

**MINUTES OF THE 2016 AGM HELD ON 23rd JANUARY 2017,
AT THE COOPER ASSOCIATES COUNTY GROUND, TAUNTON AT 7.30 P.M.**

Present: The President, Mr Richard Parsons was in the Chair. 207 Members were present.

The Chief Executive began by reading out a list of Members who had passed away since the last AGM, after which a moments silence was observed.

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Mike Coggins, Mrs Mary Coggins, Mr David Pope, Mrs Pat Russell, Mr David Harrison, Mrs Pam Harrison, Mr Ken Goodwin, Mrs Liz Goodwin, Mr Payne and Mrs Sylvia Nash.

ITEM 2. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 2015 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 25th JANUARY 2016

All those present approved the formal adoption of the Minutes.

ITEM 3. TO RECEIVE AND, IF APPROVED, ADOPT THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2016

The Chairman, Mr Andy Nash began his report by saying that it was a very good season with the Club coming very close to winning some silverware by finishing 2nd in the County Championship.

The Chairman then explained the simple strategies that the Club aim to implement:

1. To compete in all formats of the game.
2. To deliver safe and successful events.
3. To develop and build First Class facilities.
4. To increase our financial strength.
5. To engage with our community.
6. To develop our own people.

The Chairman gave more detail of each strategy based on the performance of the Club both on and off the field for the past 12 months; the bullet points of which were:

- The appointment of Tom Abell as 1st XI Captain for 2017.
- Delivery of International T20 and Women's World Cup in June and July 2017.

- Demolition of the old scoreboard and the plumbers yard to make space for the temporary stand for the IT20 and the building of a new digital scoreboard alongside the Colin Atkinson Pavilion.
- Planning permission has been granted for the installation of floodlights – 5 x 53m masts – installation date as yet unknown but in time for the 2019 season when the Club host 3 Men’s World Cup matches.
- Still the most consistently profitable county and in a good financial position.
- Gave details of the work done in the community at schools, hospitals, clubs etc by the staff and the playing staff.
- The Club take pride in the fact that they don’t out-source any operations of the Club but employ and develop our own staff – there is a very good “one team” ethos.

The Chairman finished by saying that one of the great strengths of the Club is that we have a very clear, simple strategy that we brutally implement. The achievements off the pitch in the last decade have been phenomenal and we now hope that this can be replicated by the team winning one of the competitions but despite not winning the County Championship so far, we are the longest surviving county in Division I. Gaining Category B status has huge potential and the Club must grasp this opportunity.

The Chairman thanked the Members for their continued loyal support.

The Director of Cricket, Mr Matt Maynard gave the Cricket Report as follows:

- County Championship: the team found some consistency in their performance and thanks must go to the Head Groundsman, Simon Lee for preparing wickets that would force a result i.e. not flat batting wickets that Taunton is renowned for. Praise also to Chris Rogers who showed great leadership as Captain and also proved that sometimes you have to play attacking cricket and not be so conservative in the 4-day game.
- Delighted that Tom Abell has been appointed Captain for 2017 and he has the full backing of the squad. Chris Rogers will also be returning as batting coach to assist Tom.
- 50 Over competition: played some very disciplined cricket but bitterly disappointed not to have a home semi-final despite only losing one match in the group stages and an impressive win over Worcester in the quarter-final.
- T20: the squad are struggling with this format and showed less intensity in the field than they did in the County Championship. Chris Gayle has been magnificent as the overseas T20 player but we must review the make-up the squad as the hole he leaves is immense and the squad struggle to play together – won 3 of 5 matches with Gayle (1 abandoned) and then lost 9 consecutive matches after he had departed. For 2017 looking for a player that can play in the whole of the competition.
- This year has seen the emergence of some new and exciting talent. Dom Bess spent the previous winter in Australia at the Darren Lehman Academy and although he hasn’t massively impressed in the 2nd XI when he had his debut for

the 1st XI in the Tourist match versus Pakistan he showed real character and continued to impress for the rest of the season. George Bartlett is coming through our system and is going to be a real talent, as are Ben Green and Ollie Sale.

