

Worcestershire County Cricket Club

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Club held in The John Moore Theatre, King's School, Worcester on Monday 19th February 2007 at 7.00 p.m.

Present:	President	Mr J E Chadd
	Chairman of Committee	Mr J M Price
	Chief Executive	Mr M Newton
	Finance Director	Mr C Smith
	Director of Cricket	Mr S J Rhodes
	Captain	Mr V S Solanki
	Together with 100 members	

The President welcomed Members to the Meeting and expressed thanks to Mr Tim Keyes, Headmaster of King's School, for once again allowing the Club the use the excellent facilities in the School's Theatre.

The President then referred to the deaths of five distinguished members of the Club:

VISCOUNT COBHAM Viscount Cobham was a Patron of the Club. He was Chairman of the Lord Cobham Youth Cricket Trust, a charity for disadvantaged children.

JACK ROBERTS Jack Roberts became a junior member of the Club 83 years ago. He had served as Treasurer, Chairman and President of the Club and was believed to be the first person to hold all these offices.

MIKE JONES Mike Jones was President in 2001 and 2002. He served on the Committee for many years, most notably as Chairman of the Cricket Committee between 1981 and 1994.

BOB BROOKES Bob Brookes was a Vice President of the Club and a stalwart of the Supporters' Association of which he had been Treasurer for 48 years.

BOB BERRY Bob Berry was a member of the playing staff, a fine bowler and a delightful man.

The President then asked Members to stand for a moment in silent tribute to these and to all Members and friends of the Club who had died during the year.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from: The Rt Hon The Lord Walker, Prof Mervyn King, Mr John Elliott, Mr Clive Richards, Mr Duncan Fearnley, Mrs Betty Godfrey, Mrs Elaine Bennett, Mrs Joyce Booth, Mrs B J Day, Mrs Mary Fearnley, Mr David Exall, Mr George Farrimond, Mr Clive Fieth, Mr Jack Godfrey, Mr Michael Needham, Mr David Robertson, Mr Robert Scott, Mr J T Howe, Mr A Reece, Mr W Smith.

2. **Confirmation of Minutes of the AGM held on 20th February 2006**

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

3. **President's Address**

The President said it had been a great thrill to see the team promoted to the first division of both the Liverpool Victoria County Championship and the NatWest Pro40 League.

He congratulated the Director of Cricket and captain on the superb job they had done and the way they had moulded the players into a true 'team'.

He thanked John Elliott for the tremendous job he had done as Chairman for the last 8 years. He also thanked the Chief Executive, Finance Director and all the Directors of the Club for their hard work.

The President said he hoped his successor would have as much pleasure in the role of President as he had had. He wished Worcestershire every success in the higher divisions and hoped that England could keep their current form into the World Cup and next summer's test series.

The President then handed over to the Chief Executive for Items 4 and 5 on the agenda.

4. **Confirmation of Additional Directors**

The Chief Executive said that as a result of last year's changes to the Rules and Constitution it was now up to the members at the AGM to confirm the appointment of the additional directors.

The Board wished to recommend the following:

Mr J M Price - Mr Price had under-written all the expenditure so far incurred in obtaining planning permission for the new development. The Board had elected him Chairman in October 2006.

Mr J W Elliott - John had been a popular Chairman and was the second longest serving Chairman of all eighteen counties. He had been instrumental in gaining extra monies from the ECB following the successful Ashes series in 2004. The Board wished him to remain for an extra year to help the new Chairman in his first year of office.

Mr W S C Richards - His background is in accountancy and he has his own investment company. He is a successful entrepreneur and is also a commercial farmer in Hereford. He has his own charity which awards educational scholarships. He is a Freemason of the City of London and a Deputy Lieutenant of Herefordshire. He has been honoured with an OBE.

The Chief Executive asked for the AGM's approval to the appointment of these three additional directors for the coming year.

This was approved by the meeting.

