



18th Annual General Meeting of Lewes Rugby Football Club Ltd (83rd Meeting of Lewes RFC)

**Wednesday 6th July 2022
Held at the Clubhouse, Stanley Turner Ground, Lewes**

Present:

Robert Moore, Paddy Henshaw, Tim Green, Paul Johnson, Em Millward, James Sale, Jo-Anne Sunderland Bowe, Craig Brindley, Sam Gottardi, Andy Kipling, Kevin Powell, Andrew Jackson, Christophe Rivet, Bob Lockyer, Tash Green, James Halpin, Andy Turner, Phil Clarke

Apologies:

Nick Page, Carole Gartrell, Nigel Hastings, Brandon Palmer, Paul Nicholl, Nick Rawson, Shayne Luthuli, Danny Simpson, Dereck Wade.

- **Approval of Previous Minutes. 2021:**

- Having been previously circulated, the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 5^h July 2021 were approved by those present as being a true record.

- **Matters arising:**

- There were no matters arising.

- **Chairman's Report – Paddy Henshaw:**

- Firstly, I would like to thank you all, players, coaches, parents and supporters for all your efforts, patience and support over the last season – what seemed to have been the first fairly normal season for some time. Whilst there were still some limited changes to the regulations in Age Grade Rugby during the initial part of the season, it was, after all, our first opportunity for some time to play full contact games and also get together in the clubhouse again.

- **Rugby**

- The Men's 1st XV had a generally mixed season. Some successes during the first few games of the season in challenging circumstances due to availability were followed by losses to some of the stronger teams in the league during the run up to Christmas. Then followed some fairly challenging times for the rest of the season due to injury. The highlights of the season were probably the 41-7 away win against Hove, and the 54-0 away win against Hellingly particularly after losing a fairly close game to them earlier in the season. In the words of Head Coach, Brandon Palmer, "A solid foundation has now been laid, and for the next few years to come, we will keep building and growing the foundations."
- The Men's 2nd XV had a particularly successful season, not least due to the efforts of Stefan Mapp in corralling the players on match days, with 13 games won and 7 lost. There were over

70 players involved in playing these fixtures which included some fairly regular group from Brighton Sea Serpents who very kindly played for Lewes when their fixtures allowed.

- The Women's teams, however, have had a slightly less fortunate run throughout the season. With rapidly falling numbers prior to the start of the season in August and a further decline part way through the season once it became clear it was going to be difficult to fulfil the league fixtures for the 1st & 2nd XV's, the end of the season has seen the lowest numbers for some time. The club are very much in support of the Women's team and keen to get back to the participation levels of previous years, and so this coming season sees us in the Women's Inner Warrior League at the start of some very exciting times to re-build as the club has done so successfully in previous times.
- The Minis and Juniors have continued the successes from previous seasons, with good numbers in the majority of the age groups, with some very close to being able to field two sides. This seems to me to be a true reflection of what our club is all about – the Core values of rugby, TREDs, for both the players and participants who turn up to play and enjoy rugby, and the coaches, volunteers and parents who commit their time and effort to make this possible. Particular highlights for me are the numbers of our Junior members we have playing representative rugby for Sussex and beyond
- **Off-Field Events & General highlights**
- While it has been good to get back to competitive action on the field and much effort throughout the club has gone into rebuilding teams after lockdown, there have also been events that show that the club is about far more than just the league results.
- The men's 1st XV league fixture in October 2021 saw a visit from The President of the RFU, Jeff Blackett, along with his wife and officials from the Sussex RFU. The visit was part of the county leg of a 15-day nationwide tour to raise money for the Injured Players Foundation as part of the RFU's official 150th Anniversary celebrations. Also present on the day were the Mayor of Lewes and the presidents of Eastbourne RFC, Hellingly RFC, Seaford RFC and Uckfield RFC, as well as Peter Sealey, a Lewes RFC Life Vice President, who, along with Sussex stalwart, Allan Butcher, received lifetime achievement awards at the presentations that took place at half time.
- The tribute to Paddy Delaney played in March 2022 was also highlighted in a magazine article about events in the south east, which reported that Lewes and Brighton honoured the memory of their former prop who died of cancer last year aged 52.
- Another annual event in memory of another great Lewes player was staged once more at Uckfield whose vets took on Lewes in the John Becvar Memorial match. There was also a great turn out for this game, as rugby showed that it has fully emerged from the hibernation period of lockdown.
- Then there were some fun 7's events. The women organised a tournament alongside the Linda Goode fundraising day, while the men entered a team as part of the tournament during the Lewes Music Festival event held in May.
- The season also saw the first Minis Festival for some time, welcoming clubs from across the county for our first Festival in almost 3 years. With over 66 teams registered and 550 players events certainly had a celebratory feel, and was played in glorious spring sunshine.

- **Facilities & General Progress**

- The works to the changing rooms were completed prior to the start of the season, and whilst there is still plenty to do to bring these up to the standards of some of our neighbouring clubs, this is still very much work in progress. Lewes District Council have allocated further funds and have recently completed a Condition Survey of both the clubhouse and changing rooms to look into detail about how the funds should be allocated and spent, and so the coming season with the works planned by LDC and other works by us should see further improvements.
- The lease discussions for the clubhouse are also progressing, and again I am hopeful that the 22/23 season should see a new lease of the Sports Club of the clubhouse, and may allow further funds and grants to be applied for in the future if these become available.
- So finally, thank you all once again, enjoy the summer break, and hopefully see you all at the start of the 2022/23 Season to continue the successes of Lewes RFC.

- **Treasure's Report – Andy Kipling:**

- I'd like to start by thanking Mark for his time in this role and the help he has given me over during the hand over.
- Copies of the club's annual final statements were distributed prior to the meeting. These statements are independently reviewed by the club's reporting accountants, Knill James, ahead of the AGM and presentation to members.
- Income for the season is up year on year, mainly from subscriptions and bar takings as we returned to a more active season. With the majority of the club's costs being directly linked to rugby activities, costs were also up, resulting in a small positive surplus for the year.
- We have agreed new shirt sponsorship deals with So Legal and DB Green and are actively looking for new sponsorship as our corporate deal with Howden – formally CHIS, has ended.

- **Election of Officers:**

- The following committee members were happy to stand for election as club officers. 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	Paddy Henshaw	James Sale	Andy Kipling
SECRETARY	Paul Nicholl	Jo-Anne Sunderland-Bowe	James Sale
TREASURER	Andy Kipling	Jo-Anne Sunderland-Bowe	James Sale

- **Election of Vice Presidents:**

- The Management Committee's proposal that the following should be elected as Vice Presidents was similarly approved:
 - Carole Gartrell
 - Tim Green
 - Nigel Hastings
 - Andrew Jackson
 - Paul Johnson
 - Kevin Powell
 - Christophe Rivet

- **Confirmation of Subscriptions for 2021-22 season**

- There will be no change in the headline rate of subscriptions for the 2021/22 season.

- **Election of Reporting Accountants:**

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

- **A.O.B.**
- Andy Turner asked if there was any promotional material available for girls' rugby he could use at school. Jo-Anne Sunderland Bowe said there was and would forward it to Andy.
- Sam Gottardi asked about Woman's subscription levels. It was agreed this would be dealt with at the next committee meeting.
- Rob Moore wanted to thank the committee members for all their hard work. Having attended committee meeting in his role as president it had been a real eye opener how much work the committee had to deal with.

Meeting closed at 8.25 pm