



## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF WILMSLOW RUGBY CLUB.**

**THURSDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> JULY 2025**

Members present: 20

Apologies: Alex McLennan (President), Mostyn Williams

The notice convening the Meeting was taken as read at 7:30pm.

The minutes of the 2024 AGM were distributed – there were no matters arising.

Obituaries were observed with a minute's silence for those passing in the previous year – Sam Gardiner, Stuart Hawkwood & Norrie Russell.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The club Chairman Richard Noden provided his review of the season.

'Good evening everyone, and thank you all for coming.

It's a real privilege to stand before you as Chairman of Wilmslow Rugby Club - a club steeped in history, but more importantly, full of ambition, spirit, and community. Tonight is about reflecting on the season just gone, recognising the people who make this club what it is, and looking ahead to the opportunities we have to grow and improve.

#### **Acknowledgements and Thanks**

First, let me begin with some heartfelt thanks.

To our players at every level - from minis pulling on a shirt for the first time to our senior sides grinding out wins on cold winter Saturdays - thank you. You're the reason we do this.

To the coaches, the team managers, and the parents who shuttle kids, tie boots, and offer encouragement - your support is what keeps things moving.

To our club staff and committee - those who give up hours behind the scenes to keep the lights on, the bar stocked, the kitchen cooking and the grass cut - thank you.

To the many volunteers - whether you've coached, administered, driven, washed kit, or helped on a work party - this club simply wouldn't function without you.

And to our sponsors - your investment allows us to function, to dream big, to sustain development, and to make rugby accessible to everyone. We're hugely grateful for your belief in our club.

#### **Structure and Leadership**

As most of you know, our club structure is now anchored by a committee of six, about to reduce to five, who are responsible for strategy, oversight, and direction. They work alongside a management team of two, who focus on day-to-day delivery and execution.



There is to be a key change this year - most notably, Rob Milner stepping down as Secretary after 13 years of commendable service. His extremely able and knowledgeable replacement is Suzanne Kennedy, who's served on the Committee for 3 years as Safeguarding and Compliance lead, a position which she'll also hold moving forwards.

I also want to thank Bryn Lewis, our long serving 2ndXV manager who's put in a very strong shift ensuring that we continue to offer a natural route to the 1stXV and a social rugby alternative. (Along with the Fat Dads touch rugby group who continue to thrive on a Thursday evening).

### **Health of the Club**

Let me turn now to the health of the club.

Financially, we remain solvent - not flush, but stable. We're keeping a tight grip on costs while reinvesting where we know there's a requirement.

In terms of player numbers, we do face challenges, particularly at senior level. We've all seen it - availability, injuries, and competing priorities have left us stretched. It's an area of concern but one we're actively addressing by promoting ourselves to the rugby playing world, making ourselves as appealing a proposition as possible and reinvigorating our 2ndXV ethos and commitment, as they're led into a new world by Jez Sumner, Manager and Paul Johnson, Captain.

But our Minis and Juniors section is, quite frankly, brilliant. Numbers are strong, energy is high, and the culture is everything we'd want it to be - welcoming, fun, and supportive. Huge credit to the age-group leaders and to the parents who help week in, week out.

Our 'Lovers and Supporters' - the heartbeat of any community club - have been phenomenal. From pitchside to post-match, your presence is felt and appreciated.

And our functions are steadily increasing. Our reputation is growing - not just as a rugby club, but as a community hub with events venue of real quality.

### **Events and Community**

We've had some standout events this year:

- The M&J Festival was, once again, a huge success - well organised, well attended and a great showcase for the club.
- Our support of the Running Festival places us firmly in the town's consciousness. We do our bit very well and contribute to a strong financial performance all round.
- The November Ball was a brilliant night that brought the club together - a real highlight and a wonderful example of our club spirit in action.
- WolfFest added energy and excitement to our summer. An event now firmly established in our calendar and in the culture of the very youngest players.
- And Presentation Sunday brought the season to a fitting close, celebrating players, coaches and parents across the mini section.

We have also committed to deepen our relationship with Looseheadz — helping to raise awareness and tackle mental health challenges experienced by those in our sport. It's a cause that matters deeply, and we're proud to play our part as their founding club.



### **Looking Ahead - The Future**

Looking ahead, there are some key projects and priorities on the horizon.

First and foremost, the AGP (Artificial Grass Pitch). We remain confident that our planning application will finally be heard and approved very soon, so we can move to fully exploring funding and structural options. The AGP will transform how we train and play, but it will also impact the layout and operation of the site. We'll need to plan carefully and ensure we capitalize fully.

Our grounds will change - and with that comes the opportunity to improve parking, our boundaries and pitch use.

Investment in upkeep is essential - especially in the areas that deliver a return, both financial and reputational.

