

Lymm RFC Ltd
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
12th May 2022

Present

Kerry Anderson	Julie Antonelli	Chris Askew	Aimee Cartwright	Colette Cartwright
John Cartwright	Jonny Cartwright	Derek Clark	Rick Condo	David Dickinson
Adam Fletcher	Alan Gibson	Adam Halford	Tony Halford	Yvonne Halford
Mark Hesketh	Jon Hilton	Will Hind	Brian Holliday	Andy Jackson
Rick Johnson	Neil Kelly	Sharon Kelly	Jim Knowles	Guy Larkin
Andy Leach	Paul Maguire	Varun Maharaj	Peter Millachip	Danny McNicholl
Ron Mukherjee	Willis Mungai	Gareth Neal	Simon Plumb	Malcolm Pritchard
Dave Simpson	Alan Wilkinson	Kate Yeomans		

Apologies

Neil Allen	Steve Ashall	John Case	Peter Cornelia	Alan Cummins
Laura Hay	John Hopkinson	Richard Membery	Dave Newton	Peter Radcliffe
Paul Rigby	Steve Rule	Tony Wright		

Welcome and Introduction

The Secretary, Rick Johnson, opened the meeting by welcoming the attendees to what was the 5th AGM of Lymm RFC Ltd. As was the case the previous year, the meeting was being held with some attendees in the Clubhouse and some attending virtually.

The Chairman, John Cartwright took the opportunity to introduce Alan Troy who has recently been appointed as the Club Manager.

Previous Minutes

The minutes from the previous AGM were accepted.

Chairman's Report - John Cartwright

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members and Friends, welcome to the Lymm RFC Annual General Meeting for season 2021/22.

One year further on and thankfully we are starting to see a return to normality – or at least to a 'new normal' that is likely to be with us for a number of years to come as we grow out of the Covid Pandemic era. Since our last AGM we have enjoyed a full season of Rugby, Squash, Tennis and Hockey at all levels and this has rekindled the interest in related social activities that will hopefully once again create a strong foundation for our future operational and development activities. Our treasurer, Andy Leach, has produced an excellent report for this AGM that highlights the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on our normally buoyant events-based income streams. Not surprisingly our members were (and perhaps still are) apprehensive about returning to the traditions of large social gatherings and other factors associated with Covid have removed some of the platforms that supported these events. However, the buzz in the club house has grown louder at the weekends throughout the season and a steady increase in our members returning to Beechwood, and our away fixtures, is now evident. One great example of this was the Past Players event on 2nd April, which saw a very full Clubhouse for our fixture against Blackburn – one of a series of

excellent victories as the season came to an end. The buzz was certainly evident for that event and I am hopeful that this will continue into the new season.

Sadly, society is still impacted by Covid-19 and my thoughts go out to all those who are still suffering from this impact. Thank you to all our club members and the fantastic front-line services that continue to support our families, friends and the wider community. During the past year several families associated with Lymm Rugby Club lost loved ones, many of whom were fantastic club members, supporting the club over many years. Our thoughts and prayers are with them all and I would like to acknowledge absent friends here, which include; Geoff Evans, Lionel Cockayne, Harvey Thornton, James Hutchings and Bob McCulloch.

I would now like to turn to specific activities over the past 12 months from my perspective as Chairman. As ever and especially this year, the opportunity for me to thank all those members, volunteers and staff who have contributed to our ongoing success, is a great pleasure. The agenda items included for today's AGM will provide more specific details in a number of these areas and I will leave it to those better informed than I to provide the detail.

In September 2021 we were looking forward to a new beginning and to building on the platform that we had created in the previous one and a half seasons under the Covid cloud. Unfortunately, our Club Steward, who joined the Club at the start of the pandemic, handed in his notice after the first full weekend of Rugby activity and we found ourselves without the leadership to manage the operational activities that are essential to providing the services required across all sections of the club. As you will have observed and experienced over the past 12 months, this hiccup in September 2021 did not derail our organisation, quite the opposite. Thanks to the excellent support from members and volunteers alike, we have been successful in delivering quality services to our membership, with minimal impact. I would specifically like to highlight here the efforts of Aimee Cartwright and my wife Colette, who during the initial weeks in September took on the challenge presented and rolled up their sleeves, and to Rick 'Rock' Condo for agreeing to return to take on the role of Club Steward, for as long as necessary. In the early part of the season, Aimee recruited a number of new members of staff and trained them to create a core service team. Thank you to all members of this team for their commitment and hard work – the impact of Covid on the hospitality sector made recruitment of the skills that we needed very difficult but not impossible. I hope our young team can develop their skills and experience at Lymm Rugby Club over the coming years for the benefit of the club and for themselves.

I would also like to formally thank the Mums and Dads of the M&J section for their support on a Sunday morning to cook and serve bacon butties and hot drinks from the Half-way House. Spreading the volunteer support across the various age groups throughout the season minimised the impact on "the few", whilst creating a really effective service to members and visitors alike.

