

# Minutes

Meeting	Lancashire Cricket Members' Representative Group	Date	10 January 2023
Location	Box 8	Time	16:00 – 18:00
Attendees	Daniel Gidney, Liz Cooper, James Price, Jonathon Nuttall, Angela Hodson, Christian Mullarkey, Gaz Morris, Phil Johnston, Mark Chilton, Chris Bent, Colin Gore, Phil Clarke, Kirti Sharma, Steph Neville		
Apologies	Sandy Mitchell		

## # Item

### 5.1 Welcome/Apologies/AOB

- Joyce Palmer stepped down from group from November. The room agreed it was important to formally recognise the work Joyce did and to thank her for her contribution and note how much her friendship is valued. Additional thanks were made from Daniel Gidney and Lancashire Cricket to Joyce.

### 5.2 Approval of the Minutes of the July 2022 Meeting

- Unanimous decision to approve the minutes from the July 2022 meeting.

### Matters still outstanding

- Discussed that it would be a good idea for new members to meet with someone in MRG as a form of welcome to the Club.
- Suggested that the first match of the season (Surrey on 6 April) would be an ideal opportunity for that meeting to take place.
- **Action Support from Phil Johnston will be required to send invitations to the new members and the MRG**
- Confirmed the Club now has 7.5k paid Members (including Life Members). Daniel Gidney noted the big achievement to have reached the membership levels that we have done (Membership levels stood at 4.5k in 2013).
- Communication will be sent out regarding the junior committee ahead of the start of the season.
- LC are waiting on an exact date for the installation of the covid memorial, but it is likely to be the beginning of February – MRG will be advised of the date once confirmed. Product has been approved. Once installed, a date for unveiling will be planned. Liz Cooper raised that a process will be required for ashes to be scattered.
- **Action - Gaz Morris and Phil Johnston to liaise with Malcolm Lorimer.**
- Website reviews are ongoing.
- Matchday guide reviews are ongoing. Discussed the possibility of organising a refresher going into the season, to better manage the Members' expectations on what they should receive.

### Cricket update (including HPR)

- Overview from Mark Chilton on the process regarding overseas player discussions.
- The Club's pre-season tour arrangements are currently being finalised – with both men's and women's squads involved – as per last year. Final details are to be confirmed and will be communicated to Members and supporters in due course.

- Re HPR, the Club sent out communication to Members before Christmas on the latest developments relating to the ECB's High-Performance Review and its impact on the domestic cricket schedule from 2024 onwards.
- Since the SGM (Special General Meeting) in October last year, the Club has remained in conversations with the ECB and all First-Class counties and whilst no official vote has since been called for or taken, and no official communication on the subject has been published – it has been widely accepted by the ECB, and authors of the HPR, that the main recommendations specifically relating to the domestic schedule have not been agreed or accepted by a majority of the First-Class Counties.
- At this stage, Lancashire Cricket is not expecting any material changes to the schedule to be brought forward, which will continue to challenge our cricket and medical department – due to the intensity of the scheduling of the 14 County Championship matches at certain times of the season.
- Pushing for Hundred to be reduced to three weeks in 2024 to reduce pressure on players. Already reduced from five weeks to four but there is no doubt the competition is here to stay as a new broadcast deal has been signed until 2028.
- Kookaburra and points system and all other HPR recommendations excluding any schedule changes have already been approved by the ECB Board.
- Discussion on improving the narrative around Blast games, aim is to try to make it more relevant and improve storytelling.
- The Club believes any future potential schedule changes are on the ECB's back burner.
- Farington going to plan and is looking positive from LCC perspective. All contracts have been signed. The project won't make the Club any money but will be a fantastic set of facilities for the Cricket Department. ECB are involved and supportive in putting together the technical specification.
- Women's and Girl's cricket has shown growth this year with accelerated plans for the next couple of years.

