



# 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 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

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Present:	<b>President:</b>	Norman Gifford
	<b>Chairman of the Board:</b>	Fanos Hira
	<b>Vice Chairman:</b>	Paul Pridgeon
	<b>Chief Executive:</b>	Matt Rawnsley
	<b>Head Coach:</b>	Kevin Sharp
	<b>Captain:</b>	Joe Leach
	<b>Finance Manager:</b>	Sarah Gluyas

Together with 135 members

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The Chairman warmly welcomed members to the Annual General Meeting of the Club and informed everyone that the meeting would be conducted according to Charles Russell Speechley's Guide to AGMs, which is effectively industry best practice. He went on to confirm that he, as Chairman of the Board, would take the chair for the main body of business to be conducted and that he or the Vice Chairman would be proposing on behalf of the Board, all the resolutions appearing on the order paper. Therefore these resolutions do not need to be formally seconded, merely a straight vote (for or against) from the members of the club.

The Chairman 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 and in particular those that had been brought to the attention of the club; Roy Booth, Tracey D'Oliveira, Derek Russell, Rodney Cass, Terry Birt and Ron Fletcher.

He then moved on to the formal agenda of the meeting and confirmed that the purpose of this meeting was quite specifically to discuss the points as mentioned in the 2018 Annual Report – for clarification we did not receive any proposed resolution for this AGM by members (per rule 27.5) nor any other notice of other substantive business in time to be raised per our constitution. Therefore we will be sticking quite rigidly to this AGM Annual Report you should have in front of you, sent to you if you requested it, or have hopefully seen on our website.

We will answer questions that you may have once Matt Rawnsley our CEO has finished his remarks at point 4 – before the formal approvals commence.



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## 1. Apologies for Absence

The Chairman confirmed that we had received apologies from David Exall, Mike Vockins, Jack Randall, Pat Fletcher and Roe Jackson. He asked if there were any others from the floor. These were Yvonne Seward, Mike & Ann Gilhooly, and Mr & Mrs David Turner.

## 2. Confirmation of Minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018

The Chairman explained that it is customary for the Minutes to be taken as read and went on to say:

The signed Minutes for the last AGM held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018 have been approved by the Board and have been approved some time ago and have been published on our website in their current form from 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018, they have also been available at Club offices and also immediately prior to the start of this Meeting.

He asked for the Meeting's approval to sign the Minutes as a correct record of the previous AGM.

All approved – none against - Unanimous

## 3. President's Departing Address

The Chairman took the opportunity to inform the membership that our constitution overwhelming supported by our membership (by 95% of eligible votes) has now formally been approved by the FCA. Many things in our constitution changed – and having spoken to many other Chairmen who haven't been through this process quite yet, this will be a huge relative advantage to us at WCCC in the coming years.

The Chairman went on to say that there was one thing that didn't change and that was the fact that the President can only stand for two years. He went on to thank Norman Gifford for his two years as President – an excellent one at that. "I've enjoyed getting to know Norman over the last two years as he sat on our board – not afraid to challenge thinking and a great ambassador for our club and the wider game. His involvement with WCCC extends to approaching 60 years – and long may it continue - thank you Norman for all you've done for the club."

After much applause the floor was taken by Norman Gifford.

He thanked everyone for the honour of representing WCCC as President, he confirmed that he was extremely proud, as the club means the world to him. Having been at the club for 61 years as player, captain and now as President. He talked about having a brilliant day at Edgbaston and how proud he was to have been at such a fantastic sporting occasion when the lads won the T20 Blast. He passed on his congratulations to all involved for what was one of the best days of his life.

He has spent a lot of time with the players and feels that the squad is very together now and could surprise us all this year. He ended by wishing them all Good Luck for the new season.



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## 4. CHAIRMAN SPEAKS TO ANNUAL REPORT:

- a) The Chairman thanked Norman then went on to confirm that it was time to receive and approve the Annual Report on behalf of the Board and the Statement of Accounts. He went on to say that he would go through his own report first, followed by Kevin Sharp reporting on Cricket, Sarah Gluyas reporting on Finance and CEO's remarks by Matt Rawnsley.

The Club has gone through considerable review and change of late – in virtually every area. A dynamic new coaching team was introduced in time for the start of the 2018 season, and Matt Rawnsley joined us as new CEO on 1st March 2018.

He went on to thank everyone - staff and players, as there has been significant change and it has been embraced by all. Things do have to change and we hope this will be a really exciting year.

