



Minute of Annual General Meeting of Howe of Fife Rugby Football Club

Date: Thursday 29th June 2023

Time: 7.30pm

Location: Meeting held in the Club House Function Suite.

Agenda Item	Action
1. Welcome and Apologies	<p>Members Present: Gordon Thomson, Grant Robertson, Alan Hendry, Russell Cockburn, Gordon Douglas, Chris Reekie, Steven Player, Innes Petrie, Janet Douglas, Euan Amos, Graham Lang, Tom McAskill, Gavin Anderson, Alister Stewart, Lynsey Maxwell, Aaron Anderson, Jan Thomson, Victoria Renwick, Chloe Nicoll, Dave Rollo, Dunk McNab, Joe Manson, Craig Manson, Lisa-Jane Croniken, Rachel Croniken, Jim Darbyshire, Dave Davies, Lyndsay Petrie, Neil Strachan, Charles Samson, Neil Keddie, Jack Sinclair</p> <p>Also in attendance: Angus Cook, Matthew Struthers, Graham Lang</p> <p>Apologies: Barbara Wardlaw, Ali Paton, Mike Black, Andrew Arbuckle, Craig Stockton</p> <p>Grant Robertson in the chair welcomed all members to the meeting.</p>
2. Minutes Silence for Past Members	The chair led the meeting in a minute's silence in memory of members who have passed away since our last AGM.
3. Approval of Minutes from AGM 2022	Minutes from the Annual General Meeting of 2022 were proposed by Chris Reekie and seconded by Janet Douglas
4. Matters Arising from Minutes of AGM 2021	There were no matters arising.

5. Trustee's Report	<p>Grant Robertson gave the Trustees Report. Please see attached as Appendix 1.</p> <p>Angus Cook from the U18s was presented with the Stuart Gibb Memorial Trophy for Players player of the season. Presented by Craig Manson.</p>
6. President's Address	<p>Gordon Thomson gave President's Address. Please see attached as Appendix 2.</p>
7. Rugby Report	<p>Gordon Thomson, Alan Hendry and Lynsey Maxwell gave the Rugby Report for Seniors, Youths & Minis respectively. Please see attached as Appendix 3.</p> <p>D Rollo asked if BBHS was to put out teams next season. It was explained that teams are a joint approach with BBHS and HoF with the Club taking the lead.</p> <p>Jack Sinclair intimated he is liaising with BBHS to try and get school games next season.</p>
8. Financial Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Club Treasurer Russell Cockburn delivered the Financial Report. Please see attached as Appendix 4. - Following this report the treasurer took questions from the floor. - Aaron Anderson asked why the increase in Players expenses. Gordon Douglas explained there was approx £12k increase due to players kit being ordered but was netted off by players sponsors and players paying for the kit. - AA also asked about the Orkney trip costs – it was explained the SRU covered this cost. - D Rollo asked why the wages were £48k – RC explained these were bar staff, cleaners, catering etc and we are now in a different climate from before.
9. Fixing of Annual Subscriptions	<p>It was proposed the following Subs uplift</p> <p>P1-5 - £115 (increase of £5) P6 – student - £142 (increase of £10) Family £340 (increase of £10) Adult player - £175 (increase of £10) Adult non-player - £135 (increase of £14) Couple- £165 (increase of £11) Senior Citizen - £90 (increase of £7.50) Unified - £15 (increase of £5) New category- Adult player with non playing partner - £200</p> <p>Agreed unanimously by the floor</p>

