

Annex A

Kent County Rugby Football Union Limited

Report of the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting held at Blackheath FC on 29th September 2025

The Honorary Secretary of the Kent County RFU, Nigel Fray, opened the meeting and welcomed those present, including County Officers, Life Vice-Presidents, members of the KCRFU's committees, and representatives of clubs.

The following Clubs were represented at the meeting:

Ashford	Canterbury	Maidstone
Askeans	Charlton Park	Nat West
Aylesford/KCRFU	Dartfordians /KCRFU	Sidcup
Bexley	Gillingham Anchorians / KCRFU	Tonbridge Juddians / KCRFU
Blackheath	Langley Park	Tunbridge Wells RFC / KCRFU
Brockleians	Leigh	Will Disbrey (National Youth Council)

The **Hon. Secretary** noted that apologies for absence had been received from John Averbs, Colin Barber, Stephen Barry, Alan Bentley, Ali Boyd, Peter Hinkins, William Hurley, Pamela Kilmister, Trevor Martingell, Lynn Neal, Charlie Perkins, Steph Ralph, Graham Smith, Sylvia Taylor, Alan Tender, David Wrench.

In Memorium

He read a list of people associated with Kent County RFU and its member clubs who had passed away during the past year, as listed in the Calling Notice for the meeting and:

- David Gardner** (formerly, Discipline Secretary, KCRFU),
- David Plews** (President, Beckenham RFC) and
- Phil Ubee** (Blackheath FC).

A minute's silence was held in their memory.

Minutes of the last AGM held on 30th September 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on the 30th September 2024 were confirmed as a true record, with no matters arising. The minutes were adopted by consensus and without comment. (*Proposer – Kevin Cope / Seconder – Shaun Neaves (Maidstone RFC).*)

Financial report and presentation of 2024-25 accounts

The **Hon. Treasurer** (Ben Ahsby) delivered a presentation detailing the key points to note from the 2024-25 accounts. In summary:

- Top-line revenue, including investment income, remained largely static at £178,272 (against £182,807 in 2023-24).
 - This is due to reduced RFU funding of £66,729 (down from £70,462 in 2023-24)
 - Kent County RFU's own resources continued to improve
- Outgoings remained in line at £174,962 (against 177,127 in 2023-24)
- There has been a one-off clean-up to the balance sheet of £82,065
- Overall, the balance sheet stands at £800, 511 (against £670,046 in 2023-24)

- Investment income will continue to move materially higher, but the balance sheet will be volatile.

Doug Hursey enquired as to the outlook for the CB's investment portfolio in the light of the prevailing and volatile economic and geopolitical situation. The **Hon. Treasurer** noted that the CB has very little investment in the US. He considered that a devaluation of sterling is likely and that inflation in the UK is likely to remain at elevated levels. His intention is to trade off volatility towards better inflation-linked returns.

The 2024-25 annual accounts of the KCRFU were approved by consensus. (*Proposer – Executive Committee; Seconded – Graham Withers (Tonbridge Wells RFC)*).

Kent County RFU Annual Report 2024-25

The **Hon. Secretary** noted that there is an error in Appendix 2 of the Annual Report: The Kent Shield winner was, in fact, Beccehamian II who beat Thanet Wanderers II (51-46). He apologised to the clubs concerned.

The Annual Report was adopted by consensus and without comment.

Valedictory Address of Kent County RFU President, Doug Hursey

Doug Hursey said that, in his fourth and final year as Kent President, it was again a pleasure to visit as many clubs as possible and enjoy their hospitality, listening to their hopes and worries for the future, and renewing many old friendships from the days of playing against them in club games and as teammates in the Kent Clubs side. It had been an honour and privilege to represent the county that gave me so much in my playing days.

It is impossible not to see the real hardship many clubs are facing with the falling numbers of players; he hoped that the RFU has listened to the views expressed its roadshows, especially the one he attended in February at Dartford Valley, and that action is forthcoming rather than words. He observed that Rugby needs to find its place in an everchanging world with players not prepared to play every Saturday come what may for 9 months of the year as we all did.