Our members at our last AGM overwhelmingly approved (by 95%) our new constitution, adopted by the FCA, which greatly improved our governance with amongst many other things, the creation of a new Nominations Committee. This Committee (comprising of Supporters Association – Andrew Jenkins, Vice-Presidents – Dave Broughall and Board representation from Andrew Manning-Cox, alongside our CEO, Matt Rawnsley. This committee has been very busy of late.

The Nominations Committee and the Board recommends the appointment of Mr Cecil Duckworth CBE as our new President, as Norman Gifford MBE has reached the end of his maximum two-year term. Cecil for those in the County needs little introduction; a brilliant engineer and businessman, and a keen supporter of the community and sport, which extends well beyond the development of Worcester Warriors. Cecil has a strong association with WCCC – his efforts when John Elliot was Chairman (1998-2006), resulted in not only the signing of Glenn McGrath but also the development of the Basil D'Oliveira stand.

The Board also supported by the Nominations Committee recommends that Mr Gordon Lord should be re-appointed as an Elected Director. Gordon brings considerable necessary skills to our Board; he is a leading expert in coach development in multiple sports, not least Cricket. He has greatly assisted the Club over the last year as a Board Director.

The Nominations Committee also met with Mr David Baker who applied to become a Board member and recommended that he too should be appointed as an Elected Director. David has many years of experience in running customer focussed operations for Microsoft and his own independent consultancy.

In the coming year our focus will be on seeking additional Board representation in areas such as Marketing, Human Resources and Operations. Members with these specific skills are encouraged to apply to the Nominations Committee for Elected Board roles in December 2019.



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We recognise that the Board will be further boosted, where necessary by co-opted Board members per Rule 17.14. This process has begun with the Board supporting the co-opting of Emma Hallam in January 2019. Emma brings a wealth of experience to our Board, as Deputy Area Director for HSBC with current responsibilities for risk, people and business performance.

The Nominations Committee and the Board also recommended that I take over from Steve Taylor as new Chairman. I gladly accepted on 17th September 2018. Steve always planned to step down having given good notice of his intentions in October 2017. I must thank Steve, on behalf of the Board, for his efforts over the last four years where he has dealt with a number of challenges, some anticipated, some not so. We have come a long way under his period of Chairmanship – debt has fallen by £0.8m in the last four years, visibility of our business is as good as it has ever been and we of course, memorably, won a trophy.

One of the consequences of adopting best practise with our new constitution is that impressive Directors who have reached the maximum term of nine years are no longer eligible for re-election. It is no surprise to me, despite this that Tim Curtis, former player and our Vice Chairman selflessly voted for these changes to be implemented. Tim is hugely impressive on and off the pitch. He has greatly assisted the Club especially leading the Cricket Steering Group over the last year and we look forward to his continued club involvement.

I am really delighted that Paul Pridgeon agreed to be Vice Chairman and also to Chair the Cricket Steering Group. As a former player (involved in three Championship winning sides) and Coach at Shrewsbury School – Paul is an excellent source of cricket expertise for the Board. We are very lucky to have Paul on our Board. Thank you.

I am also really pleased that the Board unanimously recommended that Norman Gifford MBE be admitted as an Honorary Life Vice-President, and that Tim Curtis and Steve Taylor are appointed as Honorary Life Members.

## **A REVIEW OF 2018**

### **Cricket Performance:**

Our playing performances in 2018 indicate how unpredictable sport can be.

We started the season with a new coaching team – led by new Head Coach Kevin Sharp with the hiring of former players Alex Gidman and Alan Richardson providing support.

Whereas in 2017 we struggled to win a T20 game – in 2018 we thankfully couldn't stop winning. This culminated in winning the Vitality Blast having attended our first final on an historic and memorable night. We also narrowly lost to Kent in the last over of Semi-finals of the Royal London One-Day Cup at Blackfinch New Road.

In contrast our red ball performance was disappointingly not as good as our white ball cricket. Whilst at times it looked as though we were competing – and there were highlights (such as beating Yorkshire in Scarborough and Lancashire at home) on balance we simply weren't consistent enough and as a consequence we were relegated from Division One.



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Our aim in the coming year is to get promoted back to Division One and unlike in other years to then consistently stay in that league.

We have an expectation that we need to win things more regularly than in the past.

Everyone's focus is very much on improving the environment and culture here at WCCC.

We went through an extensive club review and changes in January 2018 that set expectations for all players and staff at WCCC. I think everyone has been empowered.

Our aim is not only to retain players (we are comfortable with the contractual positions for all our current players) but attract talent where necessary. Our focus will always be very much on developing our own players through our envied Academy and Pathway programs, but we will tweak where necessary (as with Wayne Parnell and Riki Wessels) to improve our competitiveness.

