

**BATH RUGBY SUPPORTERS' CLUB  
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING HELD IN THE ILLUSTRIOUS  
SUITE, THE RECREATION GROUND  
ON 4 JUNE 2015 AT 1930**



**Present:**

**Committee:**

Kevin Lawrence (Chairman)  
Erica Edwards (Treasurer)  
Anne Kirkham (Membership Secretary)  
Tom Sutton (Secretary)  
Jen Wilcox (Committee Member)

**Members:**

Sue Andrew	William Hills	Michael Mahoney	Raymond Preston
Cath Burgess	Jeff Hosier	Betty Measday	David Rawlings
David Byrne	Clive Hoskin	Peter Measday	William Singer
Maureen Byrne	Honor King	Steve Moore	Angela Tate
Fred Clayton	Pat Lawrence	Maureen Perry	David Tate
Graham Coe	Susanne Laws	Ray Perry	Dorothy Wallace
Paul Felski	Peter Legge	Peter Phillips	Jan Warrington
Jill Gibbons	Sheila Legge	Mary Picton	Mike Warrington
Keith Gibbons			(33)

**In attendance:** Tarquin McDonald (MD, Bath Rugby)

**Welcome**

Kevin Lawrence (Chairman) welcomed and introduced Tarquin McDonald, who had agreed to deliver a review of the season and update briefing, looking ahead to the next season.

**Speaker**

Tarquin began by thanking everyone for the support given to the team in the past season. Although the Premiership Final result at Twickenham had not been the result hoped for, the Club staff were confident that the past season would lead on to even greater success.

Tarquin then explained that he would concentrate on the following areas in his briefing

- The 1<sup>st</sup> XV – review of season and progress made
- the Bath Rugby Academy
- the Rec
- Bath Rugby – the business
- The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- Europe and the RFU

### The 1<sup>st</sup> XV – review of season progress made

Tarquin reported there was great satisfaction with the playing progress made over the past season. Although for the second season running there was no tangible reward in the form of trophies won, there was genuine pleasure in the improvement made.

Highlights had been the home matches against Leicester, Sale (away) and the stunning victory in France against Toulouse. These victories were tempered with disappointment at the Leinster result in the ECC QF – a game which it was agreed could have been won.

The coaches believed in, and had introduced, a player-led culture, not a regimented regime. It was felt that the chemistry of the players was growing season by season, and retention was a vital aspect in this process. Therefore contract extensions had been agreed with key players, e.g. Jonathan Joseph and Anthony Watson.

On the recruitment front, Rhys Priestland (FH), Niko Matawalu (SH), Jon Evans (SH) and Jeff Williams (from England 7s) had been signed for the following season.

The coaches would also be busy in the close season. Darren Edwards was going to Ireland to look at use of the high ball and restarts; Neal Hatley to New Zealand to study forward play, especially the scrummage; Toby Booth was due to attend a leadership course.

There has also been investment in the medical team as keeping players in good shape is crucial. In addition, a junior analyst had been added to assist the coaches.

The core belief remains in attacking the opposition, but with recognition that there is also a need to be more savvy at times on the big occasions.

### The Bath Rugby Academy

Tarquin reported that the Academy is now rated one of the best in the country – when three years ago it had been one of the worst. Part of the improvement has been in aligning the playing approach to that of the 1<sup>st</sup> XV in all respects – “the Bath Way” – so that Academy players can step up with confidence when required.

The Academy coaches have been learning from successful methods in other sports and links have been made with Birmingham University to develop mental toughness.

Player development is being very closely monitored from U15 onwards, the aim being to establish an appropriate, professional culture from a young age.

### The Rec

Tarquin informed the AGM that the temporary stands would be in place again next season. It was planned to use smaller support columns in the area underneath the North Stand to create more space for circulation.

Tarquin stated that the Club remains committed to a new stadium at the Rec and will work with the Trust to overcome any development issues. The Club believes that any planning issues are resolvable with appropriate dialogue. Following the counter-Appeal Hearing on 18<sup>th</sup> May a decision was expected within one or two months.