The loss of our steward at the start of the season was totally unexpected and the number of suitable candidates available within the hospitality sector at that time was surprisingly lower than expected. What we initially thought would be a short recruitment process, was not. In this process we were supported on a volunteer basis by a local recruitment specialist, Richard Bailey, who is based in the village centre. Thank you, Richard! Richard provided experience and access to various recruitment databases and through his support we were able to secure the services of Alan Troy as our new Club Manager. Alan brings with him a significant level of experience, a passion for hospitality, a desire to take Lymm RFC into our new future and a drive for quality. Welcome Alan, I look forward to seeing your passion and aspirations deliver change and positive progress over the coming years.

As ever, a huge thank you to our Executive Committee who have once again made the role of being Chairman easier. We have had 1 change in role on the Exec over the past year, that of Chairman of Touch, with Jonny Cartwright stepping down and Matt Cawley taking the reins for the section. Welcome Matt, Touch Rugby continues to grow and develop and I hope we will see further growth in player numbers for this format of rugby over the coming years. Thank you to Jonny for your commitment in developing and Chairing our Touch section over the years.

All members of the Executive take on a significant amount of work to ensure their specific responsibilities are delivered to the highest possible level – thank you one and all!

As a Club, we are blessed with members who are prepared to offer their time as general volunteers and in specific roles, such as those evident in the exec. However, we always need more volunteers, but we don't always know exactly what new roles may be needed. So, my request to all our members is, if you think you have a skill or experience that could benefit our club, please do put your hand up and let the members of the Executive know. If we identify specific areas where we are seeking additional volunteers we will advertise for your support – keep your eyes open and help to create our future.

At last year's AGM we were looking forward to the possibility of some of our traditional 'big' events coming back as a reality. Much to the relief of both cast and guests we were able to host our 2021 Panto – 'Aladdin Lymm'. A huge

thank you to the Panto Cast and support team for their sterling efforts. With a much-reduced audience of 96, in a Covid safe configuration, we delivered 9 shows over 3 weekends. The 2021 Panto created a £20k income stream through ticket sales, plus a much need boost of income from the Bar. Well done to everyone involved.

Unfortunately, the Marquee events for 2022 have not materialised, hopefully they will do in 2023. As an alternative, we will be undertaking 2 events during the summer months within the club house. These include a 'Ladies Lunch – in the evening' event on 1st July, and a 3-night Vaudeville run on the 21st to 23rd July to replace our normal marquee-based activities. Details of both events are posted on the website and social media.

Once again a huge thank you to all our Old Forkers for their continued effort in maintaining the pitches and keeping the grass, plants, weeds and trees in check. Their sterling effort ensures that the sports played on our outdoor surfaces are played on the best quality surfaces. Feedback from all levels and age groups has been excellent throughout the season.

Thank you to all our sponsors who have continued to support the club. Sponsorship is a critical income stream that benefits both the Club and the Sponsor. As we progress out of the pandemic this aspect of our commercial operations will become even more important. If you are minded to or know of other people or companies who would like to become a sponsor of our club, please do let one of the exec members know. For the 2021/22 season, a huge thank you to Tony Burgess for his generosity and to Challenge-TRG for theirs. Challenge-TRG have committed to being our main sponsor for 2 more years.

As ever, and as mentioned a number of times above, a huge thank you to all our volunteers who give up their time to support and manage the club. Individually this group is too numerous to mention but you are a fantastic group of people, please continue to support our club in the way that you do.

With the easing of restrictions, season 2021/22 has seen a return to a more normal environment for all our sports sections. On behalf of the executive and wider membership, I would like to say a huge thank you to all players, coaches and their supporters, parents, partners and siblings for helping to maintain one of the primary reasons for our club to exist – the playing of sport. Representatives from each section will provide more details on their sport later in the agenda.

Thank you to our non-playing membership; Honorary's, Life-members, VP's, social members and all our partner members, including all wives and partners, girl and boy friends of all players/volunteers. Thank you for your continued support off the pitch. Our overall membership continues to maintain a strong level of over 1000 members across all categories and this excludes the M&J children participants. The willingness for members to continue to pay their subscriptions pays testament to their commitment to our club – Thank You!

As we discussed at last year's AGM, Covid-19 slowed down our new club house development activities and for many reasons, this has continued throughout the past year. However, progress has been made and David Simpson will provide an update which will set out our future plans and timescale and give some context to the impact that Covid-19 has had on those plans. At this point, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Dave Simpson, Dave Newton and Pete Ratcliffe for their continued support of the development project.

Our Vision and ambition to see a sustainable multi-sports club here at Beechwood, a club that is at the very centre of our community and that is seen as a key contributor to the development of multiple sports and other community related activities on a long-term basis, has not changed as a result of Covid-19 and is as strong as ever.

As you will be aware I have decided not to stand for re-election as Chairman this year, which I will admit was not an easy decision on my part. Having served on the club executive for more than 17 years in total; firstly for 2 years in the 90's as club secretary and more recently for 15 years since 2008, as Treasurer and Chairman, I have decided it is time for me to take a step back from the front-line operational activities of the club and give other committed club members the opportunity to bring their experience, ideas and commitment to driving the club forwards.