We are pleased to have re-signed our overseas players for 2019. We expect limited player movement for the coming seasons – the coaches and the Executive are happy they have sufficient talent to do well.

We have supported Jack Shantry's testimonial and also assisted Steve Magoffin with his coaching qualifications. This is deliberate. We want to send a clear message to those who have given good service that they are important parts of our club, even if they are no longer employees. Tim Curtis has agreed to kindly take the lead with reconnecting with former players at WCCC.

## **Relationship with our Governing Body:**

Our relationship with our governing body, the ECB, following a period of intense County dialogue, is strong and developing. Matt Rawnsley has spent considerable time and efforts making sure we are represented adequately not just in collaboration with Warwickshire for the new 100-ball competition but also on specific work streams focussed on player welfare and medical provision.

Since becoming Chairman in September 2018 I have held many individual meetings with key figures at the ECB. My early impression is supportive – I suspect the silent majority of other First Class Counties is a large one. This despite vocal protestations, press commentary and a very dysfunctional first Chairman's meeting I attended in September. The key premise to our support, of course, is that WCCC will be treated equitably and our interests are at least maintained, if not improved.

I have since represented WCCC on a separate ECB committee looking at Development Compensation Payments. The recommendations, whilst approved, have yet to be formally implemented, however it seems that our interests ought to be better protected going forward. At the very least there appears to be genuine recognition that those Counties who produce England players, as well as we do, ought to be properly remunerated through a compensation system should players move on. We would expect this to be implemented in time for the 2020 season.

Whilst the new 100-ball competition justifiably gets much media attention and deserved scrutiny, I personally believe it to be at best disproportionate and at worst greatly exaggerated. Not least because with a 69% increase in broadcasting rights between 2020-2024, there remains circa £450



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million more which can be invested in developing the game. That is many multiples more than the supposed financials of the new tournament.

I think this opportunity for the game and indeed WCCC is not as well known, as it should be. There is much that ECB can communicate (aside from developing Elite Teams) which will be seen as positive – not least substantial investment in making cricket accessible, engaging children and young people, transforming women's and girls' cricket and supporting communities. I presume that will be the focus of the ECB's attentions in 2019 onwards – it needs to be in my view.

## **Off Pitch Performance :**

In headline statutory terms the club once again made a net profit, despite higher taxation and additional new depreciation charges. However on an underlying basis profitability was predictably lower, reflecting substantially more planned Cricket expenditure in the year. The Board views the operational performance at WCCC as mixed with much still to focus on. Our membership trends disappointingly declined in the year — despite early encouraging comparisons at last year's AGM. Our CEO correctly recognised the need to improve marketing and promotion of the club by hiring Joe Tromans our new Marketing Manager. More than offsetting the decline in membership was the improvement in gate receipts, which reflected the T20 Vitality Blast quarter final against Gloucestershire on 25th August 2018, and the semi-final defeat against Kent on 17th June 2018.

Road developments outside our ground impacted car-park income. Despite this Catering has shown good improvements in gross margin and overall profitability in the year. There is scope for this to further improve as we improve utilisation and reduce losses in Foley's. The club learnt lessons from historic hosting of concerts.

The Club has made very substantial investments in facilities this year in part supported by generous and welcome donations from the Supporters' Association. Huge thanks to Andrew Jenkins, the Supporter's Association Chairman and the team.

The Board continues to focus on restructuring and cost reductions in the business, seeking additional income from assets and improving the return from its enviable facilities. Our primary purpose is to reduce debt and continue to invest more in cricket and members' facilities.

Our successful members' forums – introduced by Matt Rawnsley, will continue throughout the coming season. Accessibility and responsiveness are needed areas of focus.

## **Debt at WCCC**

Since the end of 2015 we have reduced debt at WCCC by £683k to £4.878m from £5.561m – despite substantial increases in cricket costs (£0.422m) and increases in Fixed Assets (£0.323m) in 2018 alone.

The financial clouds and burdens of the past appear to be lifting – debt reduction as previously reported has been the focus and we would expect that to occur in 2019 ahead of sharply increased payments from the ECB in 2020.



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To indicate how far we have now progressed, the narrative is very different as we look ahead. We are hopeful that within four years our debt will be more than halved. I am keen under my Chairmanship that we have sufficient flexibility and reserves to make sure we are never beholden to anyone.

I am comfortable, with strong financial discipline and scrutiny this can be achieved, despite significant anticipated increases in cricket expenditure. It is only when we are at this point of financial security we should consider Floodlights or Phase 3.