### Bath Rugby – the business

Tarquin felt that there was now a more robust structure in place to respond to feedback and concerns. Operationally the Club has responded to feedback about stag groups and movement during play, and has been determined to come down hard on unacceptable behaviour.

The aim is to make the business self-supporting over the next two years.  
In 2015-16 there will be new kit supplied by Canterbury – it is due to arrive in August.  
It was also planned to provide an improved ticketing facility via the Club website.

### The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

At the moment it was planned to hold a number of events, with launch events at Farleigh House. There were also plans for an exhibition in Bath itself and Q&A sessions with past players at each home match during the season.

### Europe and the RFU

Tarquin was able to state that Premiership Rugby had agreed a new TV deal, with significantly increased revenue, to 2021.

The relationship between the Clubs and RFU was good. In addition, it was felt the new European competition had enjoyed a successful first year and more work was now going ahead to provide improved sponsorship and TV deals.

### Response to comments and questions from the floor

1. To a question about the increased cost of season tickets – Tarquin explained that the increase is driven significantly by player wages, with the main increase borne by the corporate clients.
2. To a comment about the proliferation of Friday evening matches – Tarquin explained that the Club has no control over the scheduling although, following complaints, BT has promised to give more notice of any changes to dates and times of matches.
3. To a question about the contracts of the coaches – Tarquin informed those present that it was hoped to offer extensions to their contracts, thus hoping to secure their services for longer.

Tarquin was thanked for his interesting and informative briefing.

The Chairman then introduced Alex Cohen, the newly appointed Bath Rugby Operations Manager, to the meeting. Alex gave a brief overview of his past career as a senior police officer and his new role at Bath Rugby. He assured everyone that he was committed to improvement and asked for feedback on any aspects of the match day experience so that any unsatisfactory matters could be resolved.

### **1. Welcome and Opening Remarks (Chairman)**

Kevin Lawrence welcomed everyone officially to the meeting and thanked them for coming. He then went on to introduce the members of the Committee who were present. He also mentioned Doreen Dyer, a BRSC member who had sadly passed away in the summer of 2014. Doreen and her husband Vince, had been prominent and stalwart members of BRSC, as was evidenced by the Vince Dyer Cup awarded annually to the BRSC Player of the Season.

### **2. Notice Convening the Meeting (Secretary)**

The notice convening the meeting was read. It was confirmed that in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the Constitution, the notice had been published on the Allez - Bath website and in the local Press not later than 21 days in advance of the meeting.

### **3. Apologies (Secretary)**

Written (emails and letters) and telephone apologies had been received from 71 members. (A full list of their names is attached as an appendix to these Minutes.)

Tom Sutton mentioned that when offering their apologies many members had taken the

trouble to thank the Committee members for their work and had offered their best wishes for the meeting.

#### **4. Minutes of the last AGM (Secretary)**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 22 May 2014 had been published on the website and a limited number of copies were available at the meeting. There were no questions or matters arising which would not be covered during the business of the meeting and the minutes were approved for signature.

#### **5. Membership Secretary's Report**

Anne Kirkham reported as follows:

This has been a very positive season with regards to membership. Our hard work over the past couple of seasons has finally been rewarded and it gives me great pleasure to report that we have finished the season with **814** members. This is an increase of almost 20% on the total this time last year. It is in fact the highest membership total since the 2010 -2011 season, so we are really pleased with that result.

We still haven't cracked the retention problem!!! Again this season our recruitment was positive, 280 new members; however a number of last season's members chose not to renew. These members were sent several reminders but I am mindful there is a fine line between gently reminding lapsed members by email and annoying them by filling up their inbox with unwanted emails. When we send out the membership renewal information later this month I propose to try one final mailshot telling them what they've missed and inviting them to re-join for next season. We did however welcome back a few lapsed members, so the message is being received out there.

