



## **Marlow Rugby Union Football Club Ltd**

### **Annual General Meeting Minutes**

Thursday 12 June 2025, 7.00pm

#### **1. Opening and constitutional notes**

The Annual General Meeting of Marlow RUFC was held in person at the Club on Thursday 12 June 2025 at 7.00pm.

#### **2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Robyn Catterall, Hywel Luke, Phil Parriss, Red Ross Lee, Gwyn Stone and Andrea Davidson.

#### **3. Attendees**

Paul Sharp, Robert Clayton, Nigel Ashton, Leighton Jones, Kerryn Newman, Neil Brooks, Rod Duguid, Guy Ayland, Tim Platt, Rebeka Blazey, Alison Hyde, Ian Petty, David Potton, Josh Richardson, Dan Luke, David Sumpter, Dave Drever, John Haddock, Lucy Haddock, Kudzi Mlambo, Nick Carvey, AJ Lord, Jeremy Povey.

Guest: Steve Blake.

#### **4. Approval of minutes of previous AGM**

The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting had been pre-circulated by email to members.

<b>Proposed by</b>	<b>Josh Richardson</b>
<b>Seconded by</b>	Kerryn Newman
<b>Decision</b>	Approved by majority as a true and accurate record.

#### **5. Chairman's review of the 2024/25 season**

Nigel Ashton gave the Chairman's review of the season. A copy of the Chairman's report was circulated at the time.

- Dave Drever commented that the Club may be missing opportunities with local businesses and sponsorship. He volunteered to help build a commercial strategy and take co-ownership of this work. The Chairman accepted the offer, thanked him, and noted that even a few hours of members' time can make an enormous difference to the Club.
- Josh Richardson welcomed Dave Drever's offer to help build local business connections, noting that Marlow, Globe Park and the High Street contain many businesses and that members should help build connections wherever possible.

- David Drever referred to resilience and mindset sessions for his age group, noted that he was speaking to Kevin O’Byrne, and said he would be interested in talking to others who run age groups and may also be interested.

## 6. Finance Director’s report and approval of accounts

Tim Platt presented the Finance Director’s report and reviewed the accounts for the year ending May 2024. He noted that the accounts were in line with what had been presented at the previous AGM and that there were no unusual items.

### 6.1 RFU grant and related discussion

- David Sumpter asked whether the Club knew it would lose the RFU grant.
- Tim Platt explained that the RFU grant process had changed and required an annual declaration. The Club did not sign the declaration because, under the strict definitions around payment to players, the Club considered that third parties may have provided benefits in kind.
- Robert Clayton explained the payment to players rules.
- Nigel Ashton noted that no grants were available in any event and that the Club had raised the position with County, who had confirmed that the Club had acted appropriately.
- Leighton Jones added that RFU grants now generally have to be match-funded and that the Club had not applied for one for many years.
- Ian Petty noted that COVID support grants would not have been given under those circumstances. Tim Platt confirmed that those grants were separate.
- Jeremy Povey and Nigel Ashton confirmed that the position did not affect international ticket allocations, which are based on factors including games recorded in GMS and registered 15-a-side players.

### 6.2 Approval of accounts

The accounts for FY2023/24 had been pre-circulated to members by email.

<b>Proposed by</b>	<b>John Haddock</b>
<b>Seconded by</b>	Josh Richardson
<b>Decision</b>	Approved unanimously. The accounts will be signed and submitted to the FCA.

