



Aldwinians RUFC

Lockdown meeting minutes – 6 May 2020 (attendance via Zoom)

Trustees in attendance: William Thorpe (WT) – Chairman
Trevor Hulmes (TH) – Treasurer
Ian Wilson (IW) – Trustee, Club Member/Former Player
Kevin Turner-Hague (KTH) – Trustee for Playing Club Member
Katy Davies (KD) – Trustee Club Member/Ladies Team Admin
Tyler Gibson (TG) – Future Assistant for KTH
Ian Spivey (IS) – Trustee, Development Officer, House & Grounds Maintenance/Club Member
Alan Whalley (AW) – Club Member/Senior Fixtures Secretary
Christine Spivey (CS) – Hon Secretary/Membership Secretary/CSO Club Member

Contributors: Robert Palmer (RP) – Senior Player/Club Member/Admin for members Forum
Lee Bradley (LB) – Club President/Former Player
Chris Rushworth (CR) – Former Player/Life Member

Apologies: None

REVIEWING MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

WT Confirmed everyone present was aware of agenda from last week's meeting.
Read minutes from last meeting.
Clarifying to attendees if anything is said that they don't agree with, to let him know.
WT asking if anyone has any issues with points from last week's meeting.

FURTHER DISCUSSION ON MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

Furlough

TH Furlough – some Committee members still working whilst on Furlough ie CS
WT Jane also comes to club and effectively "works" we have no choice it has to be done. Jane's working on the instructions from Marstons as to best way forward with an inert bar cellar.
TH Dictated by brewery list of requirements to ensure we can reopen again without having to install any new equipment because they haven't been looked after.

Direct debit (DD) options and different systems available

TH When this year's membership runs out, DD available enough sign up. Was all ready to go ahead but last meeting minutes suggested no discussion on DDs for current season.
RP Asking if it was discussed, are there minutes available to view
WT Confirmed it was discussed at beginning of season when new rates agreed - decided we'd only get annual membership this year and look progressively throughout the summer at building in match subs too. So, it isn't new thinking, but the way you've looked at it is new thinking and if that can be achievable, then the club is going to benefit, but those schemes were looked at and the membership forms included - you filled in one yourself to pay by direct debit?
RP Stated completed and submitted DD form but never charged. Did it quickly to show others how easy it was, but then it was never debited.
WT Are you getting confused with the 200 club?
RP No, definitely the membership form. I was waiting for the direct debit to come out but it never did and it was for membership.
TH Just to go back to the AGM, when we talked about membership there, apologise for being a bit late but we had enough numbers to set up by end of March, so it was talked about.
IW TH is right, it was spoken about earlier on in the season, however, in the last 2 weeks, we seem to have made some progress in different ways, eg Bottomline and so if that can work and those projected figures can work?



TH	Great renew sections of membership but needs to be weighed one against the other, so Bottomline enquiry should be set against what GMS collection of direct debits can do effectively for the club.
LB	Asks TH if aware there's also an integration through Pitchero via a company called GoCardless?
TH	Confirms is aware.
LB	Approx. 70% of facebook forum members use Pitchero for bits so that would seem to be ideal avenue to collect membership. Not quite complaints, but a lot of the time, Pitchero is out of date completely.
TH	Wouldn't go that route with Pitchero because it's become much more commercial than it was in the early days – lots of ads unless you're prepared to pay a top level premium for it. But, if you're looking to the future with GMS, that also offers setting up your own website, so everything would be together. It's effective for membership secretaries because you've already got your bank, all registered players, telephone numbers and address details that all tie in to the payment system. Worth looking at alongside Bottomline before any decision is made?
KTH	Sometimes GMS is really slow and out of date, I had this morning – match cards coming through from last season, so GMS isn't the best system in the world. Do we want to be tied into something financially that doesn't seem to work very well at the minute?
TH	Think you need to talk to other clubs and get feedback from those who are using GMS from a finance aspect.
KTH	Just a comment, we've seen Alan posts them out but match cards coming through from last season.
TH	Not really that concerned about match cards, I'm more concerned about collection of funds and linking those to the membership details.
IS	Had county meeting last night, where they were sorting out something about the match cards and they've actually found out that they've been going in some sort of spam box somewhere, so they're now sorting that out.
CR	I can understand what TH is saying obviously with all info on system already, and with CS having a membership, if DD for whole subs and membership could be rolled into one, with one figure broke down over 12 months, then it would work swiftly. I would have thought from an administration and implementation point of view, it would make sense if we do it. I agree with TH that we need to look at that. I've got no experience of that so I can't comment on it, I can only give you on the experience of the ones that I've dealt with, after having spoken with the two companies that I have. Well, I've used one because my system integrates with it, but having spoken to Bottomline in their rep and the various clubs in the area, it does seem that people have got that for a simplistic approach, ie relatively easy to implement. Reps pretty good, come back and assist. Options available: 1) URL on your website; 2) email member link for them to log on; or 3) letter where they complete form and we input it ourselves. Agree with TH we have to put altogether and choose best to suit
Existing RFU numbers and log in details	
KTH	GMS works with RFU number. How do we manage social non-playing members? Two different systems for collecting memberships?
CS	No. Everybody has an RFU number on GMS. All parents have an RFU number. Got to log in and create your own account.
KD	How do you access? Tried while ago, created account but still couldn't get on.
CS	Might only be able to see own personal details initially due to certain levels of access, depending on position within club. Depends how much access you've got. All have access to own personal information.
RP	Pros and cons to everything. Will it deter people if they've got to fill everything out themselves?
IW	Need simplest, easiest way for somebody who's willing to part with their money, one that gives us biggest return. Got a captive audience but could get on to something if we act quickly?
CS	All playing members, especially kids must re-register with RFU through GMS. I'm not allowed to register players anymore due to GDPR. So, every child in club has to re-register every year via GMS. Parents have to create account for U18s and those parents' details are already there for paying membership.