The committee have worked hard during the season to promote BRSC amongst the Bath faithful and to provide information & events for our members:

- We have had a presence at every home game; usually we are based in our gazebo in the Supporters' Village near the William Street entrance, a position which allows us to interact with a large number of supporters. It would be good to have a second base in a different part of the ground but we currently do not have sufficient personnel to do this. Friday night games, and we seem to have more of these every year, are more difficult as we cannot erect our gazebo in the dark. We have been based in the clubhouse for these games but our visibility in there is limited, which is something we want to work on.
- The on-line membership facility via our website has proved to be extremely popular and effective. Many of our new members have joined using this facility. It is quick & easy, has an immediacy that traditional forms & cheques lack and has the added advantage of making my life just a little bit easier.
- Our website "Allez-Bath" has been re-modelled and provides information about upcoming events, membership, discounts, travel etc. We have a link to our site from the Bath Rugby website.
- Our increased use of Social Media has raised the profile of BRSC amongst rugby supporters and others on Twitter, Facebook & recently Instagram. This media

presence allows BRSC to engage in current banter, react to and comment on events concerning Bath Rugby & its players and to promote membership and events.

- The introduction of “Newsflash”, our regular e-newsletter, has also allowed us to share current news and information with members. Whilst embracing the use of email, web-sites & social media to communicate with our members we have not forgotten those without computer access; we send out paper copies of every edition of Newsflash and mailshots of important communications to these members. We are trying to be inclusive whilst embracing new technologies.
- BRSC continues to have a page in the matchday programme and the Bath Chronicle has continued to feature photographs and articles about BRSC activities & activities.
- Posters & flyers advertising our events are displayed around the Rec courtesy of Bath Rugby
- There is a range of discounts available to BRSC members that are currently being reviewed, updated and validated for the start of next season.
- BRSC have organised a number of very successful events during the season for members & their guests. Mindful of the fact that a number of our members live too far away from Bath to attend evening events we organised several events on Match days.
- We once again held a prize draw for all members signed up by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015. The draw took place at half-time in our game against Wasps on January 10<sup>th</sup> and the winners were Alan Jones (membership no 1457) from Melksham and Alan Jones (membership Number 5568) from Penarth. There was about a 1 in 489,000 chance of this happening. Both won a Riverview Suite Hospitality package for 2 people for the LV= match v the Ospreys. Thanks to Bath Rugby for donating the prizes and facilitating the whole process.

### **Next Season**

As next season is a very special one for Bath Rugby we are aiming to reach 1500 members. These members will receive a special edition membership card designed by the winner of our competition Kevin Loader. His original design is displayed on the boards at the back along with highly commended designs by Jac & Tom Jones (aged 7). Kevin’s design will be slightly modified to include Bath Rugby’s Golden 150<sup>th</sup> Logo.

We have been working closely with Bath Rugby to promote membership of BRSC. They have enclosed a BRSC flyer in all their Season Ticket mailings as well as including a BRSC information section on their STH “Thank You” emails. There is now an updated BRSC section on the Bath website.

I would like to record my thanks to Bath Rugby, especially Kat Farmer & Mark Wenban, who have been very supportive & helpful in matters relating to BRSC membership & events.

Our website has displayed a *Register your interest for 2015 /16 season* button since membership for this season closed; so far we have had over 180 expressions of interest registered, If all these new members sign up we are well on the way to exceeding the 1000 membership mark which has not been achieved for a long time.

There were no questions and Anne Kirkham was thanked for all her hard work.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

Erica Edwards reported as follows, with the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation:

Good Evening.

This year has been interesting year from a financial perspective.

Although we managed to break-even, we have not enjoyed as much sponsorship as we have had in previous years. The very generous newsletter sponsorship from Wadworth has dried up as they are no longer one of Bath Rugby's main sponsors. Bath Ales have stepped in but at a much lower level so far. We are hopeful that we might be able to encourage them to increase their interest in due course. Due to an increase in the number of members our subs income has gone up to offset these losses.

The Awards Supper has also seen a change of sponsor. John Titcombe Jewellery and NanoLumens are businesses run by BRSC Members who kindly stepped into the breach when we found ourselves without a main sponsor. Sponsorship has been key in providing a quality Awards Supper that BRSC can be proud of, for a ticket price that is still affordable and very good value for money.