5. **Confirmation of the Election to the Board**

The Chief Executive said that there had been six vacancies on the Board for the current year and eight names had been put forward.

The following six members were elected to the Board for the year commencing 1st October 2006 - Mr David Broughall, Mr Tim Curtis, Mrs Meriel Harris, Mr Peter Jewell, Mr Ken Mills and Mr Peter Radburn.

6. **To Elect a President**

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

The Chairman, on behalf of the Board, expressed a vote of thanks to the departing President, John Chadd.

Together with his wife Monica, he had upheld all the traditions of being President of our wonderful Club and both had been superb ambassadors for the Club throughout the cricketing fraternity.

He then proposed Peter Seward as the Club's next President subject to agreement by the AGM to this nomination. Peter would become the Club's 30th President since 1899.

Peter had been Treasurer for 23 years serving on the Committee since 1978 - a total of 26 years. He had helped to guide the Club through a period of great change and, of course, success on the field in the late 80's and early 90's. It was to be hoped that he would bring more of the same during his Presidency.

Mr Roy Booth seconded this proposal and the meeting voted in favour of the proposal.

Mr Seward, as President, then took over the meeting.

The President firstly thanked the Chairman and the Board for proposing his election as President and then thanked the members for their approval. He said it was a great honour and thanked Mr Chadd for his presidency over the last two years.

He said he had worked for many years with Mike Vockins and they had become very good friends. Mark Newton had arrived and then Chris Smith, Finance Director, and there had been good financial progress over the last three years. The President hoped that his experience over the years would be of benefit to the Board and that he would be able to offer some good advice.

He would represent the Club and its members to the best of his ability and looked forward to exciting times with the team and the new development plans.

7. **To elect two Honorary Vice Presidents**

The President proposed the election of two new Honorary Vice Presidents, David Exall and Jack Randall.

David Exall had joined the Committee in 1986 and had been instrumental in most of the rules changes since that time. He had served on the Membership and Marketing Sub-Committee and the Finance Committee. Upon retirement he had moved to Yorkshire.

Jack Randall was an accountant. He had been on the Committee for a number of years and was Vice Chairman for the last couple of years. He was Treasurer of several organisations and together with his wife, Linda, organised the annual Graeme Hick Charity Dinner.

This was seconded by Mrs Cynthia Crawford and approved by the meeting.

Mr Randall thanked the meeting on behalf of himself and David, who couldn't be present at the meeting, and said that as Vice Presidents they would continue to represent the Club with the same integrity and enthusiasm as they had done when serving on the Board.

8. **The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts**

The Chairman said that first of all he would like to say how highly honoured he was to be Chairman of such a wonderful cricket club. He first went to see Worcestershire play at Stourbridge 53 years ago and had been a supporter ever since.

2006 proved to be a historic season for the Club. Promotion in both the County Championship and the Pro40 League guaranteed First Division status in both competitions for the first time in the Club's history. He gave his sincere congratulations to both Steve Rhodes, Director of Cricket, and Vikram Solanki who so ably captained the side.

The team spirit in the dressing room conveyed itself onto the pitch and he thought that Phil Jaques was the catalyst who inspired the team in the Championship. He had scored 1148 runs in 8 innings averaging 88.31.

He said that special mention must also be made of Graeme Hick. He scored 1000 runs for the 20th time and became only the second player since the war to score 100 first class hundreds for his county.

All three overseas players made valuable contributions and he was sure that the success that Zaheer Khan achieved with us undoubtedly led to his return to the Indian test side.

Our performance in the Cheltenham and Gloucester Trophy and the Twenty20 Cup left a lot to be desired and he felt that Bumpy would look for a great improvement in these competitions.

The Worcestershire Cricket Academy under the directorship of Damian D'Oliveira accepted 12 young players in 2006 and 11 of the 12 either played or had trials at Regional and National level from Midlands U15 to England U19.

He said that he felt the future of the Club on the playing side was very exciting and extremely promising.

