 additional members.

Approval of Centenary Club Report Proposed-Gary Archibald

Seconded- John Adams

Approved unanimously

5. Booster Club

The Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer reported on the Booster Club, launched in 2017/18 designed as the name implies to boost club funds. The clubs normal cash flow is insufficient to fund more than routine maintenance and as the 'new' clubhouse is now ten years old there is an increasing requirement for finance for replacement and renewal of fixtures, furniture and mechanical and electrical equipment. The primary aim of the Booster Club therefore is to create a fund which will provide finance for 'one-off' items of capital expenditure. The income of the fund is designed to be by regular donation which enables the club to claim Gift Aid. To date only six members have subscribed. It was acknowledged that the concept may not have been well promoted and that some kind of re-branding may be appropriate, but the meeting was asked for feedback as to whether it felt that this issue was one of concept or branding and marketing. There was a general sense that the concept is sound, and the matter will be taken back to the Operations Committee for review and re-launch.

6. Rugby Report

Minis

In the absence of James Loizos and Leen Broekhuizen, Paul Neville reported on the Mini section:

The Minis season for 2017/18 followed its usual cadence with early season recruitment and training, and the London Scottish festival developing into the cold of winter where we had our first setback when training was cancelled, and Santa could not do his thing due to snow! We recovered well nonetheless, with stirring carol singing the following weekend and a steady trickle of surplus sweetie bags being sold on to visiting teams through the New Year.

The annual exchange for the U8/U9 squads with Rugby St Andrews saw us retain the trophy once more, and we attended the Middlesex festivals doing well in most age groups, but the highlights of the Minis year are always our own festival and Tour. The U12s did a sterling job in organizing the well-attended tour to Church Farm Haven near Chichester, and the U11 organization of the festival was once again hailed widely as the shining example of how to do it. We increased player numbers to some 1,400 from 138 teams and held net revenues excluding bar and kitchen to some £17,000 despite reduced headline sponsorship from Maylim. Over the summer the Minis weren't all on the beach all of the time, and some of us managed to

support the NatWest Rugby Force clean-up day on 9<sup>th</sup> June which is becoming a regular feature of volunteering to keep the club facilities and grounds in good condition.

### Juniors

Andrew Morgan reported that the Junior Section is in better shape than for many years both in terms of quantity and quality. There is a wide mix of abilities but with some very good quality players. The Juniors tend to benefit from the graduation of strong Mini Year Groups. The club welcomes the recent directive from the RFU that every player included in a match day squad must be given at least one half of rugby as this is consistent with its ethos of giving everyone an opportunity to play rugby irrespective of ability. The revival of a Junior Tournament in 2018 was a resounding success in both a rugby and financial sense and will be repeated in the coming season.

### Girls

Iain Brown reported on behalf of Giles Ward that the girl's section is growing albeit slowly and have now disengaged from the partnering arrangement with Grasshoppers

### Seniors

Iain Brown, Head of senior Rugby presented his report:

The 17/18 season commenced on 9<sup>th</sup> September with the 1s winning at home. With our 2s and 3s starting their seasons a week later the fourth Whole Club Day in memory of Andy Rees was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September with three senior matches played at home. The day was again successful in bringing the various sections of the Club together and in raising funds for charity. The Whole Club Day for this season will be Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September, with three home games planned.

The 1s had settled well into London 2 South West and started the new season strongly. By the Christmas break we held a 9 win to 3 loss record. However, the new year brought about a mixed bag of some excellent wins but some very poor losses. This culminated in a 14 win, 7 loss and 1 draw record for the season meaning we finished a commendable third in the league; that represented a climb of two places from the previous season. Surprisingly we used 39 different players through the 22 league games. Whilst this highlights a strength in squad depth at this level it also implies that we continue to struggle with the consistency of player availability, albeit that some of it is injury related. We won our first round Intermediary Cup match, before going out in the next round, but lost the equivalent Middlesex Cup game.

The 2s started the season in MMT3 very strongly winning the first 4 league games. Thereafter, with a combination of regularly losing players up to the 1s, a couple of very close losses against

strong local opposition and a couple of very strange results against bottom table teams we finished the season with an 8win, 5loss and 1draw record. A highlight was that we were the only team to inflict a defeat on the champions London Cornish. A fourth placed finish put us into the promotion playoffs but once again we lost in a very close and competitive game away to Welsh. A decent cup run saw us beat Feltham and Chiswick before losing to Hampstead in the semi-final.

There continues to be a significant number of walkovers at MMT6 level but the 3s did well in the games that were played. A record at the close of season of 10 wins, 5 losses and 1 draw placed us third and gave us a home promotion playoff semi-final against Uxbridge, which we won, only to lose in the promotion playoff final at Welsh in another very close match. We were knocked out at the first hurdle in the cup competition.

In summary, excellent performances by all three teams at the higher level of pre-season expectations. Team morale, discipline and spirit on the pitch continues to be exceptional across the board. All three teams will remain in their respective divisions for the 18/19 season.

Following the successful tour to Portugal plans are already underway for a tour to Spain at the start of May 2019.