### **Comms and Technology**

Communication is improving across the board. Our Instagram, WhatsApp groups, Facebook, and email updates are becoming more consistent and connected.

However, our calendar still needs work - we need clearer, more visible planning tools to ensure everyone knows what's happening and when.

### **Our Vision**

Let me remind you of our vision:

To become one of the country's leading community-based rugby clubs, providing members and locals with the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports for all ages and abilities, and the chance to socialise within a facility offering best-in-class hospitality, in a beautiful green setting. It's ambitious, but achievable. We have the people, the place, and the passion.

### **Objectives - On and Off the Field**

On the field, our aims are clear:

- To deliver competitive senior amateur rugby at the highest possible level, supported by top-quality coaching and management.
- To offer social rugby for all who want to play, whatever their level.
- To create a strong pathway from junior to senior rugby, anchored in a well-run Colts environment.
- To support Mini & Junior rugby that is fun, inclusive, and driven by enthusiastic parent volunteers.

Off the field, we want:

- Best-in-class hospitality, in a welcoming, modern facility.
- Infrastructure that meets the needs of all - for members, guests, and the wider community.
- To cement our place as the venue of choice for events of 80 to 150+ guests.
- To ensure the club is always presented in the best possible light - clean, tidy, well-maintained, and professionally operated.

**So, in summary:** we're in good shape - not without our challenges, but with a clear plan and the right people to deliver it. Thank you again to everyone who contributes to Wilmslow Rugby Club. Whether you lace up boots, sip pints, blow a whistle, sell raffle tickets or simply cheer from the sidelines - you are part of what makes this place special.

Here's to the future - and to making Wilmslow Rugby Club everything it can be.

Thank you'.



## **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

The Treasurer Alan Hill (AH) reported on the condition and health of the club's finances and the accounts for 2024/25 were distributed throughout the members present:

Summary income statement was presented showing an increase in turnover from the previous year, however bottom line shows we spent more money, made up largely of depreciation and the use of £8 worth of cash reserves.

Balance sheet confirmed the drop in cash reserves following commitment to capital expenditure in the areas of floodlighting, awnings and the new coffee machine.

P & L account was presented – AH explained that there were a couple of discrepancies, mainly due to the Accountants and their confusion as to our business status. Cost of sales increase mainly due to International ticket allocation.

Drop in Gross profit of £8K, however this was the result of a small accounting error which when remedied will show a small profit made.

Bar and Catering revenue both up over the course of the year – some discussion therefore took place regarding the margin made on these areas and what can be done to increase this to reflect future increases in sales.

Sponsorship down slightly despite the best efforts of Nick Jones – AH asked for continued focus on this on the basis this revenue stream represents 100% profit to us.

Other income made up of Fitism rent and Car Park rental – the latter being significantly down on previous years due to almost no film crews renting the facility in 2024.

Expenditure overall kept at a reasonable level, however an inevitable spike in the cost of Light and Heat. Extremely high cost of for example, chilling beer plus some conversation was had as to the actual efficiency of the existing solar panels, ie are they dirty or too shaded??

Senior rugby costs increased – 3 international players were brought over last year (air fares/accommodation etc) and spiralling Physiotherapy costs amongst other things. We should see in a reduction of both these costs this year as currently no overseas players being targeted and Physio costs being reduced.

Drop in the figure of repairs to property, however this work still needs doing and the jobs are stacking up.

John Garrard asked what areas constituted the large proportion of overall revenue (circa £390,000). AH confirmed the following:

Bar £162,000

Catering £74,000



Subscriptions £61,000  
Sponsorship £32,000

David Scanlon expressed concern over the reduction of cash in the bank – however AH stated he wasn't worried as this would get bolstered over the summer with several lucrative commercial events taking place.

A motion was taken to approve the fact that the annual Accounts hadn't been formerly audited before submission to the FSA – This was approved by the members.

The Treasurer announced that he would be stepping down from his role at the 2026 AGM, emphasising the need to find a suitable successor and also the requirement to allocate a number of the day to day housekeeping duties to another person to lighten the workload.

**A Hill**  
**Honorary Treasurer**

#### **AGE GRADE (M & J) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

The Age Grade Chairman Gavin McManus delivered his review of the season:

'This year has been a hugely successful year for the age grade teams at Wilmslow. Membership has once again seen growth compared to the previous season with many taking advantage of our early bird and monthly direct debit schemes. We have over 360 age grade players, including Colts, registered at the club which is fantastic to see and hopefully bodes well for the future. Particular thanks goes to the coaches in the younger age groups who have the difficult task of welcoming and retaining new members.

The 24/25 season has seen success on the pitch with all our teams continuing to uphold the RFU core values of play. This season saw regular competitive fixtures for all with very few weeks being lost to the weather. As ever huge thanks must go to our fixtures secretary Pam Street for all the effort she puts in behind the scenes.