#### Campaign to attract Members to apply to be on the 2024 MRG

- Filming with MRG has taken place on 10 Jan for the MRG promotional video. This went well and produced some good content.
- Already have some edited footage as a launch piece that will form part of the campaign. Remaining footage to be edited before sending to MRG for feedback.
- **Action - James Price to look at dates for MRG to discuss with LC.**
- The aim is for the launch video to go out around mid-February.
- MRG expressed an interest in additional promotion for the MRG during the season. Colin suggested filming takes place at a match with a walk around the venue with the MRG to discuss MRG achievements.
- 5.5 - Club to organise series of MRG & Club meet ups with interested Members during the season.
- **Action – Phil Johnston to organise MRG meet ups**
- Spin Magazine went out with mention of the 2024 MRG and one Member has been in touch to ask how to become part of the MRG – on the back of the editorial MRG article.
- Question raised on when Joyce Palmer's replacement would be able to begin their role and whether this would need to go through the AGM? The Club said that this will depend on the level of interest from the membership. If there is only one successful candidate to come forward, then they could start immediately. If there is more than one, then the vote would go to the Members at the AGM.
- The date for the AGM is to be confirmed – but is likely to take place during the second home fixture of the season in May.
- **Action – Above to be confirmed by LC.**

#### Update on EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) Project (ECB report, Club appointment)

- 5.6 - Update from Daniel to say that solid progress has been made over the last twelve months on the project. Noted there is no finish line on this process, it is purely about embedding a change in culture and behaviours and then measuring progress the Club continues to make but understanding there is a lot

more work to do.

- The Club will continue to progress but need to work on a way to engage Members more in this work.
- The ICEC (Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket) report (commissioned by the ECB two years ago) will be published at the end of the month. Report is expected to be challenging for the sport. Key comms will be shared with stakeholders when we know more detail.
- Club is in process of recruiting for a new Head of Inclusion and Engagement
- Advert for the Club to appoint a new non-executive board member went out on 6 January. Deadline for applications is 31 January. LC encouraged MRG to use its network to help with recruitment as it would be ideal to have a strong pool of candidates to choose from to support the Club's objectives and support membership. Ideally looking for someone with a strong record of executive leadership in an organisation that has a membership programme. Important to be clear on the role of the non-executive director in that it is not a replacement for the MRG who will continue to be the primary representative voice of Members but is a board member who supports the Club's objectives, supports membership and leads on membership comms and services.

### New Membership schemes (30-day ceiling) & current numbers

- 5.7
- MRG has received feedback that the general perception from Members was that moving to a Prime Membership would mean they wouldn't be able to attend all matches and being a "partial Member" if they're being limited to certain number of fixtures.
  - The Club have agreed for Members renewing an existing Traditional Membership and converting to Prime Membership would include 43 days that covers all Lancashire match days. The point was made that circa 1% of the current Membership were actually able to attend more than 30 days per year but the Club understood how perception was important in this matter for longstanding and very supportive Traditional Members. Research undertaken regarding attracting new Members cited the largest obstacle being too much cricket within Membership packages. The Club has recognised that attracting new Members required a nuanced approach to retaining current Members and this has now been reflected with the increase to 43 days.
  - **Action – LC to draft comms and send to MRG to review.**
  - 44% of 2022 Members still to renew for 2023.
  - 62% are new Members, 38% are returning Members. 82% of Standard Members are new Members.
  - Discussed that we need to understand who our new Members are and if we're attracting a more diverse membership base.
  - **Action – LC to draft comms and send to MRG to review.**
  - Club has actively listened to the MRG, and improvement has been made on the memberships. The MRG thanked LC for the additional comms that went out and for listening to the feedback.
  - Consensus is that if new people are going to join, it's more likely to be through the white ball route and then converting them to red ball.