## **Our Expectations :**

As I mentioned at the Players' Awards in September, we are firmly of the view that we are not in any way constrained. We have shown what we can achieve as T20 finals winners and we have enviable emerging and established talent. We aim to compete in all forms of cricket and we must compete with anyone.

There has been a significant focus on our One Club foundations, successfully introduced by Matt Rawnsley. One Club is a set of values (Humility, Teamwork, Integrity, Commitment and Community), supported by a strong expectation of attitudes and behaviours that will drive Worcestershire Cricket forward. Everyone at our Club shares this message.

The environment feels very positive; everybody is empowered, listened to and has a voice. We focus alongside the PCA and ECB, on extensive education and development programs. We will be looking at training our staff to empower them further. We have improved overall support with the hiring of Rob Young as Chief Medical Officer and Camilla Henderson as the Club's psychologist. I know the players and indeed all employees will fulfil what is expected of them in the coming seasons.

In 2019 we as a Club will be operating more closely with the Tom Hill and the Cricket Board to make sure we do what is best for cricket participation and enjoyment as well as Elite Cricket in Worcestershire and the surrounding area. We are very excited about what we can do together and the opportunities that lie ahead.

Operationally in 2019 budgets have now been set for WCCC, which are predicated on improvements in every area. We recognise that there is still a lot to be done. The Executive has clear targets set by the Board to aim for both on and off the pitch. The club will invest even further in cricket and in other areas such as Marketing and Stadium, to make sure we improve all that we do for our members. While we accept there are undoubted challenges ahead, we are excited about the opportunities for the club in the coming years.

Finally he thanked everyone that is involved with the club especially our current board for their professionalism, commitment and help over the last year. It has been a challenging year with substantial change which we have had to manage.

## **b) CRICKET UPDATE – KEVIN SHARP**

15 months ago, although they didn't advertise it, the club were looking for a new coach and I wasn't expecting it to be me. I felt my own strength was in developing coaches and players, having a foot



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in both camps was where I felt comfortable. Having known the coaching staff here very well it was a very difficult time. We felt it needed a calming influence to steady the ship. I never threw my own hat into the bag I just hoped that we didn't get it wrong. The Cricket Steering Committee asked me to take the role on and as well as being surprised, I was a little concerned about dealing with contracts and money as I had never done that before. However, I was reassured that our new CEO, Matt Rawnsley would be taking care of this part of the role. I spoke to Joe Leach and he reassured me that he and the lads were very much behind that decision and would be more than happy for me to take the role. I knew there would be some very difficult decisions to make but I promised myself that I wouldn't dodge any decisions that needed to be made.

## **Specsavers County Championship**

It goes without saying that it was disappointing to be relegated from Division One. On a positive note it would be fair to say that for a good number of sessions we competed very well with the opposition and were not out of our depth for much of the campaign. This certainly proved to be the case as we went toe-to-toe with Surrey, the County Champions, on both occasions. Having said that, we were unable to seize key moments to drive home our advantage during a number of games when we had the opportunity which ultimately cost us a number of points. During the season we did drop a number of vital catches of key players in the close catching cordon at vital times, which I believe was one of our greatest downfalls. Our squad is becoming increasingly more experienced and mature as each season passes by, and I do believe that all these experiences will stand us in good stead to compete and consolidate in Division One Championship cricket in the near future.

## **Royal London One Day Cup**

This tournament was a real roller coaster ride in finishing only two balls away from a Lords final after a closely fought semi-final with Kent. The most pleasing thing for me is how we are now managing to get over the line regularly in the close finishes and how each individual is taking responsibility to win the game. Those players in their mid-twenties who have played a while now are beginning to come into their own, enabling match winning performances which can come from anyone in the team.

## **Vitality Blast**

Consistent performances from the whole squad allowed us to compete at Finals Day at Edgbaston for the first time in the club's history. Following a quarter final against Gloucestershire, where the tension was quite palpable due to the expectations following disappointments in recent years, the lads turned up at Edgbaston full of confidence and belief and justly got their rewards at the end of a very special day. A special mention should go to Moeen Ali who led the side with great composure and skill and ensured that the squad were in an excellent frame of mind to compete in the way we did. It is also important to recognise the input of Luke Wood and Andy Carter who both stepped in and played key roles in the squad in light of all the injuries we encountered.