Last season the Colts U17s had to play as a standalone age group as the club had lost the U18s group a couple of years earlier. However, they had a very busy and successful season continuing to play at the high standard of Division One and playing a good number of non-league games. Owing to their ages only one player from the Colts section made debut and played in the 2s/3s through the season. Now Colts U18s, this coming Saturday nine of this age group will debut for the 3s, so that bodes well going forward. Senior players are still well associated with the U18/U17 Colts and the U16s and are available to any of the Junior age groups that require assistance.

The fifth annual U23s match against Teddington was played over the Christmas holiday under our new floodlights. After Teddington took an early lead in quarter one we came back strongly in quarters two and three and took a slender lead into the final quarter. Unfortunately, Teddington were too strong in that final quarter and ran out winners going 3/2 up in the series. They host the sixth match at Christmas 2018.

The Club Dinner post-2018 season was well attended and enjoyed by around 65 people. Pre-season training commenced mid-July and we have on average thirty players attending Tuesday and Thursday evening sessions.

The 1s had their first game of the new season last weekend running out 43-23 winners away at London Exiles thus securing a try bonus point against a very capable team at their ground. The five strong coaching team remains intact headed by Joe Samuels. Mae Fisher and Matthew Diller

continue as 1s and 2s Team Managers respectively, although David Chowings has stepped down as 3s Manager and a replacement is currently being sought.

Ian Leggett has started to disseminate his responsibilities for the physiotherapists and medical function to Amelia Harwood and the search continues for a replacement physio. The “Player Clans” idea has proved highly successful and has evolved and continues. Leslie Hill and Mark Harrison continue as club referee and coaching coordinators.

## **7. Operations Report**

The 2017 – 2018 season was a busy and momentous one for the Club, as we celebrated our 150 Year Anniversary, as well as continuing with our role and ambition as a Community Rugby Club.

### 150-year Celebrations

The Club would like to extend its thanks to Tom Moses, who took on the role of leading our celebration activities in our 150th season. We started with a commemorative Summer Ball, and the events included a Whole Club event on Twickenham Green, parading the Twickenham Stadium at half time in the Xmas Big Match, unveiling of the new Floodlights at Parkfields, branding of the annual Minis and Junior tournaments, design of 150<sup>th</sup> playing and supporters’ shirts, and raising of over £11,000 for our partner charity, Shooting Star Hospice, by the Social and Community Group. One of the members also produced a video of the activities of all parts of the Club which captures our culture and ethos very well and will be the modern equivalent of the photos on the wall for future generations.

### Volunteering

Organisation of our Volunteer Activities continues to be a challenge without a key member to lead and drive the function in the Club. We ran a successful NatWest Force day around the first England in South Africa Test in June, which resulted in a huge amount of grounds and clubhouse maintenance work being completed. It was also a great “One Club” day, with members from all sections of the Club pitching in together. We hope to continue this with smaller gang efforts during the year, and perhaps another Whole Club day at the end of next season. We ran a successful Volunteer Recognition evening around one of the international matches. The Andy Rees Volunteer of the Year Award was presented at our end of season recognition evening. This was awarded to Lindsay Morris in recognition of her efforts as Manager of the current Colts age group for many years.

## Commercial

Raising funds in the current economic climate remains tough.

## Facilities

We have continued with small, low capital schemes to improve the changing facilities. We managed to carry out a fair amount of redecoration on the Volunteer day in June. The age of the “new” clubhouse is now leading to increasing maintenance costs, which John Adams works hard to contain. There have been no further security incidents following the spate we suffered a year ago. The culprit was identified from our CCTV and received a custodial sentence. Steve Fitzwater and his team continue to do a great job in maintaining the grounds and pitches to an excellent standard.

## Membership

Membership has continued to grow, and we will be looking to make a good start to collecting subscriptions as the new season commences. Changes have been made to our membership structure and subscription rates to improve income, and to check our competitiveness with other clubs in the area. A major piece of work has recently been completed to ensure our compliance with the new General Data Protection Regulations.

## Social and Community

The Social and Community Group continue their efforts to generate social activities in the Club, to ensure a full diary in the Clubhouse and to ensure we have a positive presence in the local community. As well as the money raised for Shooting Star Hospice over the year, they are in the process of reviewing the Social Calendar for this season and ensure it stays fresh and attractive for members.

## Club Development and the Development Task Group

The DTG has done a fantastic job over the past 4 years in proposing and driving initiatives to take the Club forward. Many of its members have now gone on to take on key roles in the Club, and the time will be right in the next year or so to identify new members to comprise a new DTG.

Approval of Operations Report :Proposed- Ian Leggett

Secoded- John Clissold

Approved unanimously

## **8. Report of Hon. Secretary**

### Property

Documentation was completed with Thames Water for consent to assign the lease to TRFC Ltd and for consent to the floodlight installation. We have not yet progressed discussions for an extension of the lease which expires in 2045.

