

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Bridport RFC**  
**Held outside the Pavilion, Bridport Leisure Centre**  
**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2020 at 7.00pm**

*Minutes taken by Kathy Briggs*

**Present:** See attached list

**President's Welcome:**

Peter Brook thanked all those present for attending and said that once this Corona virus situation is over we will have a good celebration. The Leisure Centre had a Government directive that we could not use the pavilion and he thanked Will Thrower, Nathan and Carlos for their help in setting out the chairs outside together with the PA system. He also thanked the Chairman, Julian Hussey, together with all the players and committee for their commitment in making the last season so successful. He also praised Ayo Fraser for his drive in helping the side get promotion after the previous season's relegation.

**Apologies:** John Bandey, Guy Livingston, Geoff Grant, Robert Wheelwright, Gerald May, Martin Cox, Guy Ewart, John Simpson, Charlie English, Shelley Strawbridge

**Minutes of the last AGM:**

Allan Staerck proposed and Noel Gregory seconded that the Minutes of the last AGM be approved. This was passed unanimously.

**Matters arising:** None

The reports had been circulated via GMS and no queries received.

**Chairman's Report – Julian Hussey:**

With the changes that occurred in the closed season our campaign for promotion back to Dorset & Wilts South 1 was always the priority for the 2019/20 Season. The Committee united in supporting Ayo and his coaching team to ensure this aim came to fruition.

Coach travel to the further away fixtures created a fantastic atmosphere and on occasions the away supporters outnumbered the home ones! Only once were the travelling supporters disappointed with the result. We hope to make coach travel a regular occurrence in future seasons.

The Senior Side has performed well and Ayo will report on this.

The Colts have had a mixed bag season but with dogged determination from Tim Farrell they continued to play as many games as possible. These games have produced mixed results but the Colts have trained alongside the Seniors for some of the season and it is good to see a common thread starting to appear in our game plays.

The Junior section continues to flourish and Noel will report on this.

Like every other Club our season ground to a halt as the Corona Virus hit and then we had the anxious wait to see if we had gained promotion, which was eventually confirmed by Dorset & Wilts RFU.

During the pandemic the RFU has given us regular updates but now finds itself in turmoil and job losses are inevitable which will have an impact across all areas, especially at grassroots levels and we can only wait and see how this will affect us. I am quite sure that the days of the RFU and Dorset & Wilts giving financial assistance may not return for a long time.

Fortunately the stewardship of our outgoing treasurer, Stuart, has put our Club in a very healthy and enviable financial position. He has been a fantastic servant of this Club and I remember playing alongside him many years ago, so to now be saying goodbye to him as treasurer reminds me just

how long he has been involved with the Club. What a volunteer he has been and an example to others.

Our Club cannot survive without volunteers and I am asking if you can help with any of the following positions because if you can't our Club may falter. These are:-

Junior Registration Officer

Junior Fixture Secretary

Kitchen Manager and Helpers

Youth Team Managers and Coaches

Match Day helpers

Without the efforts of our volunteers we would not have the superb kitchen facility we now have.

This project was managed by Noel Gregory who, with Ben Stephens, Lloyd Vercoe, Lewis Dunn along with other helpers, have done a brilliant job.

The RFU is also undertaking a review of the League Structure and we will have to wait and see what effect this has on our Senior Side in the 2021/22 Season.

Our Club is now well placed to move forward and meet its new challenges and I hope it is not too long before we can be back here supporting the Blues from the youngest age group to the Senior side and socialising in the Clubhouse afterwards.

Come on you Blues!!!

#### **Secretary's Report – Simon Hussey:**

Although this has been a challenging year with one thing and another, I have enjoyed being back involved with the club again and hopefully giving back to an organisation that gave me so much. I would like to thank Kathy Briggs for taking on the onerous task of minutes' secretary, which has made the job of club secretary so much more enjoyable.

The club has had numerous bookings throughout the year, some more easy to sort than others but we now have a good system in place where all club bookings are made between myself and Kelly Heath at the Leisure Centre. Ayo has also made some direct bookings for the hall for training inside when the weather has been bad and this has gone well. There are some bookings that the LC took for this year that have not taken place due to COVID and those concerned are looking to book again for next year. At the moment this is all dependent on when the season starts and finishes.

I have tried to pass on the RFU community updates when I have received them and mostly that has gone ok, with the odd exception. There have been some points which been helpful to us and we have acted upon these if need be.

The payment of players form was returned on time and, as far as I'm concerned, we should now be able to apply for any monies that the RFU or D&W put up.

