



# WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

## Worcestershire County Cricket Club AGM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Club held in the Graeme Hick Pavilion at the County Ground on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

---

Present:	<b>President:</b>	Lord King of Lothbury
	<b>Chairman of the Board:</b>	Stephen Taylor
	<b>Chief Executive:</b>	Tom Scott
	<b>Director of Cricket:</b>	Steve Rhodes
	<b>Captain:</b>	Daryl Mitchell/Joe Leach

Together with 167 members

---

The President warmly welcomed members to the Annual General Meeting of the Club and noted that it was good to see so many Members present.

The President then asked members to stand in silent tribute to all the members and friends of the Club who had passed away during the last year, in particular Ken Mills, Vic Whittingham, Mike Nicholls, Louis Devereux and Peter Richardson.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

John Curtis, Alec Mackie, Tim Jones, William Mann, Marjorie Elliott, Roe Jackson, Dave Bradley

2. **Confirmation of Minutes of the AGM held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

The Minutes (which had been available to members prior to the Meeting and were taken as read) were approved by members and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

3. **President's Address**

**Lord King of Lothbury** addressed the AGM in his capacity of President, he said it had been a mixed year and felt like it had been one step back and 2 steps forward. There are high hopes with the young players for County and Country with the selection to the England Lions.

The President said it gave him great pleasure to pass the presidency over to Norman Gifford who is part of a wonderful institution here at Worcester. He went on to say that he himself was deeply honoured to have been President and felt it was a huge privilege to have served in one of the greatest homes of cricket and he was very proud of the club. He thanked everyone and confirmed that he would still be around for many years to come.



# WORCESTERSHIRE

## COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

#### 4. Approval of the Annual Report on behalf of the Board and the Statement of Accounts that accompany this Notice.

The President invited the Chairman, **Stephen Taylor** to speak to the Annual Report.

The Chairman thanked the President and went on to say that cricket is changing and this is highlighted by the introduction of the ECB 20/20 format. The ECB have a Business Plan over 8 years and see this as a positive way forward. There is massive debt in cricket and there are serious concerns for the game. The ECB are pushing for better governance. They need to react to changes – we, as a club, have to be able to do this too.

The Chairman confirmed that he was proud and happy to be elected as Chairman and wants to do what he can to make this club fit for purpose. He said that he and the Board were looking to modernise the club and keep the rules up to date. This is a massive challenge and he apologised for not having the amended rules in place as yet, but there is a lot more work to do, so this has been postponed. He promised that it would be done by the next AGM.

The Chairman highlighted that on paper, this was our 6<sup>th</sup> year of profit but there was a new Financial Statement because some allocation of costs needed to be re-done.

There are still many challenges to get over and a sizeable amount of debt, but this is being sorted out by Tom Scott and his team. We now have a cash flow forecast and a very strong budget set. Fanos Hira (Board Member) has been assisting and the Chairman handed over to Fanos:

#### **Fanos Hira**

Fanos gave a brief biography of himself and where he had come from.

He then went on to say that he became Audit Chairman in July 2016 and that the data presented was an extract from the Statement of Accounts which had been signed off and audited.

Fanos confirmed that there have been a few changes since his election to the Board:-

- Year End has changed to December
- The surplus has been doubled, but there were a few exceptional items
- In 2016 the ECB gave the club £500,000 in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. The reason this is included in 2017 is down to tax benefits.
- The 2015 figure of £182,000 was in fact a loss of around £180k – the results were flattered by the re-imburement of a mis-selling claim against Clydesdale Bank.
- We have now secured lower levels of interest rates on loans
- Membership income loss, is down to being relegated, together with an IT issue.
- The bulk of membership monies are in and the numbers are up on last year.

Fanos went on to say that there are still a number of things to do to clamp down on costs. Early evidence shows that there is improvement but debt in sport is high.



# WORCESTERSHIRE

## COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

The current liabilities have increased to £1.4 million compared to £800k previously. Everything is being addressed and we have already paid back a lot of the debt. Some of the debt has been re-phased to reduce pressure and cumulative interest.

The Phase 3 Development has now been put on the back burner in order to focus on reducing debt. We believe the outlook is positive.

### Chairman

The Chairman thanked Fanos for his words and for the assistance he has offered the club. He went on to thank Tom Scott for accepting the full time position as CEO and to congratulate Jon Graham on being promoted to Managing Director.