### 6.3 Financial position and commercial income

- Tim Platt noted that the Club had invested significantly in rugby during the season, while income had not matched the levels achieved in recent years.
- Cash reserves remained strong, with reserves of approximately £246,000 compared with approximately £265,000 at the same point the previous year. The movement in cash did not exactly match the profit and loss position because of accruals, including pitch maintenance not yet paid.
- Tim Platt warned that if the Club continued with the same structure, it was likely to see a similar financial result, and that additional commercial effort was needed. The Club had lost one of its international ticket sponsors and needed to fill that gap.
- Tim Platt noted that the Club did not need to panic, but could not continue running a deficit indefinitely. He referred to the period around 2008 when the Club had a £70,000 NatWest loan withdrawn, creating a serious financial position, and said the Club must avoid returning to that type of situation.
- Leighton Jones referred to prospective Thames Water income, noted that events and revenues had been affected by Thames Water’s presence, and said the increased cost of senior rugby reflected broader delivery across age groups down to under-9s.
- Josh Richardson said the commercial side had not delivered enough in the current and prior season, but that a new Commercial Director could help the Club pick up the slack and provide value back to the local community.
- Steve Blake noted that the rugby investment was not like-for-like coaching spend but more holistic Club-wide coaching across age groups. He also urged the Club to make it easier for people to donate.

- Tim Platt noted the Club relies on volunteers who do things, and that post-COVID work pressures had made volunteering more difficult. A part-time bookkeeper had been taken on and trained over the previous nine months to reduce the load on the volunteer Finance Director role.
- Kerryn Newman noted that volunteers do not have enough time to do all the work and more should be encouraged to step up.
- Leighton Jones thanked Tim Platt for guarding the Club's financial buffer.
- Jeremy Povey noted that the Club did not want to eat into reserves.
- Paul Sharp thanked Tim Platt for his service and there was a round of applause.

## 7. Honorary Life Memberships

Paul Sharp, seconded by Robert Clayton, proposed that Tim Platt, Leighton Jones and Steve Blake be appointed as Honorary Life Members of Marlow Rugby Union Football Club and this decision was put to the AGM, having been previously approved by the executive committee excluding those named proposed for honorary life membership.

<b>Proposed by</b>	<b>Paul Sharp</b>
<b>Seconded by</b>	Robert Clayton
<b>Decision</b>	Approved unanimously. Tim Platt, Leighton Jones and Steve Blake were appointed Honorary Life Members.

## 8. Membership fees for the forthcoming season

The Management Committee proposed the membership fees for the forthcoming season, as set out in Appendix 1. The proposal was presented by Nigel Ashton and seconded by Rod Duguid. Although there was no constitutional requirement to put the fees to a vote, the Executive Committee put the proposal to members for endorsement in the spirit of openness and transparency.

### 8.1 Discussion

- Ian Petty asked what value non-playing members receive.
- David Sumpter stated that all 45 Swans pay as non-playing members.
- John Haddock stated that around 20 non-playing members are not eligible for international tickets. The Club was looking to simplify and explain the offer, including 20% bar discount, discounted clubhouse hire, and international tickets. He also raised the possibility of working with local businesses to offer member discounts around town.
- Ian Petty said the Club needed to sell the membership proposition better and reach people who do not currently attend the Club.
- Tim Platt noted that around 500 people actively use the Club card, which represented an opportunity.
- David Potton asked about total membership. It was noted that the Club had around 900 members including children, and approximately 580 adults.
- Kerryn Newman noted that the Club did not currently have a Marketing Director. Guy Ayland said the discussion showed the need for someone in marketing.
- Leighton Jones said the Club was looking at additional benefits, including possible corporate membership of Bisham Abbey gym. Nigel Ashton said there was a genuine case for approaching local shops about Marlow RUFC discounts. Dave Drever volunteered to go around local businesses.
- John Haddock noted that the Club is a member of the Chamber of Commerce.
- Josh Richardson referred to a pitch-side banner package of £275, including social media coverage of sponsorship and buffets before 1st or 2nd team matches.
- Tim Platt noted that it was difficult to stand out among emails and social media.
- Steve Blake thanked the Club for the honour of Honorary Life Membership and said that sponsorship had been difficult that year but remains a staunch club supporter and sponsor. He urged the Club to reach

people who are not at the Club every Sunday, including former members and supporters who still care deeply about the Club. He suggested that a clear monthly giving proposition could be effective.