10. Appointment of Financial Examiner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russell Cockburn proposed Henderson Black as Financial Examiner. No objections from the floor. Henderson Black duly appointed.
11. Appointment of New Trustees	<p>GR explained that the following were standing down as Trustees Grant Robertson Gordon Douglas Russell Cockburn Alan Hendry</p> <p>AH was re-elected as Trustee and the following were adopted as Trustees Gavin Anderson Lynsey Maxwell Innes Petrie Craig Stockton Alister Stewart.</p> <p>One other Nominee was received but too late and the Trustees would discuss co-opting this Nominee.</p> <p>RC would stay as Treasurer meantime and also as Trading Director to assist Alister Stewart as Trading director</p>
12. Appointment of President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was unanimously approved that Gordon Thomson be President for the coming year.
13. Approval of Captains and Vice Captains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior Men had proposed Fraser Allan as their Captain and Andrew Harley and Brad O’Hanlon as their Vice-Captains. - Ian Stevenson, Lee Croston/ Edgar Dingle <p>Quins Victoria Renwick – Captain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No objection from the floor.
14. Presentation of Cellars Trophy	<p>Gordon Thomson presented the Cellars trophy to Alan Hendry for his endeavours throughout the year, and his hard work and commitment to the Club which was never ending throughout the year.</p>
15. A.O.C.B.	<p>Graham Lang said he recognised the financial challenges the Club face but would like to see the Club reach out to the wider community and encourage them to use the Club. Also to arrange events such as rounders, games etc in the off season both initiatives would increase income.</p>

	<p>Tom McAskill asked if the AGM was constitutionally valid in terms of notice given as he had only heard about it that morning. GT confirmed notice was given two weeks plus on Social Media, email and local press. TM did not get the email.</p> <p>Jan Thomson said she would endeavour to set up an up to date email group but said she needed up to date email addresses with membership forms.</p> <p>- No other competent business raised.</p>
16. Close	<p>With no other competent business raised GR therefore thanked all present and closed the meeting</p>

Appendix 1

Chairman's address

As we reach the end of another year, we are pleased to report a fair amount of success throughout the year. Our finances are holding up, even with the high prices of gas and electricity and we have managed to keep expenditure under control. This will require even more attention next year. I do not wish to steal anyone's thunder but our playing sides have had great success at all ages, something I think you are aware of. I must say a special thank you to firstly our President Gordon Thomson who has worked tirelessly throughout the season and to our VP for Youth, Alan Hendry who has coped with many problems and to all my fellow Trustees and Directors who if it comes to the crunch carries the can. I will finish by saying a big thanks to Jan Thomson, our Subscription Secretary and to Russell Cockburn, our treasurer. The Club would not be in the comfortable situation it is without them.

Appendix 2

President's address

Good evening everyone and welcome to the 2023 AGM.

This has been my first full year as the president of the Howe of Fife having spent 2 seasons as the Vice president of the Senior players. We found ourselves coming out of covid in not a bad shape due to the continued support from our membership...With all the covid funding stopped we were confronted with facility bills that had trebled for the same usage. Again it was the strength of our membership that has shored this up.. and for that we thank you...

This season.. we have engaged and brought on board more sponsors and new advertisers than ever before..Alongside our long standing partners and benefactors.

We have been successful with hosting luncheons at selected senior games including

- Past presidents
- Ladies day
- Sponsors day with a improv Q&A session that went down a storm..
- And a very successful Farmers day.. Dave Bell setting the bar higher every year
- Senior Players presentation dinner..

●I was also invited to the U16s presentation dinner which was a sell out just short of 100 people in attendance.

The Howe 7s were back to a 2 day affair with the Senior men on the Saturday and the Senior Women and the U18s on the Sunday.

It's the 3rd year I've watched the Minis tournament and it gets better each year. So much so I was invited along to the thankyou funday to flip burgers... you know you've made it when you get handed that gig.

Not forgetting our now annual trip up to Aberdeen to the youth finals with the U18s and U15s..and a wee cheeky trip to a final in Murrayfield courtesy of the U16s.

We were involved with the setup, tear down and ticket duties at the Fife show..

We also supported a very successful and hot Ceres Games.. cooling it down with the Howe outside bar.

I am on the SRU National league 2,3,4 and Cally Midlands zoom forums. Engaging with all the other clubs and having a voice for the Howe. And we're getting noticed..

I cannot lie...there has been some situations that have been quite challenging at times and others very rewarding.

There's a change of guard with some personnel within the club tonight.. we welcome them on board bringing with them their enthusiasm and eagerness to drive projects forward.. exciting times.