Mowbray Woodward continue to sponsor the 'MW Award for Services to Bath Rugby'.

Bath Rugby have been very supportive. This season we have enjoyed:

- The hire of the Clubhouse and Illustrious Suite at zero cost for most of our events
- Free food for players and Bath Rugby staff at our Awards Supper
- Free posters at The Rec advertising our events
- The opportunity to add our flyer to the season ticket renewal pack

Without these sponsors and Bath Rugby's assistance, running BRSC would have been difficult.

And now the Accounts for the year ending 30 April 2015:

### **Income**

- Membership subscriptions were up by £1000 v last year
- Events: Event income was level
- Charity collections: Down 1,160 offset by a reduction in costs of £565
- Newsletter sponsorship of £200 relates to 2 newsletters this year, whereas last year's £500 was for just one newsletter.
  - The Amlin Final tickets income was spent on buying tickets from French sports agencies and sold at cost to BRSC members.

### **Expenditure**

- Membership: Costs are level as we have managed to run down our stock of membership cards
- Events costs are up because we decided to subsidise a few events: Bendy's Farewell, the European Breakfasts, and because we had to pay room hire for the 6 Nations Forum
- Printing, Postage & Stationery: Costs increased due to the extra newsletter offset by our decision to email our summer notifications this year
- Equipment: We bought feather banners this year.
- Presentations: Bath Aqua Glass mementos presented this year at the BRSC Player Awards plus Bendy's Farewell ball
- Web: Costs have increased because due to a timing issue on our website costs and an increase in PayPal fees because people like the facility.

- Merchandise: £0
- Charity Expenditure: £0
- Charity Donations: Same as our charity collection

### **Charitable Donations**

This year we donated £1406 to charity. These donations came from our members and other rugby supporters.

The players sold raffle tickets at our Awards Supper to the amount of £538, a slight reduction v last year.

We charged an entry fee as well as sold raffle tickets for our Charity Christmas Quiz.

We collected £259 at the Glasgow Breakfast Meet

### **Web Presence**

In the summer of 2013 I added an online shop for membership applications and renewals, event bookings, and merchandise. I also set up a BRSC PayPal account.

This has been a great success. The majority of memberships are now completed via our online shop.

The online shop uses the shopping cart software from Ecwid - which is used by more than 450,000 sellers in 175 countries.

We have decided not to charge extra for the use of our online shop vs the more traditional methods because the benefits of especially online membership applications far outweigh the small oncost.

### **Income v Expenditure**

This year we have spent slightly less than we received as income.

### **Expenditure Level**

I am of the opinion that we have achieved a reasonable balance between the level of costs we incur on one side and the level of professionalism we try to achieve on the other side.

### **Bank Balance**

Our bank balance as at the end of April is £5,820. Out of that amount, £1,332 will be donated to WILSAR and Bath Cancer Unit Support Group and £490 relates to expenditure incurred during this season but where the cheque has not been cashed yet.

This leaves us with a contingency fund of £3,998.

### **Financial Planning**

Next year will be quite different:

- Bath Rugby will charge us their costs incurred for our events held at their venues. We know the approximate cost of a small event like Ask The Ref or a Quiz Night, but at present we do not know the on-cost for the Awards Supper
- We are holding a 150th Anniversary event outside The Rec with substantial fixed costs - venue hire (and speaker)
- We have no confirmed sponsors for the Awards Supper, the newsletter, or the 150th Anniversary event as yet.

On top of this there is the increase in the price of stamps and other expenditure.

We will work hard over the summer to find sponsors. However, we cannot rely on an uncertain source of income and we need some additional protection from the unknown costs heading our way.

Over the past 4 years we have rebuilt the finances of BRSC from almost zero to a good level. We need to continue this good work and ensure that we are not reliant on just a single source of income that is not increasing at the same speed as our costs.

### **Finally**

Committee Members are not reimbursed for travel costs. We always purchase our own tickets to BRSC events. Any costs are only reimbursed to Committee Members after being agreed in advance and claimed with a receipt.