I am extremely proud of what we have achieved over the past 15+ years and the opportunity that I have had to play a part in that achievement. I have been associated with Lymm Rugby Club for more than 47 years as a player at all levels, as a volunteer committed to driving success and more recently as the Club Chairman. Throughout this period some of the, off field, achievements that stand out for me are;

- The implementation of a state-of-the-art flood light system on our main rugby pitch
- Transition from a club with one main grass pitch to a club with 3 senior level pitches and 2 junior level pitches, all within a single boundary

- The implementation of a phased development plan capable of creating a sustainable future for Rugby and other sports at Beechwood
- The implementation of a state-of-the-art AGP in conjunction with the RFU
- Participation in our Annual Panto over a 15-year period
- Participation in the initiation and growth of our “Summer Marquee” events as a funding stream for our development programme.

On the pitch I am very proud of the achievements of our playing activities, whatever the sport and at whatever level. With regards to Rugby we have achieved a huge amount over the past 15 years and have stuck to our primary ethos of being a professional club that “does not” pay its players – I personally hope that this continues in to the future and we continue to provide an effective platform for young players from Lymm and the surrounding community to achieve their potential within our club and also at higher levels where their skills dictate. Based on our achievements to date there is no reason why this will not happen.

Over the past 12 months I have seen the start of the rugby experience for another generation of Cartwrights, with my Grandson Jack and his younger brother James enjoying themselves in the walled Garden on a Sunday morning, under the guidance of my son Jonny as one of their committed coaches – happy memories and another generation begins the rugby cycle.

Finally, it would be wrong of me not thank my wife Colette and all my family for their support and patience over this extended period – without their support I would not have been able to undertake my role as Chairman of Lymm Rugby Club – it has been a privilege!

The President, Neil Kelly, commended the Chairman for his fantastic service to the Club especially in respect of the difficult circumstances presented over the past couple of years with the pandemic and the situation where the Club as left with no Bar Manager. This is was wholeheartedly supported by the meeting and in recognition of his efforts the President presented the Chairman with a Club blazer.

Treasurer’s Report - Andy Leach

Fellow members and friends, it gives me great pleasure to present my third Treasurer’s report since taking over the role at the 2019 AGM. I have divided my report under a number of headings which I hope make sense and provided a useful structure.

Corporate structure

It’s probably worthwhile setting out the present structure of our club, which is as follows:

Lymm RFC Limited (“LRL”)

- A company limited by guarantee where each member’s liability is limited to £1.
- A charity registered with the Charities Commission.
- Has a Board of Directors currently comprising: Executive Officers - John Cartwright (Chairman), Andy Leach (Treasurer) and Rick Johnson (Secretary); and 3 non-executive Directors – Tony Wright, Mal Pritchard and David Simpson.
- Undertakes all our rugby related activities and owns all our land and buildings, except for the Manor Road Tennis Club (MRTC) site (see Lymm Garden Limited below).
- Has two wholly owned subsidiaries – Lymm Beechwood Limited and Lymm Garden Limited.

Lymm Beechwood Limited (“LBL”)

- A limited company, wholly owned by LRL.
- Has a Board of Directors currently comprising John Cartwright and Andy Leach.
- Undertakes all our commercial activities, such as managing the bar and organising fund-raising events, including the panto and marquee events.
- Each year, any surplus created by LBL is donated to LRL, thus avoiding any unnecessary and avoidable tax leakage.

Lymm Garden Limited (“LGL”)

- A limited company, wholly owned by LRL.
- Has a Board of Directors currently comprising John Cartwright, David Simpson, Peter Radcliffe and Andy Leach.
- Was dormant until August 2020 when it acquired the MRTC site.
- Was established as a potential means to realise property under the development programme in a tax efficient manner.

One of the consequences of this structure is that it, effectively, splits the club’s financial performance across three different legal entities, making it difficult for the casual observer to really appreciate the full picture. This is addressed further below.

Results to 30 June 2021

The annual accounts for LRL, a copy of which is attached to this report – together with the accounts for LBL and LGL - were approved by the Directors on 17 March 2022 and were filed at Companies House and with the Charities Commission before their respective deadlines of 31 March 2022 and 30 April 2022, and the relevant tax returns with HMRC before its filing deadline of 31 March 2022.

As can be seen from the accounts of LRL, the surplus for the year to 30 June 2021 was £106,027. As is often the case these days, the accounts are difficult for third parties to interpret, something which is magnified in the case of LRL as our accounts are required to follow a specific Charities Act format, which is more designed for organisations of a different shape. This is further complicated as we choose not to prepare accounts (and incur the associated cost) which consolidated the performance of LRL with its two subsidiaries, LBL and LGL. In order to get a true picture of our overall financial performance, it is necessary to aggregate the accounts of LRL with those of LBL and LGL. The effect of this on the income statement is shown below.