Exciting times indeed...with all youths and mini's all moving up a year slightly changing the dynamics of their sections.

And all change in Senior Rugby with the new league restructures..

As you can imagine the financial foundation of the club is built on membership, volunteers, sponsors and our treasurer Russell Cockburn who has the purse strings tightly shut.. to keep the club running.

We have to stay ahead of the financial game and try and not get caught out... pricing accordingly along the way.. not just to survive but to carry momentum.

The club would personally like to thank our membership secretary Jan Thomson for the 4 seasons at the coal face stream lining our membership who is standing down when a suitable replacement comes along.

Finally I would like to thank all of our 22/23 trustees, sponsors, partners, members, benefactors, coaches, players, parents, bar staff and the incredible group of volunteers. Without all of your help and contributions, the club would not be in the place it is today. So thank you.

Appendix 3

RUGBY REPORT – Senior

We have managed to secure the services of Stewart Lathangie and his full coaching team again for the 2023/24 season.

The 1st XV had a strong season..finishing 3rd..in National league 3.. notable was the amount of long term injuries sustained to some players..

Notable games were away to Orkney and one of the last home games against Gordonians..

They only lost 1 game at home all season and beat Allan Glens away ..first time Allan Glens had been beaten at home in a season and a half .

The Crusaders came out of the blocks firing on all cylinders winning all their games bar one.. away to Aberfeldy. Winning the Cally Division 3 and crowned champions. A massive result for all the hard work.

The Senior Harlequins finished 4th respectively in National league 1.. Losing out by a try or 2..definitely the 2nd half of the season was stronger.. Again player numbers were a factor..

Jack Sinclair is standing down as head coach of the Quins but is staying on as the club's development officer.

We move into a reconstructed league set up for all teams this new season..

The 1st XV see the league reduced to a 10 team rather than a 12..

With 5 teams coming down from Nat 2..

Cartha Queens.

Preston Lodge

Dumfries

Boroughmuir

and Hamilton.

The Crusaders have been invited to skip Cally 2 and go straight into Cally 1..due to the dominance of last year.it will be a north midlands split..

The restructure of the Quins league's sees them in Caledonia Midlands/East League 1..with 10 teams..

We thank our Senior out going Captain's teams for their commitment to the club over the seasons

1XV.. Jamie Thomson & Fraser Allan

Crusaders..Lee Croston,Ian Bousie and Keir Honeyman

Quins...Lisa Croniken & Victoria Renwick

And we welcome our new leadership groups..

Some notes of interest.

Fraser Allan & Euan "Bizz" Bissett being selected for the Caledonia Reds..

Fraser going on to play and winning the final against the South..What a great achievement personally and for the Howe.

The last time the two teams played each other was in 2016 down at Jedburgh our own Stewart Lathangie & Terry Turpie being selected..

Howe Senior Quins.

Molly Pullman and Sam Taganekurukuru

Selected for Scotland U20's squad for their game against England.

Ned Wright winning "Try off the Month" from the SRU.

Other notable landmarks..

3..Centurions at the club 2022/23 season were..

Jake Douglas,

Ian Aitken and

Phoebe Saunders

1st XV player of the season..
Greg Frearson.

1st XV Players Player..
Brad O'Hanlon.

Crusaders player of the season..
Ryan Underwood.

Crusaders players player..
Luke Connah

Most improved player.. Kaylan Dewar

Howe Harlequins coaches player of the season
Lisa Croniken

Howe Harlequins Players player
Rachel Croniken

Howe Harlequins most improved player
Becky Smith

The new leadership groups will be announced later on..

It has been noted that the crowds are definitely coming back to Duffus and all the senior teams are getting stronger with this..

We do have the best support home and away in all leagues. Long may it continue.