The Elton John Concert had been a great success and made over £50,000 profit for the Club. The inconvenience caused by the moving of the pitches in the early part of the season was justified by the profit from the concert.

Finally, he wished like to place on record the Board's thanks to John Elliott for being a superb Chairman for the last 8 years and to David Exall, Jack Randall and Alan Bennett for the time and effort that they had contributed to the Club over many years.

He finished by saying that he hoped 2007 would bring good weather, great cricket and a successful year.

Development Plans

The Chairman gave the meeting a brief resume of the new development plans for the ground. They would provide 21st century facilities for players, members, spectators whilst maintaining the ambience of one of the most loved cricket grounds in the world.

A working party had been set up in early 2006 which included town planners, conservation officers from the City Council plus highway engineers from the County Council and officials from the Environment Agency. Detailed reports had been submitted, including an archaeological study and a travel plan dealing with traffic and parking.

At a meeting in January the planning officers had indicated that it would be possible for the application to go to the planning meeting scheduled for the 15th March 2007.

The most critical aspect of the plan is the flood risk assessment. The report deals with the existing and proposed flood situation and considers the impact of the "once in 150 year flood" scenario.

The Chairman also pointed out that every bit of profit that will be made on this development would go into the coffers of Worcestershire CCC. There would be no premiums going into the hands of the private developers. The Chairman said that at this delicate stage of the process he would prefer not to answer any questions but assured members that they would be given their chance to make suggestions in due course.

Cricket Report

The Director of Cricket said that 12 months ago it had been difficult to give his presentation.

He didn't think that the start of the season had been too bad but there had been no consistency. The best thing out of the season had been the team ethic. Playing positive and aggressive cricket had been the difference between winning and losing. Phil Jaques had been a positive element but all the overseas players had contributed well to the season.

It had been his aim early in the season to have a dressing room spirit which was the envy of the other counties. There had been excellent leadership by Vikram Solanki, marshalling the team on the field and the new batting order had helped, together with a balanced bowling attack.

The Cheltenham and Gloucester Trophy did not start too well but to finish third was not a bad effort. We improved as the competition went along.

The County Championship had been the best competition of the season, especially the game at Northants.

The Pro40 League was an awkward competition with the games coming very fast towards the end of the season.

The Director of Cricket said he was very proud to be in division one for both competitions.

He said the team had not yet found the right formula for the Twenty20 competition but he had some ideas for the current season.

The players had done some fantastic work during the winter months with Dave Lowe, our Fitness Trainer, and there had been one to one sessions at Edgbaston and net sessions at Evesham. Several of our players were overseas and had been playing well.

The Director of Cricket said that there had been a lot of work done with the Academy over the last 12 months. Together with the Academy Director, Damian D'Oliveira, they had set up Satellite Academies in Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and the Black Country to coach 12 to 14 year olds. It was hoped that these youngsters would then feed into the main Worcestershire Academy.

At least four of the current Academy squad had the potential to play some Second XI cricket this year. We also had on the Academy a 13 year old with a very special talent.

During the winter the Club had recruited Moeen Ali who would hopefully be a massive addition to our batting line-up. Also Alexei Kervezee, who is likely to be the only Worcestershire player in the Cricket World Cup, playing for the Netherlands, had been another new signing.

Our second overseas player is to be Doug Bollinger. He is a hard working bowler. Like Zaheer last year, he has a point to prove to try to get into the Australian team. He is a left arm bowler which is good for our team as a different angle is useful. He is also available for the whole six months which is a massive incentive when looking for an overseas player.

The Director of Cricket felt that we had the squad balance right and all areas covered for the new season. The team spirit will continue and we will go into the new season with confidence and believe.

Finance

The Finance Director addressed the meeting. He said that the accounts being presented were a merged account of Worcestershire County Cricket Club Limited and Worcestershire County Cricket Trading Ltd.