## **Coaching and Support Staff**

I have been delighted in the way that both Alex Gidman and Alan Richardson have settled into the club. They have both relished their roles and have thrived on their responsibilities. They are both highly motivated, smart and strategic thinkers so, in light of this, I had no hesitation in



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recommending the changes to the coaching structure in the autumn. I am very content in the knowledge that we are making a move that will benefit all of us in both the short and long term. Elliott Wilson, Ryan D'Oliveira and Andy Sutton will benefit from more exposure to Second Eleven

cricket in 2019 which will enhance their experience. Ben Davies (Head of Sports Science and Medicine) and Ross Dewar (Strengthening and Conditioning Coach) continue to manage their duties in a very professional manner.

## Overseas Players

We have been blessed over the years to have had a number of excellent players and characters playing for the club and Callum Ferguson and Martin Guptill were no exception. Both players loved playing here. Not only with their team mates, but also as part of the healthy culture and environment that has developed. They are both very mature men who possess excellent qualities ranging from skill, execution, power, calmness, tactical awareness and a will to win.

## The Players

There were a number of key moments during the season that contributed towards the outcomes and here is a snapshot of my recollections:

- It was a blow to lose Captain Joe Leach mid-season to a stress fracture of the lower back. Joe leads with confidence and by example and he was clearly missed particularly in the County Championship campaign
- Brett D'Oliveira gained valuable experience by standing in for Joe that will stand him in good stead for the future. He is a very well respected member of the team and led the group in a very calm and tactically astute manner
- The emergence of Dillon Pennington was great to see. He is tall, strong and bowls with good pace and is a very exciting prospect. For me one spell against Kane Williamson at Scarborough was like watching Test Cricket
- Ben Cox responded brilliantly to being left out of the Championship team against Surrey by providing two well deserved man of the match performances in the T20 finals day. Much Credit goes to Ben for the way he responded by showing resilience, character and professionalism in the way he did
- Congratulations to Alex Milton who made a century on his debut and has flourished into a key member of the squad. Alex is a very mature young man and has a deep desire to play at the highest level. The members will enjoy his steely determination and the will to win.
- The signing of Wayne Parnell has added more experience and skill to the squad which will be of great benefit to us. Wayne is a great competitor and is an excellent team man
- At this point I would like wish Jack Shantry and Steve Magoffin, who have both retired from playing, all the very best for their respective futures. Both have been great servants to the Club and to cricket as a whole.

## General

I believe we have now assembled a squad that will be competitive in all formats of the game. It is our desire to consolidate in County Championship Cricket, gain promotion and be a consistent competitor in Division One.



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The signing of Riki Wessels is an exciting addition and he will no doubt play his part in achieving our ambitions with his competitive nature and powerful stroke play.

I knew the role of Head Coach would be challenging for me for many reasons as mentioned previously and I want to particularly thank Matt Rawnsley (CEO) and Fanos Hira (Chairman), the Board and all the staff at the club as a whole for believing in me and playing their part in helping us get into such a positive place.

The change in roles within the Coaching team excites me very much and the role of 'Head of Coach and Player Development' will allow me to mentor and coach in a more generic role across the whole spectrum of the club which will definitely bring out the best in me.

Worcester is now home for me, I have grown to love the club, have a very good relationship with the members and I can't wait to see what we can achieve between us over the next few years.

### **Second Eleven Report**

The 2018 season proved to be a mixture of success and dealing with injuries at Second Eleven level.

Overall the players who represented the Seconds, whether Worcestershire CCC players or trialists, did so with a high level of skill, effort and execution.

Several players went from representing the Seconds in 2018 to achieving first team honours last summer, the likes of Alex Milton, Dillon Pennington, Ben Twohig and Olly Westbury.

The Second Eleven format also gave opportunities to players from the Academy and Pathway during the season such as Adam Finch and Jack Haynes, reinforcing our goal to be a club that promotes opportunities from within.

On the field, to reach the semi-finals of the Second Eleven Trophy 50 over competition after finishing runners-up in the North Group was an outstanding achievement. I was particularly pleased with the ability shown adapting to different surfaces, conditions and opposition.

The wickets we played on were not generally suited to 'modern day' 50 over cricket, so the learning was about understanding how to accumulate a score, how to build pressure and ultimately win before we came up against a very strong Middlesex side in the semis.

Overall, we used over 25 players, which shows how well our contracted players dealt with changing circumstances. Our three and four day cricket, which included the Second Eleven Championship, was inconsistent.

It was made very challenging through not being able to field a consistent team but, as we all know, that's part of the game – and there were some excellent team performances.

There was notably a great batting performance against Somerset in the first game at Taunton Vale against a first team attack which included contributions from Zen Malik (121 not out), Adam Wiffen (118) and Ross Whiteley (196).