	2021	2020	2019	2018
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Donations	31	59	23	31
Subs	61	86	77	75
Sponsorship	2	22	21	23
Bar surplus	2	52	28	46
Panto surplus	0	33	27	23
Summer events surplus	0	0	34	24
Grants	79	0	0	0
Crowdfunding	15	0	0	0
AGP income	13	13	0	0
Storage/parking	20	0	0	0
Other income net of other direct costs	23	(8)	(51)	(31)
Gross profit	246	257	159	191
VAT partial exemption	5	(3)	(8)	8
Establishment costs	(26)	(36)	(36)	(30)
Playing costs	(10)	(57)	(53)	(47)
Grounds costs	(9)	(15)	(17)	(9)
Lease and repair costs	(9)	(5)	(8)	(11)
Salaries	(36)	(42)	(19)	(19)
Accountancy and legal	(12)	(4)	(12)	(5)
Miscellaneous	(5)	(8)	(7)	(1)
Donations made	0	0	(6)	(7)
Finance costs	(18)	(25)	(23)	(25)
Depreciation	(20)	(21)	(6)	(8)
Total costs	(140)	(216)	(195)	(154)
Surplus/(deficit)	106	41	(36)	37

By comparing the 2022 financial performance with prior years, the impact on the shape of the Club’s traditional revenue streams and cost base of the Covid pandemic and related lockdowns can be clearly seen. In particular, it is worth highlighting that:

- With both the 2020 Panto and the 2021 Summer events being Covid casualties, no surplus was generated from these important fund-raising events which have sustained the Club for many years. In a “normal” year, these two events would have been expected to contribute a combined surplus exceeding £50k.
- The bar surplus (£52k in 2021) was almost eliminated entirely. As you will recall, we were only able to utilise our social facilities for a relatively short period and often at reduced capacity. This, combined with an understandable reticence of members to venture out as the pandemic remained a considerable threat to public health, reduced our bar sales in the year to £19k – from £94k the previous year and £112k in the last complete ‘normal’ year.
- Given the lack of activity on the pitch and socially, it will be no great surprise that sponsorship income – typically around £20k per annum – fell to almost nothing.
- In fact, the surplus from these 4 activities – sponsorship, bar, panto, summer events – which had averaged £111k over the previous 3 years, fell to £4k in 2020/21.
- In addition, membership subs reduced by £25k, mainly due to a decision we took to offer a reduced membership fee for M&Js given the severe disruption to their season and that no food was able to be provided.
- To compensate for the near elimination of these traditional revenue streams, we generated £20k of revenue by renting out our surplus land for caravan storage/parking.
- In addition, we received Covid related grants from central and local government and the RFU totalling £79k. Of this, £11k related to the Job Retention Scheme (JRS - furlough scheme), which we were only able to claim from October 2020 to May 2021. A further £15k was raised through our ‘Your Club needs You’ crowdfunding project. Clearly, without this support we would have been in an altogether more challenging financial position.
- Most categories of costs reflect the lower levels of activity and a range of savings that were made to conserve cash. Playing and grounds costs were considerably lower than normal, whilst establishment costs benefitted from lower utilisation and the government’s universal Council Tax holiday. Salaries, net of the JRS, also fell by 40%.

Adopting a similar methodology, the aggregated balance sheet at 30 June 2021 was as follows:

	2021	2020	2019	2018
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fixed assets	1,594	1,561	1,501	1,487
Stock	5	5	7	24
Debtors	18	3	55	89
Cash	62	19	45	56
Creditors	(35)	(45)	(101)	(127)
	50	(18)	6	42
Borrowings	(564)	(571)	(576)	(562)
Net assets	1,080	972	931	967

Things to note here are:

- All but £89k of fixed assets relate to freehold land and buildings. As part of a valuation exercise completed for Handelsbanken in November 2020, Savills valued this land and buildings, including the MRTC site on Manor Road, at £2.85m. This valuation will be refreshed over the next few months.
- During the year, £47k was spent of costs associated with our Development Programme, including £37k relating to the purchase of MRTC and associated costs.
- Creditors and debtors are much lower than historically due to the cancellation of the marquee events which tended to run right up to our year-end. Included within creditors is an amount of £10k representing the amount members had pre-loaded their loyalty cards.
- Borrowings comprise a £16k interest free loan from the Rugby Football Foundation (dating back to their support for our 2006 land acquisition comprising pitches 2 to 5), which is being repaid at the rate of £7k per annum which will be fully repaid by December 2023, and a £548k loan from Handelsbanken.
- Our relationship with Handelsbanken remains very positive. Throughout the pandemic we have kept them well informed of our financial position and the actions we have taken to manage our finances within our means. On

more than one occasion they have said how impressed they are with our financial management and control, reporting and forecasting. The Handelsbanken loan is interest only, at 2.75% over LIBOR, and was originally set to mature on 7 February 2022. However, given the confidence they have in us and the direction of travel of our development plans, supported by the valuation undertaken by Savills, they have agreed to extend this maturity date by a further 5 years to 7 February 2027 at which time, depending on the progress of the Development Programme, the expectation is that it will be either fully repaid or any balance converted into a longer-term amortising facility.

- In addition to this loan with Handelsbanken, we have a £75k overdraft facility in place which has only ever been used sparingly to help manage short term cash flow.