The Chairman gives his full support to Tom Scott's team and he went on to thank The Board for their support. He then handed over to Steve Rhodes (Director of Cricket).

### Cricket Update

The Director of Cricket opened his review of 2016 by saying he was happy to be here, one year on and happy that we had a winter with no floods. He went on to congratulate Joe Leach on becoming Captain.

With regard to the County Championship 2016, it was a tough ask to get promoted and he didn't think the 8/10 split helped. 3<sup>rd</sup> place was good. Kent played well and will be tough competition this year. Essex were worthy champions and Alex Cole was excellent.

Some positives

- Joe Clarke scored 1000 runs and was selected by the Lions.
- Joe Leach took 65 wickets

We need to get more runs, we have the batters but we also need bowlers. John Hastings should give us an edge, Ed Barnard and Charlie Morris are both back with a zip and their performances have been very encouraging.

Moving on to the 50 over game – we got to the quarter final but sadly we didn't play as well as we could. We are just getting to grips with that disappointment now. We had some really good wins – we can do it. We have the capability to win, we just need people to take wickets, John Hastings and Joe Leach should help this year. We actually beat the finalists.

The T20 group is a strong one. We lost Mitch Santner to injury – he would have been great but the injury took him out of the picture. He's back later on this year for the T20 games.

Joe Leach has taken over as captain – his man-management is excellent, he's a good communicator and motivator.

It is definitely achievable for us to win – there are some good teams out there but we do have the strength.



# WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

Steve went on to thank Daryl Mitchell for his years as captain and to congratulate him on being chosen as PCA Chairman.

With regard to the Academy, SR mentioned there had been some excellent work from Elliot Wilson, Paul Pridgeon and Dave Manning. The future really does look bright.

Finally, the Director of Cricket stated how pleased he was that Norman Gifford was to be President, it is an excellent choice as he was a very successful Captain and Coach and still helps out with coaching. All the players look up to him.

### **CEO's Address to Members (Tom Scott)**

David Leatherdale left last year to take on the role of CEO for the PCA and I was asked to look after the club for him. It is a hard act to follow, but we are making the necessary changes to move the business forward.

The business was tired and change was required. We now have the team to take the business forward. It has taken time and will take more time, but changes need to be made for growth. We need to keep a sustainable and profitable business.

We need to sell the space we have and this is why we have our new Café which is open to members and supporters on match days and to everyone, including the public every other week day.

Paul Foley's is a great story as there wouldn't be a club without him. We've done our market research and focus groups to see if it will work. We believe it will and this will help to nibble away at some of the outstanding debt.

As the Chairman mentioned, the Phase 3 Development will have to wait until our debts are paid off.

We have a commercial plan to help pay off the debt. I have been in the post 12 months now and we haven't borrowed any more money since I started.

We are focused on selling the space and this includes the ground as well as the rooms and this is the reason for the concerts and outdoor cinema's etc.

### **The retiring President, Lord King of Lothbury:**

With regard to the cricket, I feel there is now a tremendous opportunity with Steve Rhodes and Joe Leach.

Operationally, it looks like the club will be in a much better position going forward.



# WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

## Members Questions:

Q1 – David Bessant

Congratulations on the away games! It is a shame there is no cricket in August and no only 3 games in May – can we do anything about this?

A – Tom Scott

Unfortunately it is out of our hands because all 18 counties have their own priorities and every county is in the same boat.

Q2 – John Wright

Thank you for the information regarding the Accounts I am delighted by the honesty. However, can't see where interest paid is entered, where is it paid?

A – Fanos Hira

I would be happy to discuss this in more detail after the meeting.

Q3 – Lifetime Member

Will professional fees continue to rise?

A – Fanos Hira

The vast majority of the professional fees relate to the interim CEO position and the exceptional item. Therefore they should in fact come down.

Q4 – Tony Caseley

With the new T20 competition in 2020, will we lose players?

A - Tom Scott

Every club will probably lose some players – we do have issues with the new competition at the moment. We are challenging the ECB as we are opposed to the competition as it stands. We need to protect our own interests as do the other Category C clubs.

A – Stephen Taylor

I see the ECB regularly at Chairman's meetings – there is a lot of work to be done and it is very challenging. By the end of the year we should know more. We want to make sure we continue cricket at Worcester and we want guarantees.