My thanks to Clive Hoskin for his expertise and help in producing the audited accounts in time for this AGM.

There were no questions to the Treasurer and Erica Edwards was thanked for her report and work during the season.

## **7. Chairman's Report**

Kevin Lawrence presented the following report.

### **Introduction**

- Good evening ladies and gentlemen, once again many thanks for attending the AGM tonight. BRSC belongs to all its members and it's important not only that the Committee is able to account to you for the management of the Club over the past year but also that as many members as possible contribute to shaping the way ahead at a very exciting time for all Bath Rugby supporters and BRSC in particular.
- I'm going to try to keep my presentation fairly brief tonight. You've heard from Erica and Anne and I won't go over the same ground in detail. What I would like to do is to:
  - focus on what we promised we would try to deliver as a result of last year's AGM,
  - give an insight into other activities that we have undertaken
  - take a look at the key challenges and opportunities for next year.

### **Thanks**

- I'd like to start by thanking your committee members who have worked tirelessly on your behalf across all aspects of BRSC activities. What you see on matchdays is the tip of the iceberg – running an organisation like this is a huge undertaking in both time and effort and I hope you will agree with me that your committee members have done a great job in the last year. (*Spontaneous loud applause.*)
  - I would also like to include in that the contribution made by BRSC members who are not on the committee but have rolled their sleeves up and helped out throughout the year, particularly Honor King and Pat Lawrence. (*Loud applause*)
  - I think it's also only right to recognise the work of Jan and Mike Warrington for another year at the helm of BST providing important travel services for supporters – not only in UK but in Europe. At least they won't have to try to arrange a trip to Siberia which our friends up the M5 very well might – but I'm sure it wouldn't faze them if they did! (*Further loud applause*)

- Of course, on behalf of all of us a huge thank you goes to the coaching staff, the players and everybody associated with Bath Rugby for putting smiles on our faces during a fantastic season! Many of you might already have seen the exchange of emails that we had with Mike Ford after Saturday. I won't read it all out – it's on allez –bath - but he once again emphasises how much value the coaching staff and players put on the incredible support that they receive at home and away. And he said something that I think pretty much sums up the relationship between the players, coaching staff and supporters when he said “when we achieve, we achieve together”.
- I'd like to make a special mention of the matchday staff at the Rec who have been really helpful this year – it's much appreciated.

### **Issues from last year's AGM**

- So, looking at last year's AGM, what and how well have we done?
  - Let me start with communications. In 2014 /15 we've produced two high quality hard copy Newsletters and also implemented the more frequent and slightly less formal Newsflashes which predominantly go out electronically. Both of these have been very well received. It's been a team effort, but Jen Wilcox has done a great job in pulling these together. (*Loud applause*)
  - We've also significantly improved our website, social media and direct E Mail communications. Twitter traffic is up by 80% and our Facebook following has increased 7 fold. We are working with Bath Rugby to improve the link and content relating to BRSC on the main Bath Rugby website with the intention of having that overhauled by the start of the next hopefully very special season.
    - One other particular success has been the improvements of the on – line shop implemented by Erica; it now works really well for memberships, events and a variety of other purposes and is a huge step forward in our business processes.
  - Speaking of events, we've worked particularly hard to deliver as wide a variety of events as possible including our flagship Awards Supper, Ask the Ref, 6 Nations Forum, Charity Quiz night, exclusive hospitality boxes for A League games, Meet the Brewer and breakfast sessions before high profile games. They've been mostly well attended and we'll be looking to run more next season as we help Bath Rugby celebrate it's 150 Anniversary. New or different ideas for events are always welcomed.
- You also asked us to undertake a review of the Constitution. We've done that throughout the year, taking our time over it because we wanted to get it right before presenting our work to you and so that hopefully it will stand the test of time.
  - Our intention was to strike a balance between capturing the original spirit of BRSC as an independent supporters club and creating an enabling document, to take it forward for the future.
  - We addressed all the areas that had been brought to our attention and I think our revised draft contains all the necessary checks and balances but is sufficiently flexible to grow and to allow BRSC to take advantage of opportunities to develop as the Supporters' Club for one of the best teams in Europe – because that's what we are!
  - We will talk in more detail when we reach that point in the agenda, but I would like particularly to thank Tom Sutton and Chris Wensley for their work on this and also Sue Andrew who helped greatly by “peer reviewing” the developing work.