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There were excellent wins against Derbyshire at Belper, with Alex Milton, Josh Dell and Olly Westbury contributing with the bat and Josh Tongue with the ball, and Surrey at Kidderminster. In

the latter game Westbury (77) was again amongst the runs and Callum Lea scored a half century on his debut before George Rhodes (61 not out) saw the Seconds to victory.

I was particularly pleased with the individual contributions of Olly Westbury and Josh Dell. Olly fully deserved first team debut and Josh his professional contract on the back of their performances during the summer.

Our T20 campaign was the most disappointing part of the season. However, throughout that competition we learnt a lot about some of the players who went on to play a major part in the First XI T20 Blast success.

This is where the Second Eleven is so important. What can seem like frustration in terms of results, can have a greater, and longer term impact, contributing to those fantastic learning experiences for both the players and coaches which we know had a huge impact on our season particularly in one day cricket during the season.

## **Academy Report**

We've had another really exciting year and a lot of players who spent a lot of time with the Academy played a substantial amount of games in Division One of the County Championship, the likes of Alex Milton, Ben Twohig and Dillon Pennington.

It was hard for them but exciting to watch them playing after seeing them develop over the years. Especially Ben and Dillon who are a little bit younger than Alex who was in his last year at the Academy when I came to the club.

It would be wrong not to mention Olly Westbury who has been with us since the age of nine and made his first team debut in T20 and First Class cricket. I think he has proved a lot of people wrong over the past couple of years and would not have been the player picked out to achieve what he has achieved. All credit to him for the work he has put in, in both T20 and First Class cricket.

Pat Brown has also had one of those stellar years for us in T20 cricket, having come to us as a 15 year old and to have had the year he has had is quite special.

I always say I don't have a crystal ball and can't predict who is or who isn't going to make it. But there will be certain things in a player that make me think we can work with them.

For instance, are they open to learning, are they coachable and do they have the behaviours to be taken on a journey to wherever their potential will allow them.

Whether they are good enough to get to first class cricket, I'm not sure, but we've got a reasonable track record of working with and identifying players who have got a chance of progressing into our professional squad.



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In the Second Eleven, Jack Haynes and Adam Finch played a significant role for the first time and the pair of them did really well and ended up going away with England Under-19s and securing their first full-time contracts.

We also had a lot of cricketers involved once again in the Bunbury Festival and then Super Fours for which Jack Haynes, Zain Ul-Hassan and Xavie Clarke were selected along with Henry Cullen, Josh Baker, Joe Miskowski and Rehaan Edavalath.

We've done well for the last five years and will keep working hard to maintain that. I'm sure there will be periods where we don't have quite as many representatives in regional cricket or sign professional terms.

That's the nature of the sport we are all involved in, it works in cycles. I hope and believe we are doing a good job and we will keep working hard, trying to innovate and evolve otherwise we will stand still.

Kevin went on to thank Duncan Fearnley for his support, Norman Gifford for his support and the people of Worcester as he now loves the place.

### **c) FINANCE REPORT – SARAH GLUYAS**

2018 has been a year of investment and improvement.

We have invested in players by increasing the size of the squad, now pay market rates and attracted high calibre overseas players. We have invested in member facilities with a new scoreboard and shop. We have invested in the pitch with a new tractor and blotter machine. We have invested in our visitor facilities with the new marquee and kitchen.

In total we have invested nearly a third of a million pounds in fixed assets in 2018, with the very substantial and very generous support of the Supporters Association, who contributed £93,000 to projects last year.

The ECB remain our main source of income, with nearly half our turnover from them. Only Leicestershire and Northamptonshire are more dependent on ECB as a proportion of their total income, indicating that we need to do more to improve things off the field.

As we had home draws for both the Royal London 50 Over semi-final and the Vitality Blast T20 quarter final, unsurprisingly ticket sales were up.

Despite prices being frozen for the last 5 years, membership subscriptions were lower by 16% and T20 season passes took a bigger hit down by a third last year, probably reflecting the poor campaign in 2017. What is the indication for 2019? Sales are broadly in line with last year and marketing activity continues. It is encouraging junior memberships have doubled compared to this time last year and T20 season passes are doing even better – unsurprising as we are T20 champions! We accept we have to attract new audiences to cricket.

The PopFest concert held last summer was on a different basis to the concerts held in 2017. As we indicated at the last AGM, this time the ground was rented out as a dry hire and the promoter had



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the responsibility of booking artists, the infrastructure and ticket sales. This was a far less risky venture for us and yet made more profit. At this stage, no music concerts are planned for this year.

