

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bridport Rugby Football Club
Held on 14th October 2024 at the Rugby Pavilion**

Present: Julian Hussey, Allan Staerck, Ayo Fraser, Chris Wood, George Hussey, Louis Browne, Kathy Briggs, Lloyd Vercoe, Niamh Vercoe, Guy Livingston, James Keen, Timmy Edwards, Nic Courtice

1. Apologies: Peter Brook, Simon Bareham, Pete Dacey, Rob Sullivan, Charlie Samways

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting:

The minutes were approved, proposed by James and seconded by Allan. All in favour.

3. Matters Arising:

- Four brush heads now on order and if suitable more will be ordered.
- Lisa Adams cannot help with strapping.
- Will would like to see a proof of the proposed sign "Welcome to the Palmers Brewery Ground". Creative Solutions to be asked to provide.
- The fixture books have been sent out to the VPs.
- Meeting re social media not yet held.
- Instructions on how to use Spond on a computer have been circulated.
- Access to the container to be changed to a coded lock.
- Bluetooth speaker has been purchased.
- George to speak to Sky regarding Premier Sports and European rugby.
- Ben Stephens has advised the RFU of the French tour.
- Lloyd spoken to Will re the kitchen. Suggested that the LC share the costs of professionally cleaning the clubhouse floor. George to check first with Tony Chant regarding the floor cleaner and costs.
- Heineken and Moretti do non-alcoholic lagers.
- Allan will chase Mystic re the Sponsors board as proof has been signed off.
- Louis confirmed that Sam has not made any recent comments re involvement with the club for physio.
- The First Aid kits are still not being properly looked after and junior coaches will be reminded again.

JH

JK

GH

GH

AS

4. Chairman's Report:

Julian has spoken to the manufacturers regarding the electronic scoreboard. It should be available within the next three weeks.

Arrangements for fireworks evening well in hand. The England v NZ match will be shown in the clubhouse beforehand. The band will set up before the fireworks so they are ready for 8.30pm start.

Letter received from Kitson & Trotman advising that the final part of the Matthews legacy will be available by year end.

5. Treasurer's Report:

Balance at 30th Sept - £73,152.38

Today's balance - £76,381.33

Net movement positive. Purchase of 100 x £25 vouchers for the Juniors offset by membership fees.

Bar Takings in Sept - £5,111.15

Bar Takings Year to Date (May - Sept) - £19,144.81

Waiting for PIN to register on FCA to be able to submit accounts.

Still looking at options re opening another bank account. Barclays still best option.
25 senior players now paid subs/sponsored.
Junior subs doing well with 173 across all age groups paid. Thanks to Lewis for his work on GMS.

6. Secretary's Report:

Attached below.

It was decided not to commit to CRISP this year as use of ProActiv going well.

It was agreed to host a Tag Festival for the District Scouts possibly early April. Contacts known within various scout groups and Lloyd has already been in touch with Adam Paulie. George to be advised of date when potential fixture against Dorset Police team arranged.

7. VP's Report:

To date total sum received is £2,410 including cheques and BACS payments notified to Peter. Other BACS payments likely to have been paid directly into the bank account so Peter would appreciate a list/copy of bank statements so that he can make sure everyone is thanked.

AF

8. Fixtures:

Lytchett at home this Saturday 19th October. Referee has been confirmed.

The website link needs to be updated.

9. Coaching / Team Management / Captains report:

Mixed start to the season.

Training numbers are still disappointing, though a good turnout of Colts.

Unfortunately likely to be struggling for backs this season.

Squad bonding session held recently which went well and worth doing again.

Meeting held after the match against Puddletown with Julian, Peter, Simon, Ayo and Charlie.

10. Junior's report:

James expressed some concerns about recruitment but the numbers so far are looking very good.

The Junior bundle only covers up to age 10. Next year the same package will be needed for older age groups.

Lloyd confirmed that the Club Xmas drinks evening will be Friday 29th November from 7pm, starting at the Woodman and then the Tiger as they are both club sponsors.

Lloyd will cost two floodlights for the corner of the old 7's pitch for use in training by smaller groups and to help prolong use of roadside pitch in winter.