- We have done some work on the discounts list, but we plan to have a major re-validation of that during the summer. However, I can this week announce a new benefit for members – Homewood Park Hotel, Restaurant and Spa are offering deals on lunch and afternoon tea. Their GM is a staunch Bath Rugby fan and I will be meeting him shortly to explore the possibility of further engagement with us including possible events sponsorship. We have also ensured once again that we have had a visible match day presence at the Rec for every home game this season.

### **What else have we done?**

We have continued a constructive relationship with Bath Rugby which has allowed us to exert influence on behalf of our members and the wider supporter community, regularly communicating with Tarquin and his management team. As examples:

- You may recall the major feedback exercise on the changes to ground infrastructure that we conducted at the start of the year. That exercise produced a detailed report and was taken by BR and used as part of their planning process.
- We have also been a positive conduit for comments relating to crowd behaviour, and the match day experience as a whole. We're pleased that Alex Cohen, the new Head of Operations, has asked to attend our committee meetings on a regular basis to talk about infrastructure issues and the match day experience for supporters.
- Recently we have successfully negotiated with Bath Rugby once again to include BRSC material in the Season Ticket documentation and mailshots. This has already resulted in significant expressions of interest from new members.
- We've cooperated on STH events such as coach's evenings, securing guaranteed places for BRSC members who otherwise may not have been able to attend, such as those who don't have season tickets.
- We also provided a conduit for members to feedback to Bath Rugby their views on this year's season ticket prices.
- Finally, as an example of the consultation process in action, we were consulted and were able to influence the Club's decision to provide transport to Twickenham for the final.

On the wider front we have been active in liaising with other supporters groups, especially during European competitions to obtain and publish advice on venues, watering holes etc. We've also continued to develop our media presence with BRSC interviews taking place on TV and on various local radio shows in advance of most games. We also retain our page in the match day programme.

### **CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

One of the biggest challenges that we face going into the next season relates to cost and financial planning. You should have seen my E Mail letter which explains the background and we are going to talk about it later, but we have to look at this. Under Erica's stewardship as Treasurer, the Club's finances at the end of 2014/15 are in good shape and have a resilient base, but a number of the cost drivers have changed and we can't wait until they aren't before we start addressing this area.

- I'm clear that we need to plan strategically to ensure that as Bath Rugby cements itself as one of the top clubs in European Rugby, BRSC is able to develop with it.
- With that in mind we need to plan to deliver financial stability and growth. I will not shy away from my view that we need an increase in membership subscriptions as a core element of achieving this.

- Along with that we need to continue to grow our Membership. We've done well this year but 1500 plus should be achievable in 2015/16 – double where we were a year ago.
- We have not sought to secure a sponsor for BRSC as an entity. This is a Club which belongs to its members and that shouldn't in my view be diluted. Nevertheless, we need to find replacement sponsors for the Newsletters and major events, particularly our Bath 150<sup>th</sup> Dinner at Bath Racecourse on 18 November and we're working on that.
- The other side of the coin is what the military describe as "troops to task" and to be honest, we need more. On the basis of nominations received, we will be short of the full complement of Committee Members and we need more people to get involved to share the load at events and on match days.
- You don't have to join the Committee. There are any number of opportunities that we'd welcome help with, even on a one – off basis, so please have a chat with any of us or drop us a line on email and help if you can!

I think I will close there – we've a lot to get through tonight and I'm grateful for the opportunity to put these points to you.

A year ago I stood here and acknowledged that we had some ground to recover. Thanks to the unstinting effort of your committee members I think we've done that and we are in a much better place than we were then.