Year to June 2022

The current financial year has seen a welcomed, if staggered, return towards normality - not that things will ever probably be exactly as they were pre-Covid. In particular:

- We have enjoyed a full season of rugby at both senior and M&J/Colts level;
- Socialising in the clubhouse recommenced, albeit there has been some lingering Covid impact with members, generally, being understandably more cautious about when they socialise and for how long. Generally, whilst social revenues have been building over this period, they are still some way below those experienced pre-Covid.
- The Panto returned, albeit to a reduced audience to allow a Covid-safe environment to be created, making a welcomed contribution to our revenues.
- Once more, the summer Marquee events were cancelled, meaning that a vital revenue stream will again be missing from our 2021/22 finances. On the positive side, the current view of our major corporate “tenant” is that, all things being equal, they would like to reinstate their events in 2023.

Against this background, we have once again seen our cash flows revert to the historic cycle of strong inflow in the August to December period as rugby membership fees are collected, sporting and related social activity peaks and the Panto surplus is generated. This is followed by a sustained period of cash outflow. Since 2011 we had addressed this issue through the surplus generated from the summer Marquee events. With the absence of this surplus for, at least, a further 12 months our cash flows will continue to be carefully monitored and managed. One positive development which will help us manage our historic seasonal cyclicity is, following the MRTC acquisition, the establishment of our Tennis section, where the traditional membership year starts in April, provides an excellent balance for the typical timing of rugby membership income.

In my report last year, I noted that we had been awarded a £45k loan by the RFU under their “Winter Survival Fund” which was designed to help clubs fund investment in grounds and clubhouse improvements that would assist in the return from Covid. I’m afraid that nearly 12 months on, we have yet to receive this funding – the delay being, in my view, the inevitable challenge with accessing Government funded schemes with both the RFU and us having to navigate through layers of process and red tape. I am, however, hopeful that we are now close to concluding this and that the funds will be with us shortly – ideally before our year end. As we have already completed about half of the projects that this funding was intended to cover, this would be especially welcome.

On the subject of future funding, Handelsbanken have, in principle, agreed to advance a further £100k, to fund potential enabling works related to our Development Programme and we are finalising a £250k loan from the LTA to cover the build costs of 4 new tennis courts in the walled garden – more about this in the report on the status of our Development Programme.

Other matters

I’d like to acknowledge the tremendous support that I have had from Kate Yeomans over the past 12 months. We are both looking forward to working with Alan, our new Club Manager, to ensure that we are in as strong a position as possible as we continue to rebuild our revenues and further secure our finances over the next 12 months.

Finally, thanks to the hard work and support of my fellow Directors, Executive Committee members and our wider membership I am confident that we will continue in a healthy financial position going forward and have tremendous opportunities to ensure that our club remains at the heart of our community for generations to come.

In response to a question from Paul Maguire about the likelihood of getting money from the Covid related insurance claim, the Treasurer, gave the view he does not think there is much chance of success.

Senior Rugby Report - Adam Fletcher

What an amazing season. Once again I would like to thank the committee for all the support they have given me and the squad throughout the season. Thanks also to Pete Millachip and Olly Brown for running the 2nd and 3rd XV's.

Also I must extend a thanks to Rick Condo and Aimee Cartwright for looking after the players on a match day, Neil Borthwick for running touch, Paul Rigby for his match day support, all the match report scribes and last but not least Chris Askew and his team for looking after the pitches.

Andy Leach and Jordan Widdrington have made my job of reporting a little easier by putting together a brilliant record of the season. I will pull out a few of the standout statistics:

- 5th place league finish – Lymm's 3rd best in 11 seasons
- 86 League points – 2nd best; best was 88
- 17 wins – equal best
- 18 bonus points – most ever
- 15 try bonus points – most ever
- 829 points scored – most ever; next best was 691
- 523 points conceded – 4th best
- +286 points difference – 2nd best; best was +309
- 119 tries scored – most ever; next was 92.
- 22 penalties scored – least ever
- 52 players used – most ever; next was 46

Looking forward to next season, as many of you know we have had a couple of notable retirements in the Bray brothers. I think you will agree that they have played more than a significant part in our success over the past 10 seasons or so. It won't be the last we will see if Tom as he is stepping into a coaching role, leading the Colts Academy sessions and will also lead on our defence and breakdown at a senior level.

Unfortunately, we are losing Curtis Langdon from the coaching staff after 3 seasons. Again you will agree he has worked wonders with our pack and has transformed our set piece. We wish Curtis all the best with his move to Worcester. I can gladly say we have moved quickly to replace Curtis and can announce Gavin Woods as our forwards coach for the 2022-23 season. Gav will be combining the role with playing.

The 2nd and 3rd XV's have had successful seasons finishing in the top half of their respective leagues. A huge achievement considering the pedigree of the other clubs in those leagues. Pete and Olly have done fantastic work on getting competitive teams out each week. They put so much time and effort in to this. We would be lost without volunteers like this. Covid-19 has impacted a lot of clubs in the northwest below 1st team level with Macclesfield being a prime example of this. So I really just want to reiterate the fine work Pete and Olly do.

