

**TRING RUGBY UNION
FOOTBALL CLUB**

**MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

18th JUNE 2020



Tring Rugby Union Football Club

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18th June 2020

Introduction

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the AGM this year was held via Zoom Conference calling as the club could not be used. The Chairman John Ball (JB) welcomed members present with 37 members signed into the virtual meeting.

Minutes of AGM held on 13th June 2019

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Hugh Logan (HL), seconded by Jon Westcott (JW), and agreed unanimously.

Chairman's Report

JB spoke about life before Covid19 and the foreseeable impact on the club and its finances. He then went on to speak about the pandemic's arrival. Payments to players were paused and the clubhouse was effectively shut down. Steve Hayes and Stewart Wallis granted the club a payment holiday on the loans that are outstanding, which the club greatly appreciates.

JB went on to talk about the grants and loans that were available to us during financial difficulty. The RFU asked us to withdraw our application as we were deemed to be financially stable. We were successful with applications for a £25,000 government loan from Dacorum Council and also a £10,000 from Sport England. JB mentioned that there is the possibility of securing a 100K from the RFU, this is an interest-free loan over 15 years to be used for improvements to the clubhouse.

Alongside this, JB wanted to give his thanks to the club's players for instigating a GoFundMe campaign on behalf of the club to cover the maintenance and upkeep of the pitches. They successfully raised in the region of £5.5k, an invaluable amount to the club and has kept us stocked with grass seed, covered labour and machinery costs and will see the pitches kept in good shape for the eventual return. JB thanked Mat Boswell and Matt Doodson for their efforts.

Question from Jack Flanagan: Do we have a clear cost strategy for the £100,000 loan, if received from the RFU.

JB responded that the loan would be spent solely on new floodlights but acknowledged the poor state of the changing rooms and shower facilities.

Hugh Logan (HL) reiterated to players to voice any concerns about the facilities to Mason Wallis (MW).

Financial Report

2019-2020 Season

HL presented the Treasurers Report. The message was that the current financial status is 'healthy', due to several years of hard work by everyone and no longer flirting with insolvency. It was added that the club is well equipped to handle the uncertainty of the upcoming season, although vigilance is required.

HL discussed the draft Balance Sheet, as at the end of the 2019/2020 season and commented that the Net Asset position was £153k, Net Current Assets were £73k. Cash held was £72k with £4k of stock. The Major Liabilities were detailed as two loans, of £29k and £10k. There is

a VAT liability of £20k (discussions ongoing with HMRC to resolve) and £3k remaining on the till hire lease agreement.

HL then discussed the P&L and shared an overview of the last two seasons with a forecast for next year. This season's income is down to circa £250k from circa £300k the season before. HL commented that the 19/20 season was bolstered by £25k of Covid grants, which has now been received from Dacorum Borough Council. £10k has been applied for, from Sport England but not yet received. These figures were clarified, following a question from JS. In terms of costs, expenditure was down considerably this year, owing to the early curtailment of the season. It is expected that costs increase next year back to previous season levels, should the season be undisrupted.

HL commented that the club can afford an unprofitable season, but this would impact future reinvestment.

HL thanked Mat Boswell and Mat Doodson for the GoFundMe Campaign. This raised £5k to support the grounds maintenance over the summer period.

HL thanked Rob Bray for organising the City Lunch and Martyn Kirk for another successful VP Dinner.

2020-2021 Season

HL made some comments on the forthcoming season, in terms of the finances.

The 20/21 season has been planned for to be a reasonably 'normal' season. Sponsorship funds assumed to fall substantially.

Initiatives and support will be needed to bolster the club against uncertainty in 20/21.

HL shared an overview of the club's main income streams; Subscriptions, Sponsorship, Bar Sales, Donations and Events. He stated that all items are 'at risk' due to economic conditions and playing conditions being unknown. Sponsors are a key component and their economic situation is not yet known

HL stated that budgets will be reviewed when sponsorship forecast can be clarified. Initiatives and events are being planned with short planning cycles and an unpredictable season & economy in mind.

HL confirmed that he was happy to be emailed after the meeting to discuss any of the points raised this evening in more depth.

Senior Playing Report

Mason Wallace (MW) talked through the Senior playing report.