He said that for the fourth year running the Board was delighted to report that the profit and loss account showed a surplus, this year of £53,370. This was as a result of tight cost control and maximising income.

The Finance Director gave a brief resume of the accounts and pointed out that subscriptions, catering and ECB monies were up on the previous year. Commercial had produced the best figures for the last 5 years. Match receipts, fundraising and other income were both down.

The Finance Director finished by saying that he is was pleased with the financial results for the year and feels the Club is on a firm financial footing for the challenges ahead.

The Finance Director then moved for the formal adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts.

Mr Randall seconded the proposal.

The President then asked for questions about the Annual Report.

Mr Hal Miller asked if anything could be done about the queuing for drinks and food on match days at the back of the Basil D'Oliveira Stand.

The Chief Executive apologised for this and said he would look into the situation. He added that this year there would be fresh fish and chips for sale at the ground, and of course, if the development plans went ahead then this would improve dramatically.

Mr Barry Wainwright said that he had noticed in the accounts that the Twenty20 bought in the most money on gate receipts and wondered if it wouldn't be advisable to increase tickets by £1.00 to bring in extra money.

The Chief Executive said that this is something which had been discussed and you have to try and find a balance between filling the ground and maximising revenue. Last season we had sold out 3 out of 4 matches and we really needed to sell out all the matches before increasing the prices too much. He added that if we were to get a home quarter final then the price would go up and members would have to pay.

Mr Roy Booth asked the Director of Cricket about a replacement wicket keeper should Steve Davies be injured.

The Director of Cricket said that he wasn't worried about this situation as our Second XI Wicket Keeper, Josh Knappett, who plays for Oxford University, would be ready to take over. We also had another player, Ed Foster, on summer contract who played for Loughborough University.

Mr Vic Whittingham thanked the Chairman for the very clear and concise way in which he had portrayed the development.

Mr Chris Croft asked the Chairman if he could give the members any idea on the timescale for the new development from start to finish.

The Chairman said that if we get planning permission on the 15th March we would hope to start building the first phase which would be the hotel in September. This would take about 12 months to complete and then the rest of the development would follow. If everything went to plan we would hope to complete the development within 3 years.

Mr Roy McLaren asked if the Committee would look favourably on the memorial trees around the ground should any need to be removed for the development.

The Chief Executive said that no trees on the ground should be affected.

The Annual Report and Accounts were then approved by the meeting.

9. **Rule Change**

The President asked the Chief Executive to explain these changes.

The Chief Executive said that the reason for the rule change was to reflect the spirit of the new age discrimination legislation. We are not required by law to do this but would like to remove the age discrimination that states that a Director must retire at age 70.

The Chief Executive, on behalf of the Board, proposed this change to the Rules and Constitution. This was seconded by Mr Ken Mills and approved by the meeting.

10. **Vote of Thanks to Honorary Advisers**

The Director of Cricket, on behalf of the Board, proposed a Vote of Thanks to the Club's Honorary Medical Advisors.

The proposal was seconded by Mr Alan Bennett and approved by the meeting.

12. **Any Other Business**

Mr Alan Bennett wished to thank all members who had voted for him in 2004. He had thoroughly enjoyed his time on the Board and had been made most welcome by the President, Board Members and Vice Presidents. He gave his whole-hearted support to the new development.

Mr John Curry asked if a meeting could be arranged for all the local recreational cricket clubs. The Chief Executive said that this was something that would come under the remit of the Worcestershire Cricket Board which was a separate organisation to Worcestershire County Cricket Club.

The Chief Executive said that Graeme Hick's Testimonial had raised £106,562. The Chairwoman, Cynthia Crawford, passed on the Testimonial Committees thanks to all members and supporters.

The President thanked the Members for their attendance and said that if any of the Members saw him and his wife around the ground at any time, he would be happy to have a chat with them. He wished everyone a successful and enjoyable 2007.

The President formally closed the meeting at 8.05 p.m.

Signed

Dated