Jesse and others have expressed concerns that the white lines are not lasting. Sean may be watering it down too much. The lines need to be mown out properly. Kathy to email VPs to ask if anyone can help.

Lloyd will take down the Pitch plan as it is not correct. Mystic to be asked if they can amend.

Allan will get a sample of the smart blue shirts which can then have the logo embroidered on.

Ayo to check if kit samples available from VX3.

LV

KB

AS

AF

Rugby Safe Issues:

The ProActiv App registration is up for renewal and will be £60. As this is now a key part of our, and the RFU's Rugby Safe procedures. Pete will renew on the club's behalf and forward the receipt to Ayo.

As a note it seems like there is a greater engagement with the App this year which is great.

First Aid:

Pete has secured a few places on the EFARU First Aid Course at Weymouth on 26th October. He has messaged out to the Junior Section and will chase again to try and get a few more trained up.

Colts:

Lost to Blandford but beat Dorchester.

Looking strong with good numbers at 24/25.

11. Social report:

Band booked for this Sat 19th and also for Fireworks on Sat 2nd November.

Club dinner date agreed as Saturday 17th May. Discussion on possible different format this year. Chard start at 2pm with the youngest players, working up through the age groups to the Seniors. Agreed to try this format this year, looking at a couple of players from Bath or Exeter to talk to the various age groups, followed by a band in the evening.

2025 Fireworks will be Sat 1st November so band can be booked well in advance.

For Fireworks this year 4/5 people will be required on the bar.

Agreed the bar should also be open for the other Autumn internationals.

12. Grounds Maintenance:

Grass is still growing.

Lines need to be mowed out so they can be white lined clearly.

Need to check where bills for the mower have been sent as do not appear to have been received.

13. Business Development Report:

Pete has chased up the Architect today who confirmed he would have the Planning Application resubmitted today/tomorrow so Ayo will once again receive an email asking for a payment and confirmation of the submission.

Once submitted Pete will pull together a pack to discuss with potential contractors.

A 3D image of the plan will also be produced.

14. Club Development:

a) Safeguarding – the Safeguarding policy and other documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Niamh proposed and Chris seconded that these were approved and adopted. All in favour.

b) School liaison – Tag Festival this Saturday 19th October. Charlie and some senior players will be there to present the awards to the winners.

c) Publicity – Simon writing reports when available.

d) Volunteers – always required.

15. AOB:

a) Louis advised that there had been a couple of disciplinary hearings already this season. Unless it is serious the chairman will not be involved but other committee members may receive emails requesting attendance. Usually three people required.

b) Allan requested a key for the new container. Major problem is how the kit is put away. Way forward may be to put up a mesh separator for the senior kit. Plan to be formulated.

c) Lloyd advised that the LC is changing the way the Sports Hall is used which means that many classes will be cancelled. They could be looking at re-hiring the clubhouse from us evenings when it is not in use, with charges to be taken off the annual bill, or alternatively we might want to swap for hire of the hall in winter.

d) Julian had received an email from a sponsor applying for international tickets. It was agreed that only VPs and Players were eligible to apply.

Meeting closed at 8.32 pm, next meeting Monday 11th November at 6.30pm

Secretaries Report:

14/10/2024

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend Dorset & Wilts AGM on the 2nd October, we've not been sent a copy of the minutes or any update as to how the meeting went. However, from the Agenda there are a couple of bits pertinent to us:

With rising costs and reduced income, the future is not going to be easy but with closer cooperation between clubs and the willingness to support each other things can improve.

Both the RFU and D&WRFU will endeavour to support clubs where possible, this may be advice based to make the most of any resources available.

There is some funding available, but this is limited.

D&WRFU would like to thank all the volunteers who have worked so hard to make D&WRFU a success again in another trying year.

The management team of the D&WRFU will be planning to visit as many clubs as possible during the 2024-25 season.

Could all clubs make sure that their personal details are up to date on GMS. Additionally, can they make sure that club contact details are also correct. They estimate that about 15% of all D&WRFU GMS records are incorrect that's about 6,000 people.