The County's representative teams' performances, for both men and women, were of the highest order. The Women's team showed they had stepped up another level and were only 15 mins away from Finals Day at Twickenham. The organisation now in place and the experience gained at that level only bodes well for next year. The U20 team performed well in winning their group but were beaten in the quarter-finals by a gifted Essex side. The Senior men's final at Twickenham was a great occasion, with Kent having won the Bill Beaumont Cup for the third year in succession, the feat having been achieved only once before by Cornwall. The coaching staff led by Taff Gwillam and the players deserve every praise for a great team effort through three tight matches.

He felt that it is not too far-fetched to see Kent with all three teams at the Finals Day at Twickenham. The only caveat to that is the future of County Rugby, as the financial support from the RFU dries up for county sides, and some CB's question whether it is worth being in the competition given the cost to their small budgets.

He ended his remarks, saying that he believes the future of Kent Rugby is in safe hands with an Executive committee of the highest standard and would ask that you all clubs and members support their sterling work.

He congratulated all the County teams that won promotion last season: Tonbridge Juddians, Medway, Bromley, Canterbury 2, Old Elthamians, Gillingham Anchorians, TJ 2's, Beckenham 2, Canterbury 3, O. Williamsonians, Sevenoaks 3 and East Peckham and Paddock Wood.

Finally, he announced that **Dave Phillips** (Dartfordians RFC) was the winner of this season's President's Award.

Questions to The Executive Committee

Shaun Neaves (Maidstone RFC) asked if the CB will agree to further consult with Clubs on limiting the impact that the increasing level of clubs holding National League status entering their Lower sides into the RFU pyramid, is having on junior clubs whose opportunities to gain promotion and retain their better players often developed through club youth structures? Without such action there remains a real prospect of clubs dropping out of the pyramid or ceasing to exist.

Jarrold Lawrence (Chair, Game Development Committee), responding on behalf of the Executive Committee, said that it and the Competitions Committee continue closely to monitor the situation, in consultation with the ROC, noting each week's results to seek to identify those clubs that might be fielding teams with too great a proportion of higher level players above the standard expected at any given league. There is no panacea; however, the CB aims to ensure that matches take place on as fair a basis as possible.

Shaun Neaves noted that Maidstone plays in Counties Kent 2 and that other clubs in that league have also voiced their concerns, in particular, the risk of contracted players of clubs playing at that level.

Keith Silvester (Bexley RFC) asked if the CB still awards grants towards clubs' facilities projects.

The **Hon. Secretary** said that the CB had run its Small Grants Programme this past season, as well as redirecting underspend in the Youth budget for grants towards the cost of Age Grade kit. Both had been publicised to clubs. A key criterion to receive a facilities grant is that applicant clubs must have completed a Facilities Needs Audit.

Proposed amendment to Section 14 (Composition of Executive Committee) of the County Rules

The **Hon. Secretary**, presenting the proposal, said that it is borne from the increasing number of clubs from outside of Kent that play in the RFU and CB-run leagues which the CB administers. The Executive Committee is of the opinion that such non-Kent clubs should contribute generally to the overall running costs of the CB to which they have sought and acquired associate membership. In that respect, the Executive does not see why non-Kent clubs should be treated any differently from our own clubs.

He noted that RFU Regulations restrict CBs to levy fees related to discipline only. Despite the restrictive scope, however, a CB is at liberty to include in its Rules (subject to approval by the CB's members at an AGM) a means to facilitate the levying of an associate membership fee to non-CB based clubs. The proposed amendment to the CB's Rule 14, therefore, seeks to codify this by using the 'legitimate' hook of the discipline process as the means to place formally into the CB's Rules to levy a £40 admin fee on such clubs, i.e, in effect, it's the Associate Member annual sub of £40 which all Associate Kent-based members incur. The £40 levy is separate from and seeks not to interfere with the fees that are levied by the Discipline Committee (£50 per case in admitted cases, and £125 in upheld but not admitted cases) on clubs which appear before the Panels.