Our Under 16 team, under the guidance of Mark Atkinson and Ben Ecroyd, achieved regional success with victory in the Cheshire Cup final against a strong Chester side, exacting revenge for a loss in the same fixture last season. Our under 15 team also enjoyed a day out at the Cheshire Cup finals but unfortunately lost out to a last minute try in their Shield final. Our Under 13s participated in an inaugural Cheshire round robin competition which proved to be a great success. Our younger age groups (U7-12) all participated in their respective Cheshire festivals with positive feedback received from all.

This season saw our Colts play in the Halbro Senior B-League and Cheshire Cup competitions. 90% of the squad were playing 'a year up', and overall feel that the league season went pretty well, and the players will certainly benefit from the experience in the 25/26 season. The Cheshire Cup SF exit to



Chester was tough to take but a great experience for the players who had to step up and take the field. This is a good reflection of the season in general; with essentially all of the less developed players having had to step up in the absence of many of the so-called 'rockstars'. As a result they have come on as a group and are confident they will reap the benefits this coming season, not least with a talented squad in the year below, ready and willing to cross pollinate into the group and add real depth to the squad. Exciting times ahead for sure.

The club is pleased to confirm that going forward we will usually operate a combined Colts squad. This has proved successful for the past few years, and the club intends to continue in this way. We feel it's the best way to develop our young players with their increasing physicality, demands from school and representative rugby, and claims on their time from part-time jobs, school work and other teenage pursuits

Individual recognition should also been celebrated. Many of our players gained selection for the Sale Sharks Developing Player and Academy programmes. Within our U15 group 6 players were selected for the DPP with 3 gaining Academy selection. Our U16's had 4 players in the DPP and 6 Academy players. Our Colts had 7 players train with the academy with two being retained for the U18 squad, one of which also making the England U17 training squad. 3 of our Colts represented Cheshire U17s. One of our Colts has also accepted a three year contract with Beziers Rugby Club in France. A fantastic achievement for all.

This year saw our age grade section tour far and wide with trips to Bedford, Belfast, Yorkshire, and the Isle of Man . Many thanks to all our host clubs, we look forward to reciprocating your kind hospitality in the future.

We continued to grow our relationship with Sale Sharks with club trips to premiership games against Gloucester and Leicester. Our U13 and U12 squads availed of some pre game coaching and time on the pitch, always a special experience for those involved. We once again hosted the Sedbergh October half term rugby camp which was well attended by Wilmslow players. Sedbergh also hosted an evening for our coaches which again was well received. The summer months saw the return of the RFU North Coaching Team to Wilmslow offering coaching development at a local level, something we hope to build upon next season.

The close season allowed an opportunity for our club to link up with local Girlguiding units. A fantastic evening saw the Wilmslow Age Grade coaches provide a fun filled session for nearly 90 girls, many of whom had never been exposed to rugby before. The feedback has been extremely positive and the hope is that we see lots of new faces down at the club when we come back together in September.

The age grade section continued to build links within the club and the local community. We hosted successful events such as our end of season award ceremony and Wolf Fest both of which continue to grow year on year. A special thanks must go to John Garrard for the time and effort he gives to make these occasions so special for all involved. We also looked to grow our relationship with the senior team through mascot duty and guards of honour on match days. This proved particularly exciting for our younger players. I am sure the addition of Wolfie will provide smiles for seasons to



come. We are also proud to have contributed significant contributions to our Charity Partners Wooden Spoon and The Christie Hospital.

The highlight of the year for the age grade section is undoubtedly the hosting of our annual mini and junior festival. Once again this was a huge success. Not only is it an event that brings the local rugby community together but remains an opportunity to showcase our great club to all those attending. This year we had 35 different clubs, 140 teams and over 1500 players attend across the two days. Despite reducing the number of entries from last year the festival continued to provide a positive financial surplus for the club. More importantly we received great feedback from players and parents alike which is recognition for the army of volunteers that make an event like this possible. Many learning points have been taken away in the hope that next year's festival is even better.

I would like to close by taking the opportunity to thank all our volunteers for their dedication and hard work throughout the season. To our catering team, grounds staff, and events team; your year round work does not go unnoticed and is always appreciated. Finally, to our amazing coaches, players and parents, who are the beating heart of age grade rugby, thank you for the commitment to our sport and for turning up each week come rain, hail or shine. Without you age grade rugby simply would not exist'.

#### **SAFEGUARDING, GMS & COMPLIANCE:**

Suzanne Kennedy updated the AGM on this area.

#### **Data & Compliance**

##### **Data Privacy**

'The club continues to operate in compliance with applicable law, England Rugby guidance and best practice.

