

Minutes of Gloucestershire County Cricket Club Members' Working Group Meeting

Held at Seat Unique Stadium

on

Tuesday 14th May 2024 4-6pm

In attendance:

Members
Chris Toft
Dominic Ferguson
Matt Davis
Wendy Body
George Cook
John Gordon

Also in Attendance	Role
Neil Priscott	COO (Chair)
David Finch	Ticketing & Membership Administrator
Dan Porter	Marketing Manager
Ellen Mutch	EA (Minutes)
Austen Cornell	Ground Operations Manager
Richard Foley	Board Member

Apologies from members

Ruth Sharville

Jim Bath

Matters Arising:

1. Welcome and Introductions:

Richard Foley, Board Member, introduced himself to the MWG.

Richard explained his role as part of a working group looking at plans for the new ground development.

This working group is made up of the CEO along with a number of current and ex board members. All are providing their services on a pro-bono basis.

2. Club update/AGM:

- Following the AGM there was a general feeling amongst Members of a disconnection between the board and the membership.
- Deputy Chair Steve Nelson has stepped up as acting Chair until a new Chair is appointed.
- Focus should be on what qualities a new Chair needs to have, rather than the individual.
- The Board would like the Members to have input in the election of a new Chair.
- MWG agreed to be point of liaison with wider membership to consider what qualities a new Chair should have.
- Members will be able to apply for both elected and co-opted positions.
- The Board had discussed in advance of the AGM what the process would be for electing new Chair and existing board members were asked if they intended to stay for their full term.
- The board agree that regular communication of key information to Members is essential but with a caveat that there will always be some information which cannot be shared with the wider membership.
- MGW requested a Board member attend every MWG meeting.
- General feedback from Members was concern about how the board had allowed the finances to get to the point where the club may not be a going concern.
- Sharing regular financial performance information with Members would help them understand how the club is performing against budget and KPI's throughout the year.
- Members feel communications regarding other non-cricket information could also be improved. E.g more social media posts about Project Grace, the sale of Hundred, positive off field news stories etc.
- Some personal coms/video from the new Chair would be appreciated by members.
- Members' Forums: Need to maximise attendance and agree best timings. E.g lunchtime or after play v non match day and explore scheduling a Members' forum in the off season.
- Method required for MWG to manage and record Member's feedback.
- Need to ensure that Members are aware of the function of the MGW as a point of contact with the Club and board.

Setting Common Goals:

1. Turning around the financial deficit.
 - How can Members, Staff, Board work together to achieve this objective?
 - Memberships to go on sale much earlier (August).
2. Development of non-cricket income streams:
 - Use of Social media to get key messages across.
 - Members requested CEO record a short video explaining the plans for ground move; sale of The Hundred and key achievements away from the field.
3. Visibility of Board:
 - Members would like Chair, President and board members to attend more matches and be available to speak to members.

Actions arising	Assigned to
Update website with information about the function and contact details of the MWG	Dan Porter

Develop method for obtaining Member's feedback	MWG
MGW to set up their own method of communication between meetings and send pre-meeting feedback to Neil	MWG
Agree qualities required in chair and send to Neil	MWG
Advertise dates for Members' Forums in advance	Dan Porter

Project Grace:

- Working on securing a sufficient area of land in an appropriate location with possibility of getting planning permission.
- A non-binding Heads of Terms has been drafted with a landowner for an area double the size of Nevil Road. This has yet to be signed and negotiations are ongoing.
- The Stadium would be part of a much wider site with mixed use and facilities e.g hotel, retail, other sports facilities.
- Working group are in communication with South Glos Council about planning permission and will co-opt members in with specialist expertise as and when required.
- Work now taking place on an outline for business/financial plan.

Nevil Road site:

- Sub-committee are working with advisors about possible developments on the current site.
- Three scenarios have been provided and costed to give a range of options for the site.
- Bristol City Council are being consulted regarding options for planning permission for Nevil Road.

MWG members asked if the bank and other stakeholders are confident about the process?

- The ability to secure an alternative site with options to generate other income is critical.
- Planning for Nevil Road is also key.
- Costs so far have been very minimal. Consultants have given their time for free. That will change once we get to the next stage.

Sale of the Hundred:

- Board have put forward a heavily caveated approval for the proposed sale as there are lots of questions which still need answering by the ECB re non-Hundred venues.
- A specific Members' meeting will be organised at the appropriate time to discuss the proposal.
- Members' vote is not required to approve a deal.
- The Club agree that any money raised should go toward capital projects rather than securing debt or player wages.

Women and Girls:

- Girls Pathway and Tier 2 women's team will be run by the Club from 2025.
- No detailed plans about what Tier 2 team structure will look like yet.
- The club expect to have more info on this in June

Season Feedback:

- Toilets: No additional facilities brought in for the first CC match. MWG felt the toilets by Nevil Road gate are poor quality.
- Taps and hand dryers in pavilion not good quality. Placement is not good as they are right inside the door. Costings have been obtained to move Dyson hand dryers from level 3 to ground floor.
- Toilets are ordered on male/female ratios and estimated crowd numbers.
- Gate opening times: open 1 hour before County Championship matches introduced to reduce costs.
- Change led to queues outside the gate for the first match which Improved on days 2, 3 and 4. This was due to visitor numbers being much higher than expected.

Member's Code of Conduct:

- There have, regrettably, been issues with a small number of Members' behaviour already this season.
- Clear expectations are needed for Members' behaviour E.g where they can go and when.
- Plan to send out Code of Conduct to all Members when 2025 memberships are made available to purchase in August.

Ticket prices:

- MWG fed back that some potential attendees thought County Championship tickets are too expensive. Have seen a reluctance of people to buy in advance, especially in April due to weather.
- Increased prices on the gate are to encourage people to book online and assist with ticketing data. E.g numbers of toilets, stewarding, bar staff required in advance.
- Free after tea is generating good numbers and additional spend on Food, drinks and concessions.
- Not selling day 4 in advance. Decision will be made at Tea on day 3 re tickets for the following day. This will be advertised on the PA in ground and via social media.

AOB:

- Smoking area sign outside pavilion needs to be removed.

Regional Committee:

- MWG member GC attended Cotswold and North Wilts Regional Committee.

- Similar feeling amongst members to those at the AGM regarding disconnection and communication.
- George advised the Committee about using social media to attract more members.
- George explained his role on the MWG and is now a link between regional Committee and the Club.
- Club can advertise regional Facebook groups if information is sent to Marketing Manager well in advance.

Action	Assigned to
Get Regional Committee feedback prior to MWG meetings.	George

Junior shirts:

- Junior shirts are being delivered this week.
- Issues with shirt sponsor being confirmed late led to delays in printing.
- Communication will go out to members re how they can be collected, together with the running of Junior training sessions.

Reciprocal Arrangements:

- Members want reciprocal arrangements to be an incentive for purchasing membership.
- Feedback from Members is a wish to increase reciprocal links, allowing access to Members of other Clubs, perhaps for a nominal fee.
- Questions about Reciprocal arrangements will be added to general members survey at the end of the season.

Action	Assigned to
Add reciprocal arrangements to next MWG agenda	Ellen
Get member feedback on Reciprocals for next MWG meeting	MWG

The meeting finished early to allow the MWG Members to discuss the qualities they would like to see from a Chair.