



15th Annual General Meeting of Lewes Rugby Football Club Ltd (80th Meeting of Lewes RFC)

**Wednesday 3rd July 2019
Held at the Clubhouse, Stanley Turner Ground, Lewes**

Present:

Lauren Arthur, Phil Clark, Joel Evans, Natasha Green, Mark Hall (Treasurer), James Halpin, Paddy Henshaw, Andy Kipling, Bob Lockyer, Shayne Luhuli, Holly McLintock. Paul Nicholl (Secretary), Nick Page (Chairman), Terry Powell, Nick Rawson, Jo-Anne Sunderland-Bowe and Rab Willis.

1. Apologies:

Dewi Vaughan, Robert Moore, David Durrant and Becky Taylor.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes. 2018:

Having been previously circulated, the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 20th June 2018 were approved by those present as being a true record.

3. Matters arising:

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report – Nick Page:

Firstly I want to thank all of the people that get involved every week to make rugby happen at Lewes RFC, the Management Committee, the Coaches, their Assistants, the Team Managers and all the people that have got involved in any way this season.

• Clubhouse and Changing Rooms

Lewes District Council (LDC) put the Changing Room refit back out to tender again, the cheapest quote came back in the region of £460,000! Paddy has been working with the LDC Consultants to review that and see if there are any areas that can be cut out to reduce that price.

However, the slight distraction is that LDC are looking at transferring the Stanley Turner Trust over to Lewes Town Council (LTC). They have referred this to the Charities Commission for advice as to the best way to do that. They expect that to be complete later this year.

At a meeting Paddy and I had with LTC Clerk, along with the Cricket Club under the auspices of Lewes Sports Club, we were able to establish that LTC actually have an appetite to get behind Community based organisations and their needs. I raised the concern that the state of the facilities are now at a critical state where, unless urgent repairs are not carried out, then both the changing rooms



AND the Clubhouse will become unusable and all of the good work we have done on the interior will be for nought.

As per usual, all we can do is to watch this space. But, I think once LTC are on board, we will be able to elicit a plan of attack and get support. For any Lewes residents I urge you, if you get the chance, to talk to your Town Councillor and highlight our issues and concerns. Once the transfer has happened we will be writing to each Councillor to warm them up to what may be coming!

- **Minis and Juniors**

We have a new Chair for the Minis & Juniors, and it gives me great pleasure to welcome Jo Sunderland Bowe to that role. We thank Mark Cummins as the outgoing Chair for his cover over the last few seasons following the departure of Ben Wright.

As always the section continues to thrive. We have over 200 families registered, and every Sunday a team of over 40 volunteers deliver engaging and stimulating sessions to our players.

The annual Minis Festival was another great success. With over 44 teams registered from 10 different clubs. Most importantly, feedback from players, parents and visiting teams was positive. Feedback mentioned the excellent organisation and the friendly atmosphere.

The season ended with a section-wide tour. Over 80 families from U8-U14 travelled to Great Yarmouth. Fundraising activities throughout the season included a Burns Night, Lewes RFC calendars, raffle and auctions. Thanks to everyone involved in organising these events and everyone who bought tickets, calendars, sponsored teams and so on.

We continue our association with Harlequins, and the U6s and U7s went to the Stoop for a Coaching clinic and Matchday experience where the players formed a guard of honour for the Harlequins v Grenoble European Cup game and ran a lap of honour at half time.

We can now boast two Lionesses teams – at Under 13 and Under 15 – and it's great to see the Ladies fully supporting them by getting involved and running sessions with them.

We say goodbye to Rob Moore as Volunteer / Coaching Coordinator. But Rob continues as a Minis coach and has already said he will happily host next year's Volunteers dinner.

We are engaged with local schools and last season undertook a whole day's outreach at Kingston and Iford School and ran activities at Southover CE Primary School Fair. The partnership with Elderflower Fields continues to flourish. Next season Jo and her team will be looking at more development and enrichment opportunities for current players and focus on recruitment of new players to continue to grow the section.

- **Seniors**

The Ladies have been able to regularly field 2 sides. The 1s finished a creditable 5th in their first year in the Women's Championship South East 2 league and the 2nd XV finished 3rd in the Women's NC South East 2. However, the 2s did a great job in winning through to the National Cup finals in Derby in April, where they were beaten by a good Cannock side, having made sure they had first scared them by taking a 12-0 lead!