TH Can produce reports from GMS to see missed payments – can set up for a certain period. Eg, remainder of year would be 4 x £20 for £80 membership by August, and if one missed, will get report to say so. Maybe need someone from FirstSports to give presentation to us?

Summary of all systems available for DDs

RP Need a comparative

TH Similar to CR suggestion, maybe their rep could give us presentation too? Any new scheme we use, incorporating all categories discussed last week will need bit more info. Let's see numbers and what it will produce, but really looking at September new year because quite few paid in full this year. If they see change in system half way through, and rest not being collected, will cause problems.

Facebook forum and membership proposals

RP Likewise. 200 members on FB group now and they're pleased with fees proposed. Lots willing to pay family amounts etc, and it works both ways? Can only go off last year - £9,000 in minis and juniors in fees. 266 junior members - 110 of them in the group (using questions I've asked), rest are players.

TH All their details are on GMS as existing members. Already have a weight of information that ties into finance side of GMS.

RP Makes sense. Also got weight of information going off what they're prepared to pay with fees presented. They're happy. £15 a month for one child times roughly 110 parents with one child - nearly £20,000 year. Considerably lot more money for club rather than paying one off fee.

TH Agree, obviously major turnaround for income generation from members.

Actions to take to decide which DD system to use

KTH Summary: 1) what are people prepared to pay - seems to be quite well established? 2) How do we collect it? Which platform do we use?

TH As Treasurer, we just want more money in.

RP Some do, some don't like GMS. We've gone away and looked at and spoke to other clubs and where they use Bottomline, they swear by it. Can only use what's tried and tested elsewhere?

IW Do trustees just need to meet as trustees and vote which?

AW CR have Dukinfield used GMS before or have they just gone straight to Bottomline?

CR Spoke to membership secretary who said they've used Bottomline for 5 years, but just said they used something else before, wouldn't go into it, so unsure.

RP Glossop use GMS.

CS Sedgley Park and Broughton Park use GMS.

AW Need to speak to Glossop and Broughton Park to see if they've got any probs and what their thoughts are before can make decision

CS I'll talk to Sedgley Park - I know him.

LB Three options 1) GMS; 2) Bottomline; and 3) Pitchero/GoCardless. Why don't we put together pros and cons for next meeting? I'll look at GoCardless/Pitchero, TH – GMS, CR - Bottomline.

Current paid memberships and recompense

TH What about current season re membership?

WT Think there's only about 14 people paid it in the end.

LB We could implement fees at cost we've said, but just keep it rolling, obviously soon as we can start and sorted out which vehicle going to use. Some will say, no I'm not starting till September and always going to happen, but if we roll it out and levels are fair and it's half as well taken up as was received on forum, lot of people will start it up sooner. Quicker we start, say target June, we've 3 months. Eg £18.50 membership for player, revenue £55.50 already?

TH Need an allowance if setting up new system for members who've already paid. Can't be overlooked in fairness to those who have paid.

RP Give them 50% discount, so membership from this year brought forward to next?



AW Has to be some sort of recompense for fact that they were loyal enough to pay when large number just point blank refused to pay subs.

KTH What about just reimbursing? Once start date agreed, is there any way of refunding those that have already paid in full?

Suggestions on how to recompense existing paid members

LB Could make them all a contribution of say £30 on membership card that can be spent behind bar?

All Agreed.

Target start dates

LB By absolute latest, need to put this in place by end of June.

All Agreed

Issuing new membership cards and expanding Membership Section of Committee

LB TH - what are actual mechanics of issuing cards?

TH Soon as membership form received, card issued on system directly. I've been doing that because it was a new system. Not really role for Treasurer, but for Membership Secretary.