Now it's time to plan and put the processes in place for a great future supporting Bath Rugby. (*Loud applause*)

## **8. Membership Subscriptions 2015-16**

The following letter had been sent to all BRSC members prior to the AGM:

Dear Member,

### **MEMBERSHIP 2015-16**

Firstly, many thanks for all your support. Your committee has worked hard to deliver the targets that we set ourselves at the last AGM and we hope that you have enjoyed reading the Newsletters and also the Newsflashes, which we introduced this year. It's also been very encouraging to see so many Members at our events.

I hope as many Members as possible will be able to attend this year's AGM on 4 June to help us shape the way ahead for 2015/16 which promises to be an even better year. It will certainly be busy with special events to help mark Bath Rugby's 150th Anniversary.

On that subject, I wanted to write to you in advance of the AGM to let you know that for the first time in some years, we will be seeking your approval for an increase in our Membership Subscriptions. We are proposing to set the cost for a single Member at £10.00 with pro-rata increases for our other Membership categories. As a Committee, we didn't think it was fair simply to announce this change at the AGM with no prior warning and I thought it might be helpful to write to explain why we strongly feel that we need to make this increase.

Let me say straight away that BRSC's finances at the end of 14/15 are in good shape and Erica Edwards will brief you in detail about this at the AGM. However, having reviewed our financial position in the context of increasing running costs and other liabilities, we feel that the proposed increase is both reasonable and prudent.

So what has changed? Primary drivers behind the cost increase relate to production and despatch of the Newsletter and the recent imposition of hire costs for use of facilities at the Rec as an event venue. The Newsletter situation has been exacerbated by the loss of a major sponsor, who used to underwrite the production costs, following a change in Bath Rugby's drinks supplier. We have managed to partially offset this shortfall and will continue to try to attract further sponsors, but we can't guarantee this source of revenue and we simply can't budget on an unpredictable income stream.

As some of you will know, facilities at the Rec are no longer generally available for hire. BRSC is an exception to this ruling. We take the view that the Rec is our natural "home", but we now have to pay costs covering provision of staff etc. Once again, we are trying to secure sponsors for our events, whether we hold them at the Rec or elsewhere, but we can't plan on this unpredictable outcome and we need to be able to price our events at an affordable level.

I hope this letter helps explain some of the background. The Committee and I look forward to your support on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

Yours sincerely  
Kevin Lawrence

The Chairman reiterated the key points of his letter and the main reasons for change:

1. The need to pay for Rec facilities used for BRSC social events
2. The loss of sponsorship, which impacted particularly on the cost of the Newsletter.

He also referred to earlier comments in the meeting by the Membership Secretary and Treasurer and highlighted the Committee's unanimous view that the proposed increase was reasonable and prudent.

A suggestion was made from the floor that the Newsletter might be emailed to the membership to save money. It was explained that the membership had requested the retention of the Newsletter in its current format at the previous AGM.

Graham Coe mentioned the idea of going to local rugby clubs and alternative venues for social events. It was pointed out that there was no guarantee that other venues would not cost as much as the Rec.

The Secretary reported that he had received fifteen emails in response to the Chairman's letter, representing twenty-two members. Of these 19 members (86%) were in favour of the proposed increase and three (14%) were not in favour.

After further brief discussion Mary Picton proposed, and David Byrne seconded, that the Committee's proposed increases to the subscriptions be adopted.

In favour 31. Against 2. There were no abstentions. Motion carried.

## **9. Pre-notified matters for discussion**

The Secretary reported that no items had been received under this heading.

## **10. Nomination of Scrutineers**

As the posts to be elected were not contested, there was no need for the nomination of Scrutineers.

## **11. Election of the Committee**

### **a) Secretary**

Tom Sutton was the only nomination received and he was declared duly re-elected.

## **b) Treasurer**

Erica Edwards was the only nomination received and she was declared duly re-elected.

## **c) Committee members**

Jen Wilcox, Emma Sparks and Susanne Laws had all been appropriately proposed and seconded, and were elected to serve on the Committee.