Leadership groups 2023 - 2024
1XV Fraser Allan, Andy Harley/ Brad O'Hanlon

Crusaders
Ian Stevenson, Lee Croston/ Edgar Dingle

Quins..
Victoria Renwick & Club Captain Lisa Croniken

Team manager (Senior men)
Dave Taff Thomas

RUGBY REPORT - Youth

U18 - The season was mixed and effectively in two halves. Theoretically there should have been reasonable numbers to fulfil fixtures however, age restricted players, injuries to key individuals and outside commitments meant that it was a challenge on occasion to fulfil fixtures. However the second half of the season saw an uplift in performances this didn't manifest in results. The Caledonia Bowl final gave the squad a goal and happy to say they produced an excellent performance deserving of their ability to beat a Dundee side who they lost narrowly to several weeks earlier.

Only two seven's tournaments were available with a notable victory over Boroughmuir at Stirling, and the U17 squad performing wee heroics at the Howe tournament deservingly beating an experienced large Glenamond side in the final. Cammy Merrington Ben Curtis & Kieran Todd all made the Caledonia U18 squad with Kieran invited to the Scotland U17 training camp.

U16 – Highlights included a brilliant win at Murrayfield v a very disciplined North Berwick team to win the National Shield, following this up with qualifying for the Caledonia Cup final but having to stand down due to a clash with their extremely successful tour to Italy. As a side line here the fund raising

group should specifically be praised for their huge effort towards ensuring this trip took place. Off pitch the squad came 3rd in NE Fife Sports council team award whilst Gav Anderson was selected as Coach of the Year at the same event. U16 Caley squad players - Rohan Jones Ethan Williams Brandon Seath Murray Clunas* Fraser Greig* Ross Maitland* Adam Williamson** *tried for Glasgow Warriors ** played for Glasgow Warriors U16 in the Jnr 1872 cup which Glasgow won.

Those from our squad involved in Caley U17 Logan Finlay Findlay McIntosh
U15 - Highlight of the season was winning their way through taking part in the Caledonia Plate final where they lost to a very strong Ellon squad who had several very large players who proved to be the difference between the 2 squads but the boys battled to the end having the upper hand at various points & their attitude is to be commended. Eight players were involved with training at Player Development Hub with 3 then selected to train with wider Caley squad & we await details of selection for final squad

U14 & 13s - A mixed season for the younger squads with player numbers making life difficult (U13s started with 8 players but grew squad to 16) but once again full praise to the players in both squads who week in week out turned out & in true Howe fashion gave it their all regardless. We are currently trying to recruit numbers for these 2 squads specifically as going forward intoseason 24/25 our U14 squad's results will count towards conference outcomes so as a club we need to ensure all our youth squads have sufficient squad sizes going forward. The Just Play events were enjoyed by the squads meaning we could attend with whatever numbers we had & teams would be drafted together. The challenge will be to get these quads up to around 16 to ensure we can field full squads at these age groups

Fraser Allan continues to work with all squads on S&C which ties in really well with rugby training & I'm confident all players benefit from this so thanks to Fraser

Changes going forward – at the end of the season the players & parents were advised that as from next season our squads shall be playing using DOB at 1/9. This meant that some players would be repeating a season with the same age group but it was felt by coaches & the club this meant they would be playing within the correct peer groups as we were finding with more clubs & schools changing to this DOB our squads were meeting larger players so this would help address that balance & give the boys a better opportunity to reach their full rugby potential. This change was fully supported by SRU & it was indicated that this change should have actually been made officially this season but is sure to happen next season. As mentioned before we need to increase our numbers playing wise at younger groups but we always need help coaching & admin wise (booking buses, arranging numbers for meals, etc) so if there is anyone willing to help in any way please let me know

Girls (13-15)

The mini Quins restarted in August with 2 players and a new coach- everyone unsure of the future of the girl's game at Howe but with hard work from everyone involved to recruit and grow the game, we have had up to 14 Howe girls at training ranging from U12 - U18, with many playing in festivals throughout the season. We have created a link with Glenrothes to ensure that all age groups get appropriate contact training and can learn from more advanced players. Going forward into the 23/24 season, we anticipate at least 10 playing members and girls committing to playing games and festivals as well as continue their attendance at training. There are also several P7 girls attending mini training so the hope is to encourage them to step up to mini Quins too. Victoria would like to give a big thanks to everyone who has helped the girls in the past year.