1st Team

Finished 10th In London & Southeast Division (Level 5 Rugby).

The ambition was at the beginning of season was to finish in the top 3 and/or gain promotion. This didn't happen for a number of reasons, including injuries, having a young and inexperienced team and the lack of finances which other clubs enjoy. MW commented that well invested teams such as Wimbledon, Rochford and Guernsey are challenging to match, given their superior investment.

31 Players played, including a few debutants. The future is bright, we have a young team in development.

2nd Team

Finished 3rd in the league. Playing record was 18 Games played, won 12, lost 5 and drew 1.

In total, 65 players played in Second team, 19 played First team, 22 played for the Third team.

3rd Team

Playing record was Played 15, Won 5, Lost 9, drawn 1 with 5 games cancelled. This resulted in the team being relegated. MW commented that it has been frustrating this season, given the number of games being cancelled by either side due to poor numbers.

MW talked through what is happening in the off-season. He commented that there is likely to be a league re-structure in the 2021-22 season. This would see Second and Third teams joining the league structure and replace Merit leagues.

MW stated that the surveys around Senior Rugby continue. Lots of opinions are being gathered, a common theme is that players want less games and our VP community are looking for more.

Next season

MW commented that he is working on a number of different tasks ahead of next season.

MW is looking to finalise the coaching set up. A Backs coach required as Gary Trueman cannot commit this season due to work.

The club are seeking a Head Physio.

The club is continuing to grow the link with Mini & Junior Rugby through Mike March organising the coaching framework and senior players taking in turns to coach on Sundays.

The club continue to grow the Colts into Senior Rugby with mixed training sessions with senior sides. (1st team squad training & 3rd Team).

Player Recruitment – To strengthen the senior player base across all levels. The club is close to losing its 3rd team, having lost the 4th team last season.

3rd team changes: Dan Boniface - Captain, Alfie Noble - Vice Captain, Mat Adams – Coach & Manager.

JB added that the committee is fully supportive of MW, but budgets are an ongoing situation.

Dan Boniface commented that players are generally playing less rugby, with some sides now only able to produce 10-12 players for a game. He added that we were in need of finding new blood and that a recruitment drive was necessary to bolster the current playing squad.

No questions were raised.

Sponsorship and Events

Head of Fundraising Rob Bray (RB) thanked all involved with their fundraising efforts this year. Many people have helped from 'behind the scenes' and this is what we see as the true Spirit of Tring. The club is very thankful for all volunteers and those that continue to be put a great effort into keeping the club going. In particular RB thanked Claudia, Adam and team, Sandra and Martin Walters (MUW).

It is destined to be a tough year ahead for sponsorship and we will face some challenges and bringing money into the club this year will be particularly hard. All ideas for fundraising or sponsorship opportunities are welcomed by the club and RB thanked the continued generosity of individuals who regularly support. Ollie O'Gorman has had some branded TRUFC sliders produced which are being sold through the club.

The Annual Ball was cancelled in May this year, this would have been a major fundraiser and brought in a substantial amount to the club. The Tring RUFC City Lunch with Simon Shaw as Guest Speaker is planned for 16th October 2020. This is currently on hold with the organiser and we will know more as the current situation develops.

JB responded- The club is talking to previous sponsors about their position and ability to be able to sponsor in the next season. We are mindful that many will not be in a position to be able to support the club as in the past. We want to thank them for their generosity and in return JB urged all members to continue to support the local businesses during this difficult time.

House and Grounds Report

Head of House and Grounds, Martin Walters (MUW) started by thanking Mat Adams for his input into the redecoration and improvement of the Clubhouse last year.

MUW confirmed that with the onset of Covid19, the clubhouse was closed down at the end of March 2020. All private events were cancelled and the bar was cleared.

The pitches have been managed well behind the scenes. Grass seed was put down and germinated, although due to the driest May on record, some of the grass had died. Fertilizer will be added to the pitches and by September this should result in a perfect pitch condition.

Question from Nick Turner: Does MUW flush through the showers regularly as they have not been used for some time?

These will be flushed through ahead of re-opening, the club is aware of dangers of Legionnaires Disease and this will be addressed.