RP Suggest it's not physically CS who goes with hand out to get the forms filled but obviously CS keeps record of membership?

TH RP means membership section needs more people taking parts of it to make it all work. Membership collection, money through DD system, collecting forms, able to issue cards promptly. Needs working at as a larger team with numbers we're talking about.

WT Was suggested that we offer 10% discount for playing members on beer. Part of problem was contrast between what our prices and everywhere else - prob about 50p on a pint of lager. We were one of most expensive outlets in Droylsden at time.

Suggested revenue from non members

RP Other rugby clubs give their members 10% discount and then tend put 10% more on functions and use different till. Is that something that we can do?

TH Should have always been doing that. We used to. There is a button that you can charge an extra 10p.

WT But then our prices rose to a point where it was no longer, other than hard faced asking for it.

TH I disagree. For totally outside function, you've got a captive audience.

WT Yes, but large percentage of functions are family bookings?

RP I don't see why not? You go anywhere else and they do it!

WT Agreed. Should go back to it.

TH People using a room like that expect to pay more than if they were just stood in a pub somewhere.

KTH We need some functions first don't we?

All Agreed, we need to open first!

Maintenance of club - recent, historic and future

WT I'd just like to say through KTH and the people who've been doing the work this week, what a huge difference they've made on the environment of the club and that's half the battle. You know, you go anywhere with a scruffy venue like that – they've worked really hard on it.

RP Can I add to that? A member has asked me to ask the question...he's really pleased that we've got volunteers doing the work, but he's reiterated about Colin who sold all his tools to the club, so that all this work, the maintenance and stuff can be undertaken, but he's wondering why this needs doing and who is Chair of the House and the Grounds as such? Do we have someone?

IS Well, I've been doing it for about the last 3 years and I've also been doing it before that obviously with Colin Murray and Colin Shields.



- RP** So how come we've got all this work then that needs doing?
- TH** You always get work done in the closed season.
- IS** There's always work wants doing and a couple of others have said this through the week.
- RP** So, there's always work that needs doing?
- IS** Yeah, and there's always like I say, I've been down for day for the last, well whatever doing jobs in daytime in with Jim
- RP** Would you say you need a hand then? Or do we need someone who's...
- IS** Yeah, more than one what?
- RP** Pardon?
- IS** It just went off.
- CS** He didn't hear what you said RP, because you went off.
- RP**ok right sorry, do you need help with that? We've got this team together now. Going forward, does the Chair of the Grounds need to be a bit of a team really? Because we're getting volunteers here and what KTH has done on the members list has been fantastic! We're getting people asking can I come down and help.
- IS** If they want to come down and give us a lift through the day time, that's fine, I've never had a problem with that.
- RP** I know what you're saying, but like we said in the last meeting – the power of social media and organisation, and what we use it for and how we utilise it is really important. What I'm trying to suggest maybe, is if we have some sort of Grounds Team that can come together once a week, put a list online and then these jobs get ticked off as such and you can implement this into the group?
- IS** I'll put a few things together and then we'll look at doing them.
- Power of social media**
- IW** Another thing with social media, if we get not just the same people doing it, we'd get bigger client base and people who've got vested interest.
- AW** Agree.
- IW** More people that help, will take ownership of that little bit and whole thing will grow. But, unfortunately if we keep it to same few people, we won't progress.
- KTH** That's what I'm trying to do. Garner came and started jet washing patio. I'm trying to get other people involved and take ownership and a bit of pride in club. KD was down today, Matt Birch came with his lad and helped Danny scrub posts. We've got Emma coming on Saturday to cut some logs. 2 from ladies team coming tomorrow to paint rails, so I'm trying to get as many – broad a range of people involved as poss. Example, we put a message out to see if anybody has got any astro turf and this afternoon, couple of rolls of astro turf dropped off free of charge.
- RP** Which leads to me talking last week about a clerk to take minutes? There is someone willing, someone new, a parent willing to get involved and from another angle, she can pass information on as well?
- New non-voting clerk**
- KD** Yeah, Yvonne McGuire, mum from the U12s. She'd be happy to take recordings and type up minutes. Why not trial it? Save somebody else doing meetings, give Yvonne a shot and see what people think?
- RP** What do you think? Is that something you want as a Committee? As already stated, CS is already safeguarding, Membership Secretary - TH is already helping there. I really want to get this members' page going and to do that, we need instant information. If we can make something like the minutes easier to get back to members, they'll feel involved and has whole knock on effect.
- WT** Yes from me. Any other topics?



Bar Chairman

- RP** WH – we were talking in minutes about me asking to be Chairman? It was Bar Chairman. You can go away and discuss, but if I'm on that side of things, I could help with cards etc and implementing memberships, which takes a load of CS as well?
- WT** No problem, unless anybody else has any comments on it?
- RP** Think you should discuss it as Committee and see what I'm proposing. I've put these figures towards you and I'd like to see it through.
- WT** Would be delighted.