Catering is another improvement. Combined sales for events, Foleys and match day catering is up £90,000, costs have been controlled and profitability was up £109,000. Crucially it has turned from a loss to making a modest profit. Foleys may not have broken-even last year, but it forms an important role in the life of the Club and the community. On an underlying basis, we expect Foleys to break-even this year. There is still much to do to improve Catering to produce the returns it should.

The number of employees on payroll has increased in 2018 – the number of players has gone up by 6 and salaried staff up by 3 to 42. The remainder reported in the full accounts is due to an increase in the pool of casual staff that can be called on to work catering and stewarding hours when required.

Underlying administration and ground costs have increased by 3.6% - above inflation but includes £72,000 spent on maintenance. Controlling costs is very important and we do not rest on our laurels to ensure we spend every penny wisely to plough returns back into cricket.

Costs also include depreciation, which is allocating the purchase costs of assets across their useful life. The depreciation charge in 2017 was £10,000 but has jumped to £129,000 last year. This is due to depreciating the cost of the buildings at the ground for the first time (in compliance with accounting standard FRS102), plus depreciating the new assets already mentioned.

Cricket costs have intentionally increased – unsurprising as we are a cricket club! As well as an increased total wage bill for players, coaches and support staff, other costs have increased as a result of taking even more seriously our duty of care to players. For example, providing a bus for travel together is more expensive than players car-sharing to get to and from 2<sup>nd</sup> XI matches. Players clothing costs increased to issue them with the kit they need to perform. Even the cost of cricket balls, which are supplied by the ECB, increased by 50% to £20,000.

The question posed each year has been ‘will the Club pass a liquidity test’? Well yes, the Club can pay its bills on time and has done for the last 3 years. The relationship with our bankers and the ECB goes from strength to strength. Our total debt has reduced to £4.9m, still higher than we want it to be, but there is a plan in place to reduce this by half over the next 5 years, as you’ve already heard tonight

So the result of all this investment in assets and cricket is that the profit for the year has predictably fallen – but it is still a profit, unlike some of our peers - from £449,000 in 2017 to just £38,000 last year.

Looking ahead, the income from the ECB is predictable through to 2024. We will receive a settlement from the Cricket World Cup this year of nearly £0.5m, followed by an extra £1.3m each year from the new TV rights deal. How do we spend this? Carefully, to ensure the Club is in a sound financial place at the end of this funding cycle. A balance will need to be struck between investing for the future and reducing our debt. It’s an exciting problem to have.



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## d) CEO'S REMARKS – MATT RAWNSLEY

Acknowledged that there are some unique challenges to overcome but just wanted to say what a huge privilege and an honour it is to be here. He didn't come to be a caretaker – he wanted to

challenge, improve and to make sure some sound financial decisions are made and he thanked Fanos Hira and Sarah Gluyas with all their help with regard to the accounts.

There has been a substantial refurbishment around the ground and we now have more of a presence around the County and beyond. We have a wider role to play in the community around the county, within business and education and there are some key decisions that need to be made which may not always be popular. Our goal is to run a balanced budget and we have to get the money in. We can't afford to refurbish if we don't get the money in. So we have had to make some difficult decisions, for instance charging for the Australia games.

2018 was a year of ups and downs - there was the euphoria of winning the quarter final and then the disappointment of not being allocated enough tickets for everyone that wanted to go to Finals Day.

We need to be competitive – we cannot rely on our academy, we need to also invest in new players, but we are committed to growing our own.

We changed our expectations on and off the field. We are no longer the under-dog, we were the highest performing white ball side.

Culture – we launched our One Club philosophy. This is very clear attitudes and is for anyone and everyone that is associated with Worcestershire County Cricket Club.

A lot of great work has been done – we have raised our game and will continue to do so. We remain committed to our Academy and later this year we will be taking over the Women's and Girls Cricket.

He gave thanks to the Supporters Association, to Kevin Sharp for his transparency, to Norman Gifford for keeping things honest and to Fanos Hira for a very positive relationship.

He also wanted to mention Martin Watts, groundsman since 1989 who has now retired. He was very committed to the club and I would like your support to recognise Martin's contribution. I will speak more on this at the first Member's forum.

He went on to hope that 2019 would be successful on and off the field and thanked everyone for their support.

### **The Chairman then invited Stephen Taylor (exiting Chairman) to say a few words**

Steve said it was 4 years since he took over as Chairman and he was told back then, by Percy, not to fall out with the Tea Ladies!