THANKS

Mini coordinators – Lynsey Maxwell & Aileen Mckenzie

CPOs – Caroline Crawford & Rebecca O’Hare

DO – Jack Sinclair

All coaches - VIPs

Mini, girls & youth rugby vitally important to the club

RUGBY REPORT – Mini

Successful season for the Minis, with numbers continuing to grow across all age groups.

Recruitment has been consistent over the season with over 20 new players enquiring and joining the squads. Posters have been created, social media posts have helped and our DO has done a great job raising awareness through school taster sessions.

Focus for 23/24 is to raise numbers in our P4 & P7 squads.

We have an average of 3 coaches per year group and have no concerns for 23/24. We have our first female coach starting at p1/2 level - Previously played for the Harlequins.

Our Minis Tournament was a success with over 500 players and coaches visiting for 5 local clubs. The whole club supported the event, youth coaches, club reps, the DO, Senior players and the Quins all taking on roles on the day to help. We want to thank the generous sponsors again who allowed us to provide medals, trophies, balls and programmes at the event.

Our Primary 5 squad were invited to Scotstoun to play in the Glasgow Warriors Mini Tournament. The squad played their absolute best against some fierce opposition and we were very proud of their efforts.

Howe Minis won the Sportsmanship Trophy at the Glenrothes Tournament, displaying excellent sportsmanship and skill on the day.

We have had a successful years fundraising, raising over £1500 through various events. We ran a Halloween Funday, we had a piper play at Tescis on Hogmanay, we have been given donations throughout the year and I ran the Chariots of Fire Beach Race to raise funds. The funds raised allow us to hold fun events for the players, coaches and parents. We held a Christmas event and an end of season Funday. We also arranged a farewell gift for the Primary 7 leavers and had a piper play them out the tunnel on the last day.

Appendix 4

Financial Report

The journey we have been on since 2016, when we moved into the new clubhouse, has thrown up different financial challenges each year from being heavily in debt and existing hand to mouth to an improving operating surplus which enabled us to eliminate the overdraft and repay members loans, settling into a regular pattern of operation only to find ourselves locked down with Covid restrictions. This year is the first year of full operation since the restrictions were lifted.

The headline is that the club has a deficit of £23883 compared with a surplus of £16523 last year. Whilst that should give cause for concern when we look closer at the figures the swing of £40406 it is not as bad as it might first appear. The last reported figures show that we had substantially more receipts of grants and legacies. This year we received £10856 compared with a total of £47548 for 2022. A difference of £36692.

If we exclude Depreciation which is a non cash item the deficit reduces to £177.

Trading –The bar and catering operations etc have resulted in a surplus of £8898 from operations for the year. Sales are up but are mainly generated on match days. Wages continue to be the biggest single cost followed by bank charges. The surplus is automatically transferred to the Charity. Margins

continue to be under pressure price increases are more numerous and we will once again have to increase bar prices to reflect the increase in duty scheduled for August and brewery increases.

Charity – We continue to benefit from the generosity of our members and friendsgiving donations, and subscriptions and sponsorship of both club and players.

Subscriptions - at £45092 were up approx. 13% on last year a very positive outcome the result of the sterling efforts of our membership secretary Jan Thomson

Costs – The biggest challenge is the eye watering increase in the price of energy. Electricity cost £19,636 even after deducting the government support. Fortunately, Gas was subject to a long-term agreement but that runs out soon and will bring increased pressure in the coming year. Repairs cost a total of £9990. Playing expenses include Kit £24609 (offset by sponsorship) Buses £11422 Development Coach £11439.

Cash & Bank - our combined net bank balances are £40,041. This reflects the operating surpluses of both the Charity and Trading.

Looking Forward – The loss of 2 home games will impact on Trading with only 2 matches scheduled for the new year

Membership renewal invites will go out in July.