It is pleasing to report that the match completion rate has improved in the Adult Male game with playing numbers heading back towards pre-covid levels. In Age grade there is also a slight increase in numbers playing whilst the Ladies game seems to have levelled off a bit. However, we have the RWC 2025 coming next summer and hopefully that will give a big boost to the Women's & Girls game and playing numbers.

One area there was concern this time last year was around the new tackle height laws and the impact it was going to have on the game. It is pleasing to report there has been no evidence of a drop off in playing numbers as some feared, if anything the playing numbers have gone up. The number of head injuries has stabilised and the fear of an excess of red cards did not materialize.

Continued monitoring around head injuries and injuries in general continues. World Rugby are due to look at Tackle height in the top end of the game later this year. They will be looking at data obtained from the RFU, NZ union, France and others.

The other area that has been mentioned is around Community Game Future. Work on this has continued in the last 12 months with the proposals to be moved forward early next season.

The 4 focus areas are:-

- Running rugby
- In the Game
- On the Pitch
- In the clubhouse.

Some of this is likely to be devolved to local levels- more details are awaited.

Touring

The following deadlines will become mandatory within the Dorset & Wilts RFU from the 2024-25 season. Closing date for all touring application including the completion of Schedule One 30 days before tour date.

Visiting Union approval 20 days before tour date

Risk Assessments 30 days before tour date

Consent Forms 30 days before tour date

Safeguarding Requirements 30 days before tour date

As per RFU Regulations 10.7 30 days after the tour date

Girls

D&W WhatsApp Community

We have set up a WhatsApp Community for those involved with girls' rugby in Dorset & Wiltshire. There are different group chats for strands such as age groups, rep. rugby and general information.

Administrators/ Team Managers/ Coaches can join via this link:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/EiGBfKt3isi49edGIVf5wu>

Rugby Safe

Our region has made great strides with Rugbysafe with every playing club having a named Rugbysafe lead, and the risk assessments and first aider requirements as mandated in Regulation 9. There is still some work to be done to ensure this information is kept up to date as club RSLs leave and are not necessarily replaced before the start of the next season.

CRISP - as a region we are not showing much commitment to the Community Rugby Injury Surveillance & Prevention programme with only 2 clubs and three teams reporting. This initiative is vital to the ongoing safety and injury monitoring of the RFU and I will be asking clubs to participate if they are able. Clubs that do participate will have a year's subscription to ProActive paid for by the RFU in the following season.

Proactive is gaining traction with more teams subscribing and benefitting from having everything in one place. Proactive have now launched the concussion tracking module

which monitors a players GRAS protocol and provides automatic updates to both the player and the club.

Other updates

- RFU Council meeting on 27th September – None of relevance. Meeting updates passed on.
- Community Game update 8th October
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The Community Rugby Support Fund for 2024/25 is now live. The purpose of this fund is to support voting member clubs who are in greatest financial need. Clubs can claim a one-off payment of £500.

If you indicate that your club has an additional need for help with one-off essential costs, you can claim an enhanced grant of an extra £375 - subject to available funds.

To be eligible, clubs must be voting members of the RFU and be able to show evidence of an annual turnover of less than £125,000 in the 2023/24 season.

Only one claim may be submitted per club. The claim window will close on 5 November. Payments will be made by the middle of December.

The Club Safeguarding Audit is an annual, mandatory requirement (under Regulation 21) for any club that offers age grade activities, or wishes to have 17-year-olds playing up into the adult game. It is an opportunity for clubs to reflect on current practice and assist them in planning and development for the season.

The Club Safeguarding Audit deadline for clubs offering age grade activity is 25th October 2024 and no further edits or submissions will be allowed after this date.

The exception to this is for adult only clubs that wish to have a 17-year-old(s) play up into the adult game at a later date in the season.