The proposal was adopted by consensus and without comment. (*Proposer – Executive Committee / Seconder – Kevin Cope (Bexley RFC)*)

Honours

The **Hon. Secretary** noted, in accordance with the criteria agreed for the award of County Honours (as per the review that was presented at the 2022 AGM), there is one person who merits recognition for their achievements within the game and long service to it. The Executive proposes that the award of LVP be given to **Roger Clarke**.

The **Hon. Secretary** said that his service to the County, not least as Chair of the CB's Executive Committee for the past 18 years and his 7 years as the RFU Council Member for Kent, it is surprising that Roger's service to the CB had not already been recognised by him having been awarded this honour.

It is invidious to compare Roger's service to others who are currently LVPs, but his unstinting work as an advocate of Rugby in Kent must be almost without equal in terms of the breadth, depth and range of issues that he has contributed to in the furtherance of the Community Game at every level.

This honour is, the Executive believes, merited in its own right. However, it must also have an eye on succession planning. He noted that, subject to Alan Thompson being elected as President of the CB, in succession to Doug Hursey, the CB would then need a successor for Alan as the CB's Senior LVP, which, the Executive Committee envisages, Roger Clarke will fulfil, so that the Executive will continue to benefit from his experience and wise counsel for the foreseeable future, and pending, hopefully, his election in due course as President.

(Proposer – Executive Committee; Seconded – Jarrod Lawrence (Dartfordians RFC). Carried by consensus.

Election of officers of the County

President – Alan Thompson *(Proposer – Executive Committee; Seconded – Taff Gwilliam (Canterbury RFC). Elected by consensus.*

Hon. Secretary – Nigel Fray. *(Proposer – Jarrod Lawrence (Dartfordians RFC); Seconded – Roger Clarke (Tonbridge Wells RFC). Elected by consensus.*

Hon. Treasurer – Ben *(Proposer – Taff Gwilliam (Canterbury RFC); Seconded – Doug Hursey (Charlton Park RFC). Elected by consensus.*

Election of Executive Committee for season 2025-26

Roger Clarke, Alan Thompson, Ben Ashby, Nigel Fray, Jarrod Lawrence, Graham Withers. *(Proposer – Shaun Neaves (Maidstone RFC), Seconded – Kevin Cope (Bexley RFC). Elected by consensus.*

The **Hon. Secretary** noted that the Chair of the Executive Committee is elected by its members at the beginning of each season. The Executive may also at its discretion co-opt individuals onto the Committee as required to fulfil its remit, strategy and objectives. Hence, it is the Committee's intention to continue to co-opt the Chair of W&G (Amanda Johnston) and Will Disbrey (Chair of the National Youth Council and KCRFU Youth Council).

Appointment of Auditors

The **Hon. Secretary** noted that, as agreed at the 2023 AGM, the Executive proposes still to use the small company exemption and use Goldbond Associates.

This was noted without comment.

(Proposer – Executive Committee; Seconded – Doug Hursey (Charlton Park RFC). The proposal was carried by consensus

AOB

Kevin Cope asked the CB's position with regard to T1 Rugby; would the CB be willing to organise a T1/Walking Rugby festival?

Roger Clarke noted that T1 Rugby is mainly directed at schools. There exist 2 or 3 T1 Managers in Kent, who are working to establish better links between schools (those that actually play Rugby, in whichever format) and clubs for this format of the game. The CB sees T1 as a bridge, which if effective, will enable a better transition for individuals from the non-contact to full contact version of the game. As regards any possible T1 festival, he invited Kevin to make a formal proposal, which the Game Development Committee would consider.

There being no other business, the meeting finished at 8.20pm.