I would just like to finish with a huge thank you to Guy Larkin and Les Lang for all their hard work over the years in producing a group of young men the Club should be really proud of. Guy's commitment to his team not just on the rugby front but in making them better people is a model we should really learn from. Guy must have been super proud to have the 5 colts play for the 2nd XV at Burnage in the last game of the season.

Malcolm Pritchard pointed out that each week there have been on average 14 of 18 1st team players that have come through the M&J section which is a highly enviable position for the Club to be in.

Mini & Juniors Rugby Section Report - Will Hind

Membership and contribution from Minis and Juniors (M&J) is growing and strong:

- Players (5-18 years old) - 382
- Social members (parents) - 476

Covid-19 continued to cause disruption where the number of disciplinary sessions was higher than usual. However despite no team success we have had some honours from the Academy:

- Senior Colts - 5 Cheshire, 3 North of England triallists, 2 in Sale Academy and 1 Full England triallist

- Junior Colts and U16 - 6 Cheshire, 8 in Sale Academy and 4 U16 also in scholarship with Rugby League clubs

From the Colts we have so far had 6 play in the senior side and will continue to work on that. The Academy continues to offer a great balanced coaching opportunity and will this coming year have a large U16 squad and a decent Senior Colts squad that will be supported by the players who should have been in Junior Colts (the current U16) as the impact of Covid-19 has left them with insufficient numbers. The Academy will be supported by coaching from Tom Bray and Jonny Cartwright as one of the identified needs about progression to adult rugby is the continued discouragement of parental involvement. This also means we will establish good links with the senior squad for the future especially on Tuesday nights.

Typically the U11 to U15 also train midweek and the biggest issue we face there is around getting space on the AGP once floodlights are needed – essentially this means 5 teams into a very limited time on Thursdays unless we pay for more AGP time.

We are encouraging all coaches to undertake as many courses as possible but the Safeguarding and Introductory courses are all obligatory from U10. Regarding safeguarding:

1. DBS approval is at an all time high of 90% with 5% in training (including new coaches for next years U5s).
2. Safeguarding course is the next focus as this is compulsory from next season. There is a 70% completion to date.
3. No major Safeguarding issues to report. Most coaches are asking for help if needed.

Thanks go to John Case for his work on GMS, which is outstanding, and the website, to Ralph Tucker for his continued diligence in Safeguarding, to Jonathan Cartwright for social media support on the M&Js, and an extremely special thanks goes to Paul Wardle who is stepping down as the M&J Fixture Secretary as well as AGP co-ordinator and pitch allocations chief, and will be greatly missed. In particular, we are looking for someone to do AGP coordination across the Club. Final thanks go to all the Age Grade coaches and especially those who have reached the end of their journey with M&Js as outgoing Senior Colts coaches - Guy Larkin, Les Lang and Ian Greenwood

Squash Section - Brian Holliday

[Report delivered by Brian Holliday on behalf of Squash Section Chair, Richard Membery.]

It's 2022 and excellent to be back together, both here in this vibrant Clubhouse and for the Squash Section to be back on court without playing bubbles or the wearing of masks on the balcony but I am happy to report that we saw great compliance and patience exhibited through the Covid-19 pandemic period and very much welcome this return to relative normality we're experiencing now.

Perhaps I could start by extending our thanks to the Club and its Executive for the ongoing support we receive on shared use of the premises and facilities as well as the support we receive for membership administration and accounting which enables so many of us to play Squash (some of us could be better), build and maintain long-standing friendships through our shared passion for exercise, competition and hitting small black rubber balls around our two feature rich courts here at Lymm.

We have seen improved membership numbers, 62 presently, all paying by direct debit and a growing Junior Academy section. I am happy to report also, improved player member and player engagement with the club as well as the re-introduction of female players on club nights as well as County matches. This has translated into active club nights on Sundays and Tuesdays as well as excellent participation in the North West Counties Squash League matches on a Thursday night.

How did we do? Team league finishing positions for the winter league:

- Lymm 1 played in Div 4 (with possible end of season uplift to Div 3) but finished 2nd thanks to captaincy of Peter Assad and Darren McCann. The team finished sandwiched between The Northern 6 and Grove Park with an impressive 18 wins out of 22 team matches.
- Lymm 2 played in Div 5 and finished in 10th place, with thanks to captain Mike Matthews who was supported by 21 players in all who showed up and played home and away, contributing to an equally fun and frustrating season with 10 wins in 25 games. The team finished behind Grove Park 6.

Positively, we have growing expectation of juniors coming through to play competitive Squash next season.

We are delighted to be part of the long-term plans for the Club, and appreciate the building plan update received here this evening and hope to continue dialogue relating to new court plans to allow for a view area available for County/Masters competitions.

But most importantly, perhaps I could extend our most sincere thanks to John Cartwright for the support and assistance he has given the Squash Section in his extensive time as Chairman. Along with Rick Condo who has spent many a late Tuesday and Thursday evening here with us over the over the years in the bar, but both Rick and John have never hesitated to lend a hand. Thank you.