### Access to middle balcony

- 5.8
- Last season there was a charge of £5 per day to upgrade to the middle balcony rather than a premium Membership for the whole season that was seen as a positive step forward. The MRG have had some feedback from some Members that still see the charge as a barrier and being non-inclusive.
  - The decision to ticket this area was due to the limited availability and from a safety perspective to manage potential queues to get in this space and Members reserving seats for friends.
  - The charge for accessing the middle balcony has never been about making money but towards covering the stewarding costs. Cost for stewarding the suite is over £8k for the season. With the £5 upgrade charge this covers 5k of this cost.
  - Without a booking system and charge, LC are concerned that the space would generally see the same faces and wouldn't encourage a wider selection of Members to try it out, which would be the opposite effect that is wanted to be achieved, and the space would become less inclusive.
  - Subject to availability the Club could consider holding back ten spaces to make free upgrades on match

- days to Members who haven't used the balcony before as a "surprise and delight".
- The balcony is situated behind the bowlers' arm and seen to be the best seat in the house.
  - There has been no negative feedback from Members on the £5 charge. The only issue was the inconvenience that they had to purchase the ticket on the day from the Ticket Office, which can be solved with an upgrade point on reception.
  - MRG feedback regarding other grounds is that Members aren't expected to pay an upgrade to have raised seating behind the bowlers' arm. Although, this point was challenged by MC who wasn't sure about how many grounds offered this for free. Surrey was the only ground mentioned.
  - With the new development, there will be a new raised seating available to Members without any additional charge for all County Championship and 50 over Cup games and selected T20 Blast games.
- Action - Comms to go out to inform the Members of the process and clarify that that Club are not doing this to make money and are in fact losing money and that this charge has made it more accessible for all Members, and to include that upgrade tickets will be available from reception on county championship match days.**

### Feedback from November Board meeting with MRG

Two members of the MRG met with The Board on 12 December, after attending the May Board Meeting for the very first time.

The MRG focused on three areas:

1. Last year and looking forward
2. Social media
3. Hot topics

The MRG stated how difficult the last eighteen months had been, navigating a way through Covid, Board appointments, SGM and the new membership structure. In addition, it was felt that the MRG has become more reactive than proactive given the relentless challenges that placed a heavy burden on the MRG volunteers. Going forward the MRG are actively promoting a skill-led recruitment campaign to join the team.

5.9 Social media, particularly the MRG twitter account and the constant monitoring was difficult and increased the workload. The MRG are talking to the Executive Team to ensure improved match day guides from LC that provided the most traffic on social media.

The MRG also reported the success of the MRG Gmail account which has proven to be very effective in dealing with individual Member questions, complaints and also a good number commending the service that the MRG are providing for Members.

Hot Topics from the membership were the '30 day' membership and many Members were concerned about voting rights given the large influx of new Members expected from the membership initiative to have 10,000 Members before 2030.

- Trust between the MRG and the Club has never been stronger.
- Issue raised for example about an IPL team buying an excessive number of memberships. The Club confirmed this can't happen with any organisation because each individual Member must have a separate name and address and email details to purchase.
- Conversation took place about updating the Club Rules as the majority were written many years ago. A good example of this was around hard copy posting of information and no digital flexibility (particularly re recent SGM).
- Some priorities have been agreed for updating with the Board to go to the January board meeting, which will then be ratified by the AGM.

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### Membership guide

- 5.10
- Feedback from the MRG that some really good content had been put out, however there are some gaps and Members didn't know where to find the missing information. Agreed that Members should go to find all the information they need on one page on the website.
  - **Action – LC to review page with MRG to ensure all relevant membership information is captured in one place**

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### Music at RL Cup fixtures

- 5.11
- Feedback on music at the RL50 fixtures is that it wasn't appreciated.
  - Less the type of music, more that people don't want it at all.
  - The intention from the Club was to create an atmosphere. Agreed that it's maybe not ideal for the type of crowd that an RL50 attracts. The view is to not have music at 50 over games. Traditionally we don't do this. Possibility of organising music for a Friday day/night match which might attract a different audience.
  - **Action – no music at the RL50 matches and to survey attendees after the matches**

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### Behaviour in D Stand during last season

- 5.12
- Number of complaints from Members regarding the behaviour in D stand for the internationals, noting that it's the worst behaviour they have ever witnessed with some behaviour being described as dangerous and reckless
  - Gaz Morris replied that several complaints to guest experience were around the language being used in this area.
  - The ECB had a zero tolerance on beer snakes and stewards were briefed to put a stop to any activity immediately, but they were battling against the odds late in the afternoon due to the sheer numbers.
  - LC have promoted the party stand experience on the website to try and make spectators understand that if they are bringing a younger or older relative to not buy tickets in this area.
  - Safety is aware of feedback from 2022 fixtures and will monitor behaviour in 2023.