During the 2025/5 season the club has extended the range of IT systems it uses to administer its operations, introducing Tournify for managing the very busy and popular M&J April Rugby Festival. To accommodate this extended range of platforms that consume member data, the club has updated its privacy notice

The Festival also welcomed back a sports photography company for the first time in several years, which proved popular with visitors and members.

Regularly during the season non-member records are purged from the main administrative system, GMS. A further purge will take place prior to the start of the 2025-6 season.

As a reminder, members are responsible for managing their own data on a self-service basis, and aligned with other clubs, WRUFC regularly prompts members to take action in this regard.



### Membership and Payments

The membership proposal was supported at the AGM and once again GMS will be the primary platform on which membership payments will be set-up and taken.

### Compliance

For age grade rugby the club has been 100% compliant with:

- regulation for the applicable league and friendly matches.
- all safeguarding obligations and best practice guidelines for the voluntary coaches, safeguarding officers and other volunteers, both for age grade (U18 and below) and U18 playing adult rugby obligations
- its touring with children obligations, with domestic and overseas tours across multiple age groups.

### For all rugby activity in the 2025/5 season the club has been 100% compliant

- its registration obligations, registering players prior to them playing First and/or Second XV rugby. This registration obligation includes both age grade (from age 17 upward) and adult players.
- its rugby safe obligations, in particular regards pitch-side first aid at all rugby activity including training and match play

### Rugby Safe

The club will pilot the use of the RFU's preferred injury reporting app, Proactive Reporting, initially in the 2025/6 season with the Colts squad'.

### ALTERATIONS TO SUBSCRIPTIONS:

The Treasurer, aided by Suzanne Kennedy presented alterations to this year's subscriptions as follows:

### Memberships for the 2025/6 season

Category	2025/6 season cost
Senior playing Age 22 or older	£200 (one-time) OR £18 per month via direct debit
Senior playing Age under 22	£100 (one-time) OR £9.00 per month via direct debit
Colts (U17 / U18)	£125 (one-time)
Mini & Junior (U6 to U16)	Parent/guardian plus player(s) * + 1 player £205 + 2 players £270 +3 players £330 OR £19.00 / 25.00 / 30.00 per month via direct debit



Social membership	£100 £55 concession for age over 65 OR £9.50 / £5.00 per month via direct debit
Non-playing lifetime	£850

\* a discounted early bird one-time payment option is available until midnight 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025  
see membership costs via the GMS memberships tab

The new subscription levels were agreed by the members by a show of hands.

Additionally, some disappointment raised amongst the attendees with the low figure of only 50 social memberships obtained last year. Rob Milner suggested that these 'floating' members needed incentivising more to pay their social subs, which could/should come in the form of a much larger differential in bar/catering prices for members/non-members. Committee agreed it was something that needed to be looked at more carefully.

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

Election of Officers – the list of officers and committee members for the season 2025/26 were unanimously and duly elected as follows:

**President:** Alex McClennan

**Chairman:** Richard Noden

**Honorary Secretary:** Suzanne Kennedy

**Honorary Treasurer:** Alan Hill

**Age Grade Chairman:** Gavin McManus

**Head of Safeguarding & GMS:** Suzanne Kennedy

**Sub-Committee:**

**Head of Grounds –** Jim Blackburn

**Head of Facilities –** Tony Smith

**Fixtures Secretary & Referees Co-coordinator:** Simon Muckle

**Disciplinary Chairman:** Mostyn Williams



### **Sponsorship/Cheshire RFU: Nick Jones**

The list of officers was duly approved and elected.

### **CLUB HONOURS:**

The Chairman proposed that Club Honours be awarded to the outgoing Secretary Rob Milner. The members unanimously agreed to the proposal.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

The outgoing Secretary Rob Milner expressed his thanks to The Committee and Members for their help and support during his 13 years in tenure.

The Chairman expressed his overall thanks to the Committee and sub-committee for all their hard work during the course of the last 12 months. He also wanted to give special thanks to Dave Scanlon for all his hard work over the last few months.

Danielle Timoney raised the question as to whether the membership could hold more charitable based events at the club. Suzanne Kennedy suggested that they meet at a later date to discuss in more detail.

Danielle Timoney also asked whether more could be done to provide a welcoming environment in the bar areas, particularly regarding the mini and junior sections. The Chairman agreed it was essential moving forwards but also emphasised the need for balance and the requirement to also keep the club as a events facility kept to the highest standard.

Martin Hill suggested re-igniting links between the club and local Round Table.

Dave Scanlon revisited the subject of membership and the need to push for more members and possibly look to make greater uplifts to subscription levels which he felt has fallen behind other sports and possibly other rugby clubs.

### **No further business**

**There being no further business the AGM was adjourned at 9:35pm.**