Thanks are extended also to Darren McCann (who led the Junior Academy), Peter Assad (1st team captain), Mike Matthews (2nd team captain), Axal Layton (Membership Secretary) and Andy Currie (court maintenance). What you can hopefully see is the outcome of a real team effort to improve the facilities we have and build a Squash section for the future with great participation in activities such as the improved balcony and roof / heater repairs.

Next week will be our end of season do before we face the summer leagues – an evening of social squash and a curry – with a little celebrating too.

Tennis Section - Yvonne Halford

The 2021 summer season attracted 63 members (43 adults, 10 junior girls and 10 junior boys). Coaching was provided by Martin Gleave for 5 adults, 11 junior girls and 17 junior boys.

During the 2021 season, Manor Road Tennis Club (MRTC) competed in the Warrington & District Tennis League. The Ladies team came joint top of their Division with 10 wins and 2 losses, the Mens 1st team came third with 7 wins, 2 draws and 5 defeats, the 2nd team finished 5th winning 5, drawing one and losing 7, partly due to struggling for players some weeks. The Mixed 1st team won their Division with a 100% record, the 2nd team came 5th, with 2 wins, a draw and 3 defeats.

The 2021 MRTC AGM took place in November. The following were the principal outcomes:

- The club made a profit of approximately £4,600 for the 20/21 year, ending 30th September.
- Subscriptions for 2022 season were mostly left unchanged.
- Increased Coaching plans for 2022 were announced, to be supported by an Open Day and local school Road Show early in the season (now postponed until next season to coincide with the new courts).
- All Officer and Committee posts were renewed except for Julie Freeman becoming Welfare Officer and Ralph Chambers, who is finally stepping down at the age of 90. Ladies, Mens and Mixed captains remain the same too.
- Two Mens, one Ladies (subsequently increased to two) and two Mixed teams to be entered in the Warrington & District League for the 2022 season.
- New members will be made more welcome by sending a friendly WhatsApp message from the Secretary.

The 2022 Tennis season, which is confidently expected to be the last played at Manor Road, is now well underway. Social Tennis sessions take place on Monday evenings and Saturday afternoons. Existing and new members are welcome to attend. Coaching will be commencing for adults and juniors this month. See website for details.

The Warrington & District League started last month. Unfortunately, all our 4 teams have struggled in the first month of matches, partly due to unavailability of players. We are keen to recruit league standard players for Ladies and Mens teams, as well as other players of all standards, ages and gender and especially new recruits to the game not necessarily players who are already members of existing clubs.. Anyone interested in joining should follow this link: Manor Road Tennis Club / Membership (lta.org.uk) which can be found on the LRC website. The MRTC Facebook page and website have been updated to encourage last year's members to renew and invite others to join.

All existing members received an email inviting them to renew their membership, using the MRTC ClubSpark website (see above link). 10 family (with 2 Adults and 2 Juniors), 27 Adults, 4 Country (> 15 miles) and 9 Juniors have so far joined in 2022. Therefore, we have already exceeded last season's membership.

Our plans for 2023 membership fees, with the new courts installed in the Walled Garden at Beechwood, include a loyalty discount for all 2022 members. All LRC members are asked to please promote Tennis to friends, families and anyone else who might be interested to join at this year's rates, which have remained unchanged for several years.

In addition, any Ukrainian families now residing in the area are offered free membership for this season.

Hockey Club - Julie Antonelli

The Hockey Club has managed a full season of fixtures and is delighted to be back playing after the interruption of the pandemic. It has been a decent season for the Club with a 4th Mens team being introduced. This is formed largely by young players supplemented by a few adults and it has done really well. There are also 4 Ladies teams as well as a buoyant Junior section of players of Secondary school age. The U10s and U8s have suffered a little to get back to the same level of members and as a result there will be a recruitment drive with local Primary schools next year to bring in new players.

The Ladies team narrowly missed promotion after their success in the National Plate competition last season and all other teams have retained their places in their respective leagues.

The Club has enjoyed coming back to the Rugby Club for teas and thanks go out to Rick Condo who has always made people welcome and made it easy to transition back after the pandemic. For the first time in a number of years, the Hockey Club will hold its annual Awards Ceremony at the Club this weekend.

The Hockey Club is considering offering post-match teas to home teams as well as away teams next season. This is to encourage people back to socialising and playing and it should generate additional bar sales for the Rugby Club.

The Hockey Club is grateful to the support given to it by the Rugby in helping get it back on the pitch. Finally, Julie thanked John Cartwright for this support as Chairman.

Club Development - David Simpson

The consent for development on the Beechwood site has major complications in respect of having to demonstrate special circumstances to build residential properties in the Green Belt. We managed to convince Warrington Borough council (WBC) but they have been very prescriptive in what we can do and in what order. Their main fear is that we build and sell the houses and the money never gets re-invested into the new Clubhouse. The consent provides for the following in 5 ordered phases:

- Phase 1 - AGP, 180 space car park and coach parking.
- Phase 2 - 10 houses (in the car park and behind the existing Clubhouse)
- Phase 3 - New Clubhouse
- Phase 4 - 4 dwellings (in the existing Clubhouse)
- Phase 5 - 4 floodlit Tennis courts

Phase 1 is completed but, with the arrangements we have made with MRTC, we now want to build the 4 floodlit Tennis courts in the Walled Garden next because this will allow us to release money from the development of the site in Manor Road to help fund the project.