The Chairman expressed the Committee's disappointment that not all five available posts had been filled, mentioning that the lack of personnel may have a bearing on the programme the Committee is able to run.

## **12. BRSC Charity Fundraising 2015/16**

- Kevin Lawrence explained that, following the success of last year's new process, the Committee had been keen to involve the membership again in selecting the next BRSC Charity recipients.
- He briefly described the background to the process that had been undertaken so far and the Committee's view that, following the experience of the previous year, one charity should be selected, as it was then possible for a significant sum to be raised.
- A shortlist, with appropriate background information, of three possible charities was presented for a decision.
- After a brief discussion the following votes were cast by a show of hands. Dorothy House 9; Great Western Air Ambulance 21; Wooden Spoon Bath & Bristol 6
- GWAA would therefore be informed that they were to be the BRSC Charity of the Year.

## **13. Constitution**

- The Secretary drew attention to the supporting paperwork and gave an explanation of the process that had been adopted to arrive at this point.
- He outlined the proposed revisions to the Constitution, which were all accepted and fully supported by the members present.
- The Committee was thanked for its work on the Constitution and for "giving the Constitution back to the members".

## **14. 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bath Rugby – BRSC plans**

- The Chairman explained that the Committee hoped to celebrate the Club's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in a number of ways, most notably with a formal Dinner to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Planning had already begun and more information about this and other activities would be announced in the weeks ahead.
- The Chairman mentioned that the Committee would welcome any ideas for other events from the membership.

## **15. Any Other Business – notified in advance by the due date**

The Secretary reported that no items had been received under this heading.

## **16. Relevant Matters for further consideration of the Committee**

a) Sue Andrew asked if more information about the proposed 'home' match at Twickenham could be found out and passed to the membership. To date there had been little or no detail about this proposed initiative.

b) David Rawlings asked if a precise date for the Awards Supper in August could be transmitted as soon as possible so that busy diaries could be kept up to date.

c) Honor King expressed her thanks to the Committee for “all the incredible hard work that goes on” on behalf of BRSC members.

**17. Closing Remarks**

a).Tom Sutton reminded those present to sign the attendance sheets before departure.

b) In thanking everyone again for their attendance and support, Kevin Lawrence requested that members should inform the Committee of what it is doing well, and what it is not doing well – above all to communicate with the Committee and not allow any concerns to fester.

**TWS.**

**SIGNED:**

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**Kevin Lawrence (Chairman)**

**31<sup>st</sup> May 2016**

- **Appendix to AGM 2015 Minutes**

**APOLOGIES: AGM 2015**

Jacki Barnes	Jenny Firkins	Chris Pritchard
John Barnes	Gillie Fisher	Mrs Pritchard
Derek Batchelor	John Ford	Dave Pugh
Martin Beck and family	Julia Ford	Andrew Sharpe
Bob Bevan	Sue Frogley	Mervyn Small
Ina Bevan	Peter Gagg	Emma Sparks
Charlotte Brennan	Peter Garner	Graham Teague
Kelvin Brunton	Michael Helyar	Denise Thomas
Bob Chippendale	Suzanne Helyar	Rod Thomas
Mary Chippendale	Brendan Hood	Graeme Thomson
Barry Cleeve	Maria Idun	Julian Trump
Jenny Cleeve	Henry McCulloch	Rosemary Trump
David da Costa	Kate McCulloch	John Voss
Gill Coward	Anita Murray	Terry Wagstaff
Bernard Crabbe	David Murray	John Webster
Anthony Dent	Sam Neale	Joyce Webster
Jan Drew	Paul Nicholls and family	Chris Wensley
Chas Dunford	Eric Noble	Lesley Wilcox
Phil Dunning	Jon O'Brien	John Willcox
Kevin Dyer	Lisa O'Brien	Maureen Willcox
Nicky Dyer	Christine Oxford	Richard Winter
Mike Fawcett	Tony Parker	Anne Woodman
Clive Firkins		John Woodman

**From the Floor:**

Adrian Laws  
 Phil Powell  
 Teresa Powell