WITH NO MORE QUESTIONS, THE PRESIDENT PUT FORWARD THE ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS TO THE MEETING FOR APPROVAL:

The members unanimously approved the Annual Report and Accounts.



# WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

## 5. Election of President

The President handed over the meeting to the Chairman at this point.

To elect a President for the forthcoming 2 years. Your Board recommends the election of Norman Gifford MBE

The Chairman said that it gave him great pleasure to propose the election of a true legend of the club, Norman Gifford MBE as President of Worcestershire County Cricket Club for 2 years.

This was seconded by Tim Curtis and Meriel Harris (Board Members) and was agreed unanimously by the meeting.

The Chairman went on to say that he was very proud and privileged to have worked with Lord King and his support has been appreciated. He went on to thank Lord King for his support and sensible advice.

### **Norman Gifford:**

Thanked the Chairman for his nomination and was very pleased to accept as it was a great honour for him. He went on to say that it was a fantastic opportunity for him and he would do his best to make sure the club thrives. Thank you everyone.

## 5. Confirmation of Additional Directors (Non-Executives)

The President then invited the CEO to ask the Meeting to formally approve the re-appointment of Stephen Taylor (Chairman) and Fanos Hira.

This was seconded by Meriel Harris (Board Member) and approved unanimously by the members.

## 7. Confirmation of Board Elections as per rule 18.7

The Chief Executive confirmed that three nominations had been received for two available places on the Board, Meriel Harris, Peter Jewell and Richard Coles and a ballot had been held. The results were as follows:

Meriel Harris – 915

Peter Jewell – 725

Richard Coles – 581

Due to an irregularity, Peter Jewell's nomination was void. As at the closing date PJ did not have the required number of seconders.



# WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

The Meeting was therefore asked to formally approve the election to the Board of Meriel Harris and Richard Coles for a 3 year term.

This was unanimously approved by the meeting.

## 8. Club Rules

**Stephen Taylor (The Chairman)** apologised for the late withdrawal of proposals to change the Club rules for which members were to have been asked to grant approval. The complexity of this matter and the need for legal advice on a number of issues had made it impossible to complete the process within the necessary timeframe and so, reluctantly, the proposals had been withdrawn in favour of a full-scale review to be completed in time for a postal ballot of all members before the 2018 AGM.

In the meantime, members were asked to approve the deferral of further elections to the Board until February next year in acknowledgement that the change of Financial Year (already approved as 1st January to 31st December) makes it desirable for the Board Year to run AGM to AGM - all such to be held in March following the end of each Financial Year.

In putting forward this proposal on behalf of the Board, the Chairman called upon David Exall, long term adviser to the Board on constitutional matters to formally second and speak to the resolution.

**David Exall** -began by describing the matter as a composite resolution which sought approval to commission a full- scale review of the rules and, at the same time, deferring further elections until nearer the next AGM. This latter matter he describes as a transitional necessity in the light of the change of Financial Year.

DE set out the proposed time map for the proposed Review as well as the case for a postal ballot of all members.

### **Richard Coles – made a point of order**

He wished to point out that a winter ballot would make it virtually impossible for members to gain the necessary signatures to support their nomination.

**David Exall** - responded to this by stating that there was no reason why ballot papers could not be available during the season even if they were not required to be returned until the New Year. This suggestion received the immediate support of both the Chairman and Chief Executive.

He then addressed a number of questions and suggestions from members and the Chairman eventually ruled that the vote be taken.

This action was seconded by **David Exall** and **Meriel Harris** and approved by a substantial majority of members.



# WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB

9. **To pass a Vote of Thanks to the Club's Honorary Medical Officers and Support Team:-**

The Director of Cricket, on behalf of the Board, proposed a Vote of Thanks to the Club's Honorary Medical Officers and Support Team, all of whom give of their time and expertise freely to the Club. This includes all the staff at Henwick Halt Medical Centre in St Johns, The Spire South Bank Hospital and the Bull Ring Dental Surgery.

The proposal was seconded and unanimously approved by the meeting.

10. **Any Other Business**

The Chairman, on behalf of The Board, asked that Martyn (Percy) Price be nominated as a VP. This was duly seconded and approved.

Signed ..... 

Dated ..... 05/02/2018