- Three significant injuries at the end of the season – Jamie Overton with a stress fracture but who is healing well; Lewis Gregory had an operation on his ankle for a bone spur – his rehab is going well and James Hildreth who is recovering from a broken foot. James was hit on the foot by the ball but continued his innings in immense pain only to discover later that it wasn't just bruised but broken.
- New signings Steve Davies and Paul van Meekeren are settling in well with the Club and squad. Dean Elgar has been signed as Overseas Player and has improved since his spell with the Club in 2013.
- Further investment has been made in the Academy and they are all going to India on 5th February for a 10-day camp.
- An exchange programme has been set up with Canterbury Cricket in New Zealand. Jason Kerr has been to NZ and spent some time with their coaches and we will reciprocate this summer plus Eddie Byrom is playing for them winter 2016/17.

Questions

Richard Oliver asked the DoC if there had been any complaints from the ECB regarding the preparation of the pitches. The DoC responded that there had been no complaints and added that we had not produced "poor" wickets just ones that spun.

In response to a question from Martin Shirley, the DoC said that no Vice-captain's will be named for the following season.

John Hurle asked whether there was a problem with Jack Leach's bowling action. The DoC responded that the Club felt very let down by the ECB with their treatment of Jack. All players that get selected for any of the England performance squads have to go through a screening process at Loughborough and Jack was 2 degrees out with his bowling action i.e. just on the outside of being illegal; he was re-tested two weeks later and passed. This information was discussed at length by the media during the last Test Match as he wasn't selected and sadly, the ECB didn't rally around Jack and support him which was very disappointing.

Penny Roberts asked whether Dean Elgar will be playing in all formats and also, what will happen when South Africa tour this season. The DoC responded that he is available for all cricket but it is not known at this stage if he will be selected by CSA.

Mike Short asked for clarification as to whether the floodlight plan was going ahead. The CEO responded that floodlights would become a necessity for First Class Cricket and that the lights would be installed in time for the 2019 season.

Terry Casely asked what was the Club's attitude regarding the proposed new T20 competition due to be introduced in 2020. The CEO responded that he was part of the

T20 Development Group led by the ECB looking at what a new T20 format might look like. The counties are yet to receive any formal proposals so at the moment it's a case of "wait and see". It's in development but as soon as the information is available and permitted it will be shared with the Members.

There being no further questions, the Chairman proposed the formal adoption of the 2016 Report – seconded and approved unanimously.

ITEM 4. TO RECEIVE AND, IF APPROVE ADOPT THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2016

The Honorary Treasurer explained that the Accounts were to be found in the back of the Almanac and that these were just a summary; a full set can be found on the Club's website or Members can obtain a copy from the Club Office.

The Accounts have been audited by BJ Dixon Walsh and, unlike in previous years, there is no qualified audit report and the Hon Treasurer said that he would explain this further in his Report.

With the aid of a power point presentation, the Hon Treasurer referred to the Accounts and highlighted the following key points:

- A Trading Surplus before Tax of just under £600K, an 81% increase on the previous year.
- Turnover of £6M up 9% on the previous year.
- Expenditure of £5.5M up slightly on the previous year but to be expected with the increase in turnover.
- A full year of operating the new Somerset Pavilion which has added greatly to the increase in turnover.
- Additional quarter and semi-final fixtures which are unbudgeted make an enormous impact on income.
- ECB income down by £106K.
- Gate Receipts and Membership up by £250K which is one of the main areas of growth.
- Catering and Commercial income up by 19%.
- £2.2M is spent on cricket costs which indicates the Club's committed investment in the playing squad and support services.
- 25 St James Street was sold which generated net income of £115K.

The Hon Treasurer ran through a comparison with the other counties based on the 2015 results. We have the second biggest income behind Surrey who we can't really be compared with. We are third in the table for investment in playing costs – we invest a third of our income.

- The Balance Sheet has strengthened during the year with net debt reduced by £1.1M. This is due to beginning to repay the loans for the Somerset Pavilion and

advance receipt of £1M from the ECB plus a grant of £350K towards the cost of the NE Corner development works. Currently working well within the covenants set by Barclays Bank.