## 8.2 Membership Fees

<b>Proposed by</b>	<b>Nigel Ashton</b>
<b>Seconded by</b>	Rod Duguid
<b>Decision</b>	Approved unanimously. The proposed membership fees for the forthcoming season were adopted.

## 9. Election of Officers for 2025/26

The election of Officers was uncontested. The new Officers took office at the close of the AGM.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Appointed</b>
Chairman	Nigel Ashton
President	Paul Sharp
Honorary Club Secretary	Robert Clayton
Finance Director	Kudzi Mlambo
Commercial Director	Jeremy Povey
Marketing and Communications Director	Vacant
Club Captain	Josh Richardson
Director of Strategy and Development	John Haddock

## 10. Election of other positions

<b>Position</b>	<b>Appointed</b>
Director of Senior Men's Rugby	Nicholas Carvey
Director of Touch Rugby	Robert Clayton
Director of Academy Rugby	Rod Duguid
Director of Youth and Colts Rugby	Leighton Jones
Director of Minis Rugby	Phil Parriss
Welfare and Safeguarding Officer	Red Ross Lee
Director of Ladies/Girls Rugby	Kerryn Newman
Fixtures Secretary	David Potton
Membership Secretary	John Haddock
200 Club Manager	Andrew Webb
International Ticket Secretary	Rob Thompson

Paul Sharp asked members to consider volunteering, noting that in the current economic climate the Club has to pay staff more, so additional volunteer help is valuable.

## 11. Any Other Business

### 11.1 Volunteering

- Guy Ayland asked whether there was a list of volunteer help needed. Kerryn Newman said that people are more likely to volunteer where there is a specific task rather than only large roles, and noted that there was no current Volunteer Coordinator.
- Leighton Jones said the Club has RFU-defined job descriptions for committee roles, but not the same level of detail for specific jobs.
- Guy Ayland noted that the outdoor "green stuff" works, but other areas also need help. He asked whether people could be rota'd in.
- Josh Richardson said the Executive Committee had not been good enough at defining what it needed from the membership. The Committee needed to do less itself, find more people to help, and give more responsibility to people around the Club.
- Steve Blake said the most important point in volunteering was not allowing a task to take over people's lives, suggesting defined, time-limited tasks such as two hours a week.
- Tim Platt said that people who want to suggest ideas for the Club should also be prepared to step up themselves.

- Jeremy Povey noted that a team of keen volunteers had been brought together to help on the finance and commercial side, showing that the approach can work.
- Nick Carvey said the Club needs people to do things and should ask people directly to help.
- Paul Sharp said the Club would prepare a list and put timelines against it.
- John Haddock said the Club needs to communicate what it is doing, which then provides a selling point.
- Josh Richardson said the Club was in a much better place politically and as a community than in previous years, and was more connected across the Club.

### **11.2 Scoreboard**

- David Sumpter asked about the position on a scoreboard.
- Nigel Ashton confirmed that the intention was to install an electronic scoreboard through a sponsor and that it should hopefully be in place before the season. He confirmed that a sponsor had been found and the matter was in motion.

### **11.3 Volunteer day**

- Guy Ayland asked whether there was a plan for a volunteer day. Josh Richardson indicated that this would probably be in September and that members should watch this space.

### **11.4 Mental health and wellbeing**

- Leighton Jones thanked members for the honour given to him and referred to the Club's work around mental health protection.
- Paul Sharp referred to the LooseHeads charity, the BNU Femi memorial match, and the wider responsibility members have to each other.
- Josh Richardson spoke about the stigma around men not talking about mental health, including within age-grade rugby. He said the Club wanted mental health to be at the forefront of members' minds and to build a supportive environment where people can share problems and access support when needed.
- Paul Sharp encouraged anyone with a problem to speak to the safeguarding team and not simply walk away.

## **12. Close**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.34pm.