Current finances, applications and potential cost reductions

- TH** SportEngland grant I've sent in is actually for about £5,500. £10,000 is the total, but got to be specific about why. You can cover utility bills, various things so I've honed it on recent utility bills, asked them to cover gas and electric because that's something specific I can show them. SportEngland have done some good allocations to rugby clubs so haven't heard yet but will see what comes back.
- KTH** TH – On Saturday when I was at club, heating was on in main function room. Very warm and just wondering is this something we can control? Can it be turned off?
- IS** Don't know, will have a look tomorrow. Its on for whatever temp is, so might be just blowing air out in that room?
- TH** That's fine, we're looking all the time to try and do things to cut down costs.
- TH** Updating you on where we are with 3 to 6 month forecast I gave. Spoken to Tameside and of course, have no events at moment. Am going to get March payment refunded which is £360 and they're putting stop on any charges for next 3/6 months - long as it takes until we're open again. They did that pretty quickly, so that's more savings. Also, had first tranche of furlough money in yesterday, which is around £3,800. Means we've got about £7,700 credit balance at moment. Need to sort overheads and trying to cut any other costs out that we can in meantime or defer them.
- RP** We bank with Barclays. They're doing free overdraft fees and free business banking till 12 June. Is that something we need to apply for or have we got it automatically?
- TH** They said it would be automatic. See when charges come through, if not actioned, I'll be chasing.
- WT** Have we made any progress on loans? On brewery loan as it is now?
- CR** Basically investigations I've made, feedback wasn't great. Partly due to club's financial position. Only one lender really interested in lending and rate wasn't attractive. I think best option we may have (after discussions with other members) is maybe going to membership with a loan offer. Has worked at other clubs. A golf club did it, raised £50,000 in weeks to refurbish kitchens. There are third parties who facilitate it so its all above board and you meet all legal implications.
- Obviously, still bit of work to do; look at sums and obviously need flexibility that brewery loan gives so we'd be asking quite a bit from members to say during lean times, we'd ask for bit of flexibility and maybe just pay interest, then throughout season when its good, pay it back?
- WT** Actually, I was talking to a group, not than long ago 7/8 people and 3/4 of them put their hands up when topic came up and showed interest.
- CR** I think we could get £20,000 in 12 months. So, if we went to brewery on renewal of current loan and said is it possible we take this £20,000 members' loan and pay brewery that, on an agreement we could reduce balance by 20% (roughly £100,000 that we owe brewery), if we got £20,000 in. I think current balance is 160 barrels a year, could we take that down by 32 barrels so at least we get that flexibility. So we're not tied and trying to do it all at once. Maybe once members saw that we were getting this discounted beer in at some point, more may choose to buy in? Does that sound reasonable?

Future timescale of meetings

- All** Agreed fortnightly meetings for foreseeable future.

Several Aldwinians inactive Facebook pages

- CS** I've noticed that we have 40 different Facebook sites that are ally to the club. A lot of them want closing, we're going to have to work to find out how to close them and who's got them.
- RP** I've been doing that CS.



KD I have as well.

RP Will look into further and revert back.

200 club

RP Shall we draw the 200 club now? Members on the forum have been asking when it is due, as Pitchero says this week

TH The numbers that we pick out, will be subject to me checking that they've paid the last £10 at the beginning of the month.

£220, Number 60 - Tim Flint

£130, Number 13 - Alan Jackson

£70, Number 41 - Tony Palin

£45, Number 52 – Janine Conway.

Just over 90 in the 200 club. Its something that needs boosting and generating because if we've got all these people in memberships, then they can help the club this way as well by joining the 200 club.

Miscellaneous

LB Can we look at using Gift Aid for non-playing members?

TH Yes, its not just in that area either, you can gift aid in other ways as well.

LB Another one from me, Steve Marrow on the Aldwinians members forum brought up walking rugby. So, for the older players, people who have been injured, people that you know are just still looking to be involved with the club and rugby.

WT When I had a meeting with Phil Clarke, he put me on to, there's a girl at Broughton Park who organises it all, I discussed it all with Steve, he was going to get it set up at our club as well.

LB I've been talking, Steve Marrow said something about Sale. Will contact Sale I've got a contact about walking rugby and also a contact for the ladies rugby club rugby team as well at our place. I don't know whether you want to do that KD rather than me?

KD Yeah, happy to talk to them, yeah.

KTH The other person who is really keen to get involved is Rob Hope. He's got all the tickets and he actually set that up at Congleton so he's actually done this before.

LB Yeah, and he's got all the kit as well so it wouldn't cost us a bean!

Next meeting and this meeting's recording

RP Ok, are we done? Do you want me to set up a meeting for 2 weeks' time then?

All Agreed