As of yet, I've not returned the information for the Dorset & Wilts handbook but once the officers have been finalised I'll let them have the updated information.

We have received some COVID signage, hand sanitizer and dispensers from the D&WRFU which I have brought down to the club. I

've had some communication with the Natwest Rugby Force organisers at the RFU and I'm hoping to get some more promotional materials for the rugby force weekend in September.

#### **Treasurer's Report – Stuart King:**

Stuart reported that the balance at the previous year end was £71,909 against £63,086 this year, thus a net loss of £8,823. However this was mainly due to costs incurred with the kitchen refurbishment, the repairs to the floodlights and the French tour. Income was down this year with a small drop in Junior membership. Expenses were roughly the same as the previous year though there was a large deficit in bar profit. This coming year will be a great challenge and the club should be mindful of any unnecessary expenditure. There will be little sponsorship income and certainly a bar loss in 2020.

Stuart announced that he will resign as Treasurer as from 31<sup>st</sup> August and Ayo Fraser will be taking over the role. He is submitting the necessary forms to remove John Patten and himself as from that date.

Stuart Briggs proposed and Allan Staerck seconded that the Accounts be approved.

Julian Hussey thanked Stuart for being a valued member of the club for so many years. Peter Brook reiterated Julian's words presenting him with a silver tankard. Stuart was made an Honorary Life Member of the club.

### **Junior Chairman's Report – Noel Gregory:**

The junior section had 190 registered players.

Although a truncated season due to Coronavirus, there was success across the age groups.

- The U14s and U16s reached the Dorset & Wiltshire Plate Final, beating big club sides in both the group section and the Semi- Finals. It was really disappointing that the finals could not be played due to Lockdown.
- From the U7s, U8s, U9s, U10s, U11s, U12s, U13s, U15s, and Colts, there were key victories against major club sides, home and away.
- Players from the Junior section attended County Trials and were selected.
- Although the Junior Section is short of Qualified Coaches and volunteers, Lloyd Vercoe, Ben Stephens, and Matt Elliott were exemplary in Coaching the U7s to U10s, often doubling up and covering more than one pitch.
- 'The Three Musketeer Coaches', Ben Stephens, Lloyd Vercoe and Lewis Dunn, were instrumental in upgrading the kitchen to its current high standard. The Club extends its thanks for their hard work.
- Due to lockdown, our Twinned Rugby Club, Lège-Cap-Ferret, agreed that we would postpone their Junior Section visit, and the new dates are April 15th to 18th 2021, subject to Govt and RFU agreement.
- It is our proposal to commence this season's Junior Rugby on 6th September 2020, conforming to RFU Stage C requirements, but subject to the Leisure Centre's permission.

### **Senior Coach's Report – Ayo Fraser:**

Following relegation to Dorset & Wilts 2 South, the 2019/20 season for us was about rebuilding with a view to gaining immediate promotion back to D&W 1 South, on the back of a deeper and more integrated squad.

As a coaching and playing group, we recognised that it will be the little things that counted during the season – we set ourselves simple goals for the season on and off the pitch, around commitment to being inclusive, commitment to training, commitment to being available for matches and commitment to socialising as a group – this laid the foundation for our promotion this season, as demonstrated by the integration of Colts and new players, increased and sustained numbers at training, full squads for every match and some truly memorable social events.

We started by running several weekly "Ready for Rugby" fitness session during the off-season, bringing together both Senior and Colts players, as well as new players. This paid off when we started the season with our now annual 10s tournament, which gave us a chance to get some rugby fitness into our legs and bodies and worked on some aspects of our play we wanted to use during the season.

This helped us to a strong start and we underpinned our potential with a fine bonus point win away to Dorchester 2's in our second game of the season, going on to win 9 out of our first 10 matches, with our only loss of the season coming away to W heatsheaf Cabin crew in a tight encounter just before the Christmas break. This consistent form saw us voted as the D&W Team of the Month for February – a timely recognition for an upwardly mobile team.

We bounced back after the break with a tight and hard-won victory against Dorchester at home, with a last-minute penalty conversion from Mitch Waters sealing the victory. We continued with our strong form and momentum by winning 4 of our next 5 matches, with our winning sequence punctuated by a disappointing draw against Poole in filthy conditions – our season was abruptly brought to an end by Covid-19 pandemic with 4 matches remaining to play (and with us top of the table).

During this run of fixtures, we witnessed the amazing camaraderie of rugby when the rugby community lost one of our players (Jamie Davies of East Dorset RFC) and when we hosted East Dorset in their first match after the tragedy. We truly came together to support East Dorset and Jamie's family by raising money and ensuring the day was one of remembrance and honouring Jamie's memory – a truly remarkable day!