- We have no audit qualification because the FCA require us to value the ground and this year the value was greater than what was shown on the Balance Sheet which led to a net surplus. This doesn't affect the P&L but must be shown on the Balance Sheet.
- Operating cash remains strong. All costs associated with the build of the Somerset Pavilion have been settled. Cash flow remains important with the current level of debt which is just under £3M. This level is within what the Club can manage and there are no short-term plans to increase borrowing.
- We still have a number of capital allowances relating to the build of the Somerset Pavilion so there is a modest Corporation Tax bill of £24,000.

Three months into the 2017 financial year and activities are in line with Budget and looking promising. The key to 2017 is to maximise the profit of the IT20 and Women's World Cup which is currently an unknown and some areas of income and expenditure are outside of our control.

Questions

Peter Wallis asked the Hon Treasurer to expand on what risks the Club may currently face. The Hon Treasurer responded that the Budget set is quite strict, and that income is evenly spread across all areas of the Club, so we would be very unlucky if all income streams were adversely affected. Many of the counties only have a couple of income streams and are therefore at greater risk. Complacency is our greatest risk, but we have a very good knowledge of, and control of, income and expenditure.

Michael Evans asked what provision has been provided for the installation of the floodlights. The Hon Treasurer responded that there is no financial commitment in the current set of Accounts. The CEO added that there will be a significant grant from the ECB as and when the Club decide to proceed with the installation; the shortfall will be made up of a combination of borrowing or profit from the 2017 season.

John Hurle asked if the Club were exposed if the England v South Africa match were rained off or affected in some other way. The CEO confirmed that the fee payable to the ECB is based on a revenue share of the ticket income, so the risk is shared. There is insurance in place to cover the hospitality and catering income and the ECB insure the ticket income, so the risk is managed.

Anthony Verrier asked if the Hon Treasurer had done any risks assessments in light of the new T20 franchise going ahead and the Club's current level of income from the domestic T20 competition being devalued. The Hon Treasurer confirmed that the ECB have done a financial analysis that the Club have reviewed. The CEO added that the broadcast deal linked to the new competition will see a significant increase in income to the First Class Counties, even for those that do not "host" a team. The Club will be well positioned to host matches.

There being no further questions the Hon Treasurer proposed the formal adoption of the Accounts; seconded and approved unanimously.

ITEM 5. TO ELECT AN HONORARY TREASURER FOR 2017

Mr Derry was nominated as Honorary Treasurer; seconded and agreed unanimously.

ITEM 6. TO APPOINT AUDITORS FOR 2017

BJ Dixon Walsh were proposed as Auditors for 2017, seconded and agreed unanimously.

ITEM 7. TO ANNOUNCE THE RESULTS OF BALLOTS FOR ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE COMMITTEE

In the four Areas that were due for re-election, the following were elected unopposed with the exception of Mid-Somerset which is a new nomination following the retirement of Mr Geoff Hepworth:

- Bridgwater & Coastal: Mr Viv Brewer
- Mid: Mr Kevin Russell
- South & Dorset Mr David Foot
- Weston-Super-Mare: Mr John Scott

ITEM 8. TO APPROVE, BY THE PASSING OF A RESOLUTION OF THE MEMBERS, THE UPDATED CLUB RULES

The President said that Members have had the opportunity to review the proposed updates and added that there was nothing significant, just some tidying up and asked the CEO to explain further.

The CEO explained that it is good practice to review the Rules particularly as the last update was 2006. The review was led by a sub-committee who made recommendations to the Committee Members and Members of the Area Committees. The amendments can be classified into four main areas as follows:

1. Deletion of clauses that are no longer apply to the operation of the Club by the passing of time i.e. the use of the Club seal in all correspondence.
2. The insertion of wording which complies with the current legal framework for the Club as we move from being a Registered Society under the Industrial and Provident Act to Registered Society under the Co-operative and Community Benefits Act 2014 with the former no longer being compliant for the Club.
3. Changes to the election process for the Club President and Hon Treasurer in the event of a contested election.

4. The inclusion of communication with the Members by electronic format.

Questions

Richard Tomlinson asked for clarification of Clauses 8.2 and 12.8.2 which the CEO provided.

There being no further questions, the President proposed the adoption of the new Rules; seconded and approved unanimously.

Meeting closed.

Signed.....Dated.....