Thanks to a superb effort from parents and volunteers right across the country, more than 145,000 age grade players have already been registered this season. We are now approaching the 45 days deadline from the start of the season when the process needs to be completed. We are therefore calling on all clubs to keep the momentum going to please get those remaining registrations in. A reminder of the regulation is as follows, from Regulation 15 which you can access [here](#) (opens in a new tab):

15.1.4 All Age Grade Club Players must be registered annually on the RFU's online registration platform: (a) for new Age Grade Players at a Club, within 45 days of them first joining the Club; and (b) for existing Age Grade Players at a Club, within 45 days of them starting a new Season at the Club.

So, for players who started their rugby at the beginning of September, there is not long to go to be onside! For players who have joined in the following weeks, the regulation still gives the chance to try out the game for 45 days before completing your GMS Registrations.

It is important at the outset to reconfirm that the priority and default is always for age grade players to play in their defined age/year group, with their peers and friends going through all the same academic, developmental and emotional life experiences. This is also where their support network is at its strongest with parents, teachers, coaches being most closely connected. Playing out of age grade is therefore always an exception.

For any player to play out of age grade, the circumstances, conditions, assessments and approvals required in regulation must be in place beforehand. This is all outlined in Regulation 15 – Age Grade Rugby([opens in a new tab](#)). The ultimate consideration must be the welfare and safety of all the players involved.

Applications are now open for two new leadership programmes for women involved in rugby union. Applications for both programmes close on Monday 18th November

Women's Leadership Development Programme

This interactive and impactful programme is perfect for women leaders in rugby to develop and amplify their strengths and build resilience and confidence to make a real difference. This programme has a particular focus on women leaders in committee/board roles e.g. Chair, Secretary, Finance Lead, Volunteer Coordinator.

Inspire, for 20-25-year-old leaders and aspiring leaders

This is a programme for young women involved in rugby, who might currently be leading or looking to lead in the future. They will hear from female leaders in a series of sessions and develop their strengths and build resilience and confidence to take on leadership roles in rugby.

Applications open on the 14th October for the Volunteer Recruitment programme.

The programme provides clubs, Constituent Bodies & referee societies with the opportunity to apply for funding and access a range of resources, to help plan and deliver a volunteer recruitment activity.

England Rugby and Scouts have announced an exciting partnership aimed at equipping young people with essential life skills through the power of rugby. The initiative, which is part of the RFU's community game investment and partnership, will introduce a comprehensive rugby programme across UK Scouts, offering numerous opportunities for young people to engage with the sport and its core values.

Scouts and England Rugby share a natural alignment of values, both dedicated to bringing people together, enhancing communities, and imparting crucial life skills to young people.

As part of the programme, Scouts can earn the relaunched Physical Activity badge sponsored by England Rugby. Scout groups will also have access to four innovative rugby activities, designed to be easily integrated into Scout meetings and events.

Shall we register interest with several scout groups. I know of at least 2 in our U11's who have got this badge through West Bay Sea Scouts and Chris Hoskins.

The Red Roses will face off against familiar rivals, France, in the final round of the 2025 Guinness Women's Six Nations on Saturday, April 26, at Twickenham. This fixture offers a perfect opportunity for the teams to gather for a social event. Join us for an exciting day of rugby and cheer on the Red Roses as they chase their seventh consecutive Guinness Women's Six Nations title!

Junior Group Offer

For **EVERY 10** junior tickets purchased, get **ONE ADULT TICKET FOR £5***

**Junior tickets are £5 and additional adult tickets are £15.*

Standard Group Offer

When you purchase 10 or more tickets, you can purchase these at the Early bird price from £20 per Adult and Juniors £5.

D&WRFU Newsletter - They have extended the closing date for the County cup competitions, we have already registered for our cup but this might explain the delay in being updated with fixtures etc. I also requested we be considered to host the age grade competition finals as I think it would be a good way to give positive exposure to the club.

The main request from Dorset & Wilts RFU is for us to ensure we are on top of our GMS registrations. Lewis Dunn is doing a great job with the junior and mini sections to help coaches and managers to manage their teams and Ayo is doing the same for the seniors.

I am negotiating with Dorset Police Rugby team to see if we can host a fixture with them against our 2nd XV, hopefully in the fixture break in Jan/Feb. I will keep us posted on this.

All other communications have been passed on either via email or Spond.