Once the season was cut short by the pandemic, we had a few weeks of waiting nervously to find out the outcome of the season (growing increasingly despondent as several sports and other leagues in the UK&I null and voided their seasons), but we were relieved and elated to learn that we won the league and were promoted based on the average points per game formula – a fantastic achievement for the club and especially the group of players who showed commitment, tenacity and resilience throughout the season!

I am very proud that during the season we were able to better integrate with our Colts and managed to bring through a number of Colts players into the Senior team - who will hopefully go on to have long and successful careers with the senior club.

As we move forward into the new season and all the challenges that come with it in terms of the current pandemic and the fact we will be playing at a higher level, we will look to build on the solid foundations put in place last year, both in terms of our team culture and style of play to launch and sustain a successful season in D&W 1 South.

Our success in the season was made possible by the support from our committee, supporters, senior players group and pitch side support– it has truly been an embodiment of Rugby's core values of Teamwork, Respect, Enjoyment, Discipline and Sportsmanship and I want to personally take this opportunity to thank you all for your various contributions throughout the season.

**Safeguarding Officer's Report:** Attached

### **Presentation of Trophies:**

Before presenting the trophies, Ayo thanked all the players for their commitment in the previous year, specially mentioning the strong leadership group.

As a special thank you to Han Leins, the physio, Tom Gamwell presented her with a bouquet of flowers from all the players.

Sicknote Award – for most appearances in the treatment room: George Hussey

Donkey of the Year: Dan Butler

Young Player of the Season: Will Murley

Coach's Player of the Year: Tom Gamwell

Players' Player of the Year: Mitch Waters

Clubman of the Year: Ben Stephens. Although Noel Gregory worked very hard in bringing the kitchen refurbishment project together, Ben put many hours of work into the kitchen upgrading. Noel was also thanked for his work by Peter Brook and presented with a silver tankard.

### **Appointment of Officers:**

President	Peter Brook
Chairman	Julian Hussey
Vice Chairman	Stuart Briggs
Secretary	Simon Hussey
Treasurer	Ayo Fraser

Junior Chairman	Noel Gregory
1 <sup>st</sup> XV Captain	Andrew Livingston
1 <sup>st</sup> XV Team Manager	Tom Gamwell
Senior Coach	Ayo Fraser
Fixture Secretary	Kevin Harte
Social Secretary	Dan Butler / Rich Layzell
Membership Secretary	To be co-opted
Safeguarding Officer	Simon Peck
GMS Registration	Guy Livingston
LC Liaison Officer	Allan Staerck
Publicity/Press Officer	Stuart Briggs
DBS Check Officer	Charlie English
Referee Liaison Officer	Louis Brown
VP Coordinator	Peter Brook
Grounds Maintenance	Guy Livingston
Minutes Secretary	Kathy Briggs

**Any Other Business:**

- a) Noel Gregory proposed a vote of thanks to Guy Livingston for his sterling work on keeping the pitches in such good condition. This was seconded by Mitch Waters.
- b) Rob Sullivan asked that the Clubhouse should be open for all internationals and Friday night games in order to maximise income from the bar.
- c) Charlie Crane has set up an Easyfund raising website in which 5% from purchases from certain websites will go to the club.
- d) Stuart Briggs thanked Tom Gamwell for all his work on setting up the BRFC website. There are opportunities to develop this further through SNAP, including possible sponsors advertising to increase revenue to the club.
- e) Ayo Fraser advised that currently our first match is 26<sup>th</sup> September so access will be required to all facilities. Allan Staerck will take this forward with Will Thrower. We will need to work closely with the Leisure Centre to resolve any access issues.
- f) Karen Hussey advised that we are advertising for a Kitchen Manager. Unless we find someone, there will be no food available on Sundays.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.40pm.

Signed: **Club Chairman** \_\_\_\_\_ **Julian Hussey**

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**Present:**

Julian Hussey  
Peter Brook  
Noel Gregory  
Allan Staerck  
Louis Browne  
Stuart King  
Simon Hussey  
Karen Hussey  
Jasmine Hussey  
Stuart Briggs  
Kathy Briggs  
Gavin Norman  
Kevin Hart  
John Patten  
John Trump  
John Greig

Ayo Fraser  
Tom Gamwell  
Andrew Livingston  
Mitch Waters  
Nathan Herbert  
George Hussey  
Rob Sullivan  
Dan Butler  
Rich Layzell  
Toby James  
James Tuck  
Jack Cude  
Hugo Cowley  
Charlie Crane  
Han Leins