Question from Richard Storm: Are the proposed floodlights only to

Juniors, Girls and Colts Report

Jon Westcott (JW) began by thanking all the coaches involved in the various age groups as well as MUW for maintenance of the grounds Nigel for his physio support.

Girls rugby has grown through the last season thanks to a huge effort from MF and his team. There are roughly 18 girls signed up to play which is fantastic progress and there are hopes that this success can continue when rugby is able to restart.

Three junior age groups ran two teams in the Herts and Middlesex Leagues recently and the Junior Pathway is working well.

Mike March has been involved in an initiative to encourage senior players to attend junior coaching sessions to support and guide.

There is a healthy U12 joining the Juniors section when rugby recommences. JW welcomed Andy Lowe and all the coaching team.

Colts rugby is a focus for the club with an emphasis on ensuring that the players have the opportunity to get a taste for Senior rugby. JW reported that there is a good squad moving up to the U18 and that there are some very strong players in the new U17s.

The continued link up with the Seniors is hugely successful and popular and JW stressed the importance of integrating and supporting Colts Rugby as they represent the future of Tring Rugby.

Minis Report

Until the onset of Covid19, the Minis Chairman, Dan Crookes (DC) reported an excellent year for the Mini's Section. All age groups are well supported with coaches and team managers.

DC wants to highlight that more support is needed for the Cubs section (ages 3-5 years) and a volunteer recruitment drive is required with additional advertising to entice younger players..

DC talked about the festival that was due to take place in April. Organised superbly by Will Watson, this was set to be our best festival yet with 20-30 clubs visiting Cow Lane. It has been postponed but will most likely take place in Spring 2021. DC thanked Mark Firth for his knowledge and guidance with festival planning.

The Minis Tour, taking 250 youngsters to Camber Sands had to be cancelled in May, due to Covid19. Disappointing after the phenomenal effort that was put in by the tour organisers Simon Morris, Al Langan and Matt Field. We are in talks with the travel company to move this booking to next year.

DC thanked all the coaches throughout the age groups for their continued commitment and enthusiasm this season. The quality of coaching through the younger age groups is outstanding and producing some great players. DC also thanked the sponsors who have generously supported the club, both with tour sponsorship and kit.

Nick Turner congratulated DC on a well-run season and thanked him for his efforts.

No questions.

Resolution: Election of Officers

The following officers were elected for 2020/21

Chairman	John Ball
Vice President	Martyn Kirk
Treasurer	Hugh Logan
Co-Secretary	Simon Kirk (external affairs) Carole Crookes (internal affairs)
Director of Rugby	Mason Wallace
Head of Communications	Eamonn Borg-Neal
Head of Sponsorship	Rob Bray
Head of House and Grounds	Martin Walters

Proposer: 1st Bruce Fergusson and 2nd Hugh Logan.

New Appointments

JB thanked all of the committee for their continued support, going above and beyond to manage a difficult season.

Eamonn Borg-Neal has been appointed as the new IT and Communications Officer, replacing Dan Maxwell in this role. EBN has knowledge of the hospitality industry and is a

player in the 3rd team. JB welcomed him and thanked DM for his commitment and time whilst in the position.

In December, John Stevens stepped down as Bookkeeper, supporting the Treasurer. JS was fundamental in organising the company accounts and providing excellent reporting. JS was replaced by Carole Crookes who will continue in the role of Bookkeeper. JB thanked JS on behalf of all the club and welcomed CC.

Mat Adams has stepped down as Club Secretary this season. JB thanked him for all his efforts and time given to the club. He will be replaced by Simon Kirk (external affairs) and Carole Crookes (internal affairs) splitting the role.

Andrew Docherty has joined the club as the Grants and Loans Officer. He will monitor and investigate all loans and grants that might be available to the club.

Any Other Business

Martyn Kirk asked the question would we be able to run any form of summer camp or activity days for the M&J section. DC confirmed that the situation is being monitored and we are following government guidance before we can make any firm plans.

Lotto winners for February and March 2020 were drawn by JQ and EB-N using a name randomiser. Winners Rachael Bray and Bruce Fergusson kindly donated their prizes back to the club.

Date of next AGM: Thursday 24th June 2021