There was also good representation from our Ladies in the various Sussex Matches this season culminating in the county, and some of those Lewes players, reaching the Championship Final at Twickenham.

But, without doubt a big concern is the number of Men available to play next season.

Last season we "lost" several of our more established players. Either to a combination of injury, leading to retirement, or to go off travelling etc. Next season a few more leave us. The 1sts subsequently struggled to compete in LSE 3 and were demoted to Sussex 1.

The 2nd XV were able to fulfil most of their fixtures but as a result of the struggles in the 1s were depleted on some weekends – Joel and Aidan did a great job keeping that going.

Last season we attempted to cover the Men's Coaching side of things from within our player base. That did not wholly work but James Halpin is continuing next season to lead the Coaching of the Men and will be assisted by Dave Durrant. We are also exploring how cover may be provided as and when James is not available.

- **To Finish**

The "club" is not in a bad place.

However, the main focus for next season must be around the recruitment of players for the Senior Men sides and a few weeks ago I kicked that off and had a good meeting with a number of the players. The enthusiasm from them was great encouragement to me and I look forward to it continuing. Plans are afoot, and a recruitment campaign is already in progress with posters going up, business cards printed to give out.

Various responses from the floor regarding publicising the club included

- Rolling club news items on our monitors in the clubhouse
- Social media output could be broadened, but should use the hashtag: #bemorelewes
- Club website can be utilised by all sections of the club

But we also cannot ignore that state of the facilities. So, the other main priority is a plan of attack on LTC once the devolvement of the Trust has occurred from LDC and to put pressure on them to get something moving. We, as a club, are willing to help them to help us, but need their help to formalise security of tenure to allow us to access and grants and funding that can be used. For this we will need the support of every member of this club so when we request it please do get involved. Onwards and upwards to next season!

5. Treasure's Report – Mark Hall:

Copies of the club's unaudited final statements were distributed.

Overall the club's net funds have continued to grow with this season netting £1,800. The club ended the year with £30,000 in the bank. Net assets stand at £14,000.

- Both income and expenditure are down from last year
- The difference in income is due to the grants for floodlights last year
- While subscriptions and sponsorship up, the bar and catering income was less than last year.
- The difference in expenditure is due to less coaching costs though travelling expenses have increased
- With different circumstances to deal with this year, we have continued to budget effectively in order to use our funds for the benefit of all our members.

6. Election of Officers:

The following committee members were happy to stand again for election. They were nominated and seconded as follows, and there being no other nominations received, these were all duly elected.

POSITION	PROPOSED	NOMINATED BY	SECONDED BY
CHAIRMAN	Nick Page	Paddy Henshaw	Paul Nicholl
SECRETARY	Paul Nicholl	Andy Kipling	Paddy Henshaw
TREASURER	Mark Hall	Paul Nicholl	Nick Page
JUNIOR/MINIS CHAIR	Jo-Anne Sunderland-Bowe	Paul Nicholl	Andy Kipling

7. Subscriptions for 2018/2019:

- Senior Players: £120 a year at £10 a month or £84 at £7 per month for students. However respective reduced payments of £96 and £70 if paid by 30th September.
- Juniors and Lionesses: £100 a year
- Minis: £75 a year or two payments of £40 for each half of the season
- Siblings: £50 a year
- Social Membership: £50 a year

8. Election of Reporting Accountants:

It was agreed that Knill James should be re-appointed as Reporting Accountants.

9. A.O.B.

- It was agreed to have a Senior Men's Registration Day on Sunday 1st September
- Strength and conditioning sessions are taking place pre-season. It was confirmed that any further sessions should be organised via the club committee.
- Publicising our younger sections could be helped by taking laminated cards into schools to distribute to children.
- The recent article in "Viva Lewes" was shared and was a stimulus for further discussion concerning publicity.
- It was confirmed that we have been accepted in the Waitrose Community Partners green token scheme in their Lewes store for September.
- It was asked whether the Rugby World Cup matches involving England will be shown at the clubhouse. The group games' timings are:
 - Sunday 22nd September Tonga (11.15)
 - Saturday 5th October Argentina (9.00)
 - Saturday 12th October France (9.00)

Meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Our next AGM will take place on Wednesday 24th June 2020