He thanked the Board and staff for all their support over the past 4 years and said that he had been very lucky to have some good people on the Board such as Tim Curtis who was always very



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supportive and he personally thanked Fanos Hira for all his help as Audit Chairman. He wished Matt Rawnsley the very best of luck for the future.

WCCC is a very special place and he feels there is no other place like it. He has been very proud and privileged to represent the club.

He went on to wish Fanos Hira all the best as Chairman he is sure he will be excellent.

## **THE CHAIRMAN ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY QUESTIONS?**

### **1. Sam Shuner – Member**

Why have we not had much cricket at the weekends? Have we done our best to get weekend cricket – it makes him wonder if the membership is worth it.

#### **Response from MR**

Not misaligned with our own views. It has been a challenging year with the World Cup and the Australia Tour. ECB has had a really difficult job to arrange fixtures. All Counties have felt the same. Sport is about balance and when we do have weekend cricket there are some that play at the weekend so can't come to watch.

### **2. David Baker – Question to Joe Leach**

How's your fitness Joe?

#### **Response from Joe Leach**

Has a fitness scan on Monday – feeling good – thank you for asking.

## **PAUL PRIDGEON – Vice Chairman and Head of Cricket Steering Group**

Recently spent 10 days in Abu Dhabi with the players and coaching staff. As Chairman of the Steering Group I felt it would be good to get to know the team better. Especially the new Head Coach, Alex Gidman.

I got to know him very well and I found him to be a person that is really passionate and knowledgeable about cricket and who cares very much about this club. His work ethic is fantastic and he has instilled this in the players.

I looked at the other teams that were over there and none of them were as fit as our boys. They have worked so hard and I have a gut feeling they will do well this year. The expectations are high and Alex is looking at a 5 year plan of not only going back up to Division 1, but being top of the division.

**The Chairman thanked the Vice Chairman for this insight and with no more questions put forward to Annual Report and Accounts to the Meeting for approval**



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This was seconded by Paul Pridgeon

**The members unanimously approved the Annual Report and Accounts.**

## **5. ELECTION OF PRESIDENT**

The Nominations Committee and the Board Chairman proposed that Cecil Duckworth be elected as the President of the Club for a period of 2 years.

**All in Favour.**

The Chairman congratulated the new President and asked him to make a short speech of thanks.

Cecil thanked everyone for electing him and said he would now need to get a new Jacket and tie! He also thanked Tim Curtis for riding his bicycle to the ground as it meant that Cecil had been able to park in his space!

He went on to talk about Old Trafford a ground he used to go to as a child and his enthusiasm for the game from a very early age. His childhood hero was Len Hutton an ex-player for Yorkshire. He was delighted when he came to the ground and Duncan Fearnley introduced him to Len Hutton – he confirmed that even though he has met the Queen and Margaret Thatcher, this meeting was up there as one of his favourite moments of all time.

He has had an interest in cricket all his life and played for Heenan's against a Laundry Company – he feels he is lucky to have been involved with the club for such a long time and is looking forward to spending more time here over the next 2 years.

## **6. Confirmation of Additional Directors (Non-Executives)**

Paul Pridgeon – Vice Chairman asked for approval of the re-appointment of Fanos Hira and Andrew Manning-Cox as Non-executive Additional Directors for 2019/2020.

**All in favour.**

## **7. Confirmation of Board Elections**

The Chairman proposed the re-appointment of Mr Gordon Lord as an elected Director as recommended by the Board and supported by the Nominations Committee.

**All in favour.**

## **8. Elected Director – David Baker**

The Chairman also proposed the appointment of Mr David Baker as an elected Director as recommended by the Nominations Committee.



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All in favour.

**9. Co-Option of Emma Hallam**

The Chairman then asked that Emma Hallam be co-opted on to the Board.

All in favour.

**10. Honorary Life Vice-President**

The Chairman proposed that Norman Gifford be admitted as an Honorary Life Vice President as nominated and approved by the Board.

All in favour.

**11. Honorary Life Members**

The Chairman asked for approval to admit Tim Curtis and Stephen Taylor as Honorary Life Members, as nominated and approved by the Board.

All in favour.

**12. Honorary Medical Officer**

The Chairman then proposed a vote of thanks to the Club's Honorary Medical Officer – Mr Andrew Pearce, who provides his considerable expertise and time freely.

All in favour.

**13. To receive any other business that the Chairman of the Meeting shall give permission to be raised and discussed (in accordance with present rule 27.5)**

None received.

The Chairman then formally closed the meeting by thanking Members for attending and wishing everyone an enjoyable and successful 2019 Season.

Signed ..... *F Hives* .....



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Dated ..... 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019 .....