### Safeguarding

As is evident from Archie's report we are an amateur club living from hand to mouth run entirely by volunteers Unfortunately our amateur status gives us no dispensation in today's ever more litigious and risk averse world; we are a business like any other subject to pretty much the same legal and regulatory requirements as well funded companies and corporate bodies and the risks to our finances and reputation of non-compliance are just as great. Nowhere is this more relevant than in the area of Safeguarding and as I said in my report last year the RFU takes a 'zero tolerance' approach in terms of record keeping and the follow up of any reported incident. There is no discretion given to clubs in this regard and we must follow the established processes without question. We continue to be indebted to Cath Smith our Club Safeguarding Officer who does a magnificent job and it is imperative that she is supported in ensuring not only that our records are maintained but that individual coaches, managers, first aiders etc. maintain up to date CRB validation.

### RFU

We've had financial support from the RFU in recent years notably in the case of the floodlights but they are under some financial pressure just now and have implemented a cost cutting programme which seems to be primarily targeted at grass roots community rugby- it remains to be seen how far it will affect us but at the very least we must presume financial support will be less available going forward. The RFU is also under pressure, self-imposed (but also, I suspect with pressure from Sport England) to bring its governance into line with "best practice". It has streamlined its operational structure, which is good, but this has also brought with it increasing emphasis on process and I guess self- justification and bureaucracy which is being passed on to the clubs by way of increased administration.

As I said last year the RFU is putting its Game Management System (GMS) front and centre of its relationship with clubs and it is imperative that we maintain accurate records regarding safeguarding, concussion awareness, coaching qualifications and playing fixtures (which now have a direct bearing on the calculation of international ticket allocation). Brendan does a great job in managing this system for us but does need everyone's support in ensuring that our

information is maintained up to date. RFU have renewed our Club Accreditation which is a pre-requisite for eligibility for any financial support. We are due a follow-up 'health-check' in November which means we need to make sure our GMS data is up to date at that time. The system of electronic match cards has now extended to our First Team League fixtures and Mae Fisher has attended sessions with the RFU to facilitate implementation. If at times we're making information requests of managers/coaches or members which might seem a bit bureaucratic please bear with us as we will invariably need it to satisfy RFU compliance

The RFU has brought in a raft of new regulations covering the payment of players effective from the 18/19 season and we will in future be required to submit an annual declaration that we have made no payment above the permitted threshold which in the case of level 6 and below is zero, save for the engagement of a player/coach up to a maximum of £10,000 of which no more than 50% can be in respect of playing duties. Clubs who fail to submit a declaration will be ineligible for any kind of financial support from the RFU.

### Middlesex

Like the RFU the Middlesex CB has had its structure streamlined in the past year with the removal of one or two unnecessary talking shops. We've continued to maintain an active representation at the Middlesex South group meetings and Iain Brown managed to secure the host role for a number of the Merit Table finals in April. We are hosting the South group AGM next April.

### GDPR- General Data Protection Regulation 2018

As is often the case when implementing regulations designed to increase our personal security and protection, public authorities take a sledgehammer to crack a nut and as a consequence heighten confusion and increase administration. We were all inundated earlier this summer with requests to sign up to remain on various databases some of which we didn't know we were on in the first place and for many people this invited a prolonged acquaintance with the delete button. As I've already said the club is unfortunately not exempt and were obliged to ask all our members to consent to continuing to receive emails from us. We think a number of our members, consciously or otherwise did hit delete and may now be wondering why they're not picking up emails. Brendan and I are considering how we get around this one as legally we can't send an email to remind them but if you think it may apply to you please let us know. Thanks are due to Brendan who steered us through this complex process.

### Project Funding

As Archie has said our regular cash flows cover routine expenditure but don't give us headroom for the funding of 'one-off' costs of improvement or replacement which inevitably increase with

the age of our facilities. The RFU financial pressures suggest it's going to be tougher to get funds out of them so it's important that we explore other sources outside the rugby community to fund some of these projects. One area where we are punching below our weight is promoting the community value of what we provide in our relationship with the local authority and this is an area we must explore further this year.

#### Key Positions to Fill

This leads me on to my final point the question of support at leadership /project level where we have some key vacancies which Joe has referred to. We are currently capacity constrained by the lack of Club Volunteer Coordinator and Marketing and Communications Manager. If you are interested or can suggest anyone who you think might be interested in either of these roles or in taking leadership of the Development Task Group, please let us know.

Approval of Secretary's Report: Proposed- Jim Peters  
Seconded- Jas Bhamra  
Approved unanimously

#### **9. Appointment of Officers**

Notification was made to members on 14 August that The Directors and President of Twickenham Rugby Football Club Limited would be presenting themselves for re-election at this meeting and other nominations were invited by 5 September 2018. No alternative nominations were received and accordingly it is proposed that the following officers be re-elected en bloc for the period up to the Annual General Meeting in 2019.

- President- Jim Peters
- Chairman-Martin Taylor
- Chief Operating Officer- Joe Samuels
- Honorary Treasurer-Gary Archibald
- Honorary Secretary-Tim Hodgson

Re-appointment of Officers: Proposed- Lynne Monk  
Seconded- John Adams

Approved unanimously

**10. Any other business/questions**

Brendan Griffin proposed a vote of thanks to Dan Crinnian for the production of the video shown at the start of the meeting. The Hon. Secretary will convey the thanks of the club and the meeting to Dan.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was declared closed at 9.25pm