There is a 1.5m slope on the Walled Garden so a number of retaining walls will need to be built. These are being specified to include the possible construction of a concrete beam to provide for a dome to allow indoor winter Tennis. This will be dealt with under an entirely separate business case by the Board but in the event it is built there will be members' Tennis from April to the end of September and from October to March it will become a Pay-and-Play facility. Putting the concrete beam in at this stage future-proofs the project and brings the opportunity for high-grade competition. The main wall of the Wall Garden will stay but the northern wall will need to come down by about 1m. The Tennis courts and houses behind the existing Clubhouse will not be on same level so there is structural survey and design work to do.

In terms of the new Clubhouse, we are looking to revise the design to make it more affordable but we need to stay within the constraints of the Planning consent notably it must be 2,390 square meters in size. Any deviation will mean the Club would have to go back for full planning approval which is both expensive and time consuming. We can include some terraced and covered areas within the square meterage so the building may be smaller inside than on the approved plan but still big enough for our use. Inclusion of the concrete beam for the Tennis courts means the Ground Floor of the Clubhouse will be smaller than originally planned but the upper floor will be bigger and cantilever over the wall bringing spectators closer to the pitch. The covered area will support a new Halfway House which will be in middle of the Clubhouse. WBC are supportive of this being a non-material change so we are pursuing this option.

When the phasing has been changed we will need to discharge all of the conditions that are pre-requisite for starting the Tennis, do all the surveys, design the courts, then go out to tender and appoint a contractor. With the movement

in building costs at the moment the Club does not know what the final costs will be but if all goes to plan we hope to go out to tender in June, appoint a contractor in August and complete the courts by February next year. This would allow us to close down the Manor Road site for re-development.

At the moment the bank has a charge over the building plots on the Beechwood site. Manor Road is unencumbered and our aim is to realise the value in Manor Road sooner rather than later to put that money into the Clubhouse project. We are also having the Beechwood site re-valued to allow us to release the land for the houses in the car park which we believe would give us sufficient money to build a Clubhouse we would be happy with. We can then develop the remainder of the site and use the funds to complete anything that has not been already done. In the same way we cannot develop the existing Clubhouse until we have a new one to move into, we cannot develop the Manor Road site until the new Tennis courts are up and running. The Tennis part of the project is a no brainer given what we paid for the land and its value now it has planning for 4 houses. It also doesn't compromise any of the new build and it brings a new income stream.

Hopefully property prices will continue going up so our position becomes more favourable. If we can get all the value from all the component parts we will have enough for what we want. There are potential pitfalls and the Board will not approve going ahead until it is completely confident we can finish it and leave us in good health financially.

Will Hind asked whether we are confident of breaking ground in the Walled Garden this summer as this impacts M&J rugby. David responded that we have to get the bank to release their security over the Walled Garden, which they've agreed to do, and then give the LTA a charge over the Walled Garden so they can release the £250k they have already approved. A year or so ago that would have been enough to complete the courts but we now may have to make some cost savings. If the tenders come in at the prices we hope then we will start. If they come in at £500k then all bets are off. Once we have the direction of travel we will do the groundworks and get the soil out of the Walled Garden before the start of the season.

Pete Millachip raised some concern about car parking space for Sunday mornings. David explained that before setting off with the AGP works we had less than 180 spaces. There is a decision to make on caravan parking, which would free up some space, and when we stop getting the money for that. It was agreed it would be prudent to survey the number of cars coming on a Sunday although we have no additional room we can make available. The AGP allows the staggering of start times for M&J age groups which might help the issue as would marking out parking spaces. In response to a question from Adam Halford, David confirmed the 2 coach parking spaces are in addition to 180 car parking spaces.

Election of Officers/Directors

The following appointments were confirmed at the meeting:

Chairman - David Simpson, proposed by Andy Leach, seconded by Rick Johnson

Treasurer - Andy Leach, proposed by Steve Ashall, seconded by Mark Hesketh

Secretary - Rick Johnson, proposed by Andy Leach, seconded by Rick Johnson

President - Neil Kelly will serve another year as President to help with succession planning to allow Varun Maharaj to become President-Elect to take up the Presidency in 2023.

The new Chairman said he is delighted and honoured to take on the role. He will work with John Cartwright to facilitate a smooth handover. He sees the task as helping the club transition from where we are today into the new Clubhouse. We need to start pretending we are already there. It will involve new roles and different roles. One thing he is keen to do is get some more new faces in positions of authority and not be in a position where people are resigning because of the burden of doing the work. It will also mean getting more people involved so that when we move to the new Clubhouse it is done in a collaborative way rather than have people feel it is being done to them. That is his ambition.

Any Other Business

No further items were raised.

Rick Johnson
Secretary, Lymm RFC