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### Coaches for away games

- 5.13
- The MRG asked if coaches can be put on for Members for away games.
  - LC responded that the Club have previously introduced coaches from the Emirates Old Trafford to outgrounds, including transport from Sedbergh train station to the Sedbergh ground, however the constant concern is if the coach is scheduled and there isn't sufficient demand. If there was guaranteed demand for each away match it would be relatively simple to arrange.
  - Another concern from the Club was that not all Members will want to arrive and leave the away venue at the same time or travel to and from Emirates Old Trafford.
  - It was agreed that it wouldn't work for all county championship games due to the distances and times, but maybe would for one day games.
  - Potentially a "Travel Club" scheme would work where if ten Members decide they would like to travel via coach, then the Club could organise a minibus.
  - **Action - Comms to Members regarding the potential travel club to gauge interest.**

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### 2022 Player of the Year Award

- 5.14
- Feedback from the MRG that there was disappointment from Members, as they were not given the opportunity to vote.
  - There was a reduced opportunity for membership to attend the event as there was very little publicity.
  - LC agreed to ensure Members can vote in the future and that the event will be better advertised, however it should be noted that the event is not a hospitality event and we have never had many Members pay to attend the awards.

- The Club will look if they can set aside fifty seats for Members at a reduced rate on the basis that MRG would actively promote such tickets.

**Action – LC to ensure Members can vote in future and review the price to see if a reduced price can be offered to Members**

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#### Phone issues during the season

- 5.15
- MRG raised the difficulties that Members have getting through on the membership phone line.
  - LC reassured the MRG that how the Club manage phone calls during the season is being reviewed.
  - There are obvious pinch-points during the season and there is no way to predict the duration of calls as this is very much dependant on the nature of the call.
  - At present, the Members' phone line overflow is patched through to Quay Tickets. The Club pointed out that even with the call going through to Quay tickets, Members are not always satisfied with their query being answered by an Agent as they feel they should be able to speak to someone from the Club, however the Club cannot flex resource on a day-to-day basis to manage call volumes.
  - Between June and August, the Ticket Office received 6,000 phone calls, which cannot all be answered by such a small team.
  - The Club recognises that we have not been able to find a good solution to this multi-year recurring issue and will actively explore ways to improve how we handle Member guest queries.
  - **Action – Gaz Morris to arrange basic training for wider Guest Experience staff on the Ticketing system to provide a triage to help relieve pressure on ticketing team during peak times.**

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#### AOB

##### Member question - Could the club look at Test Match practice days being open to Members?

The Club must work with ECB on this to see if anything conflicts with their agendas. May be something that could be offered for smaller fixtures.

5.16

##### Can the ground be open two hours before games rather than one?

There is a working group looking at the pre-match experience including earlier access, however there are additional resource costs to consider achieving this.

**Next meeting TBD.**



Minute Ref	SUMMARY OF ACTIONS	
1.9	<b>New Members</b> - meeting of club officials and MRG to be scheduled possibly for Surrey game on 6 April. Club to send invitations to the new members	PJ
2.6	<b>Junior Committee</b> – Communication to be sent out ahead of the start of the season	JP
4.3.1	<b>Covid Memorial</b> – Installation likely to be beginning of Feb. MRG to be informed & unveiling organised. Process for laying of ashes to be created	GM / PJ
5.4 (July)	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> XI information</b> - Club to look at how they can improve <b>information for Members</b>	MC
5.11 (July)	<b>Matchday guides</b> – Club to ensure guides are sent out to Members and the MRG will be consulted on content.	CM
5.5 (Jan)	<b>Recruitment video</b> – MRG to be consulted regarding initial footage. <b>Launch video to go out mid February</b>	JP
5.5 (Jan)	<b>MRG Recruitment</b> – number of meet ups with MRG members to be organised during the season	PJ
5.7 (Jan)	<b>New Membership schemes</b> – comms regarding 43 days membership for Traditional Members to be reviewed by MRG	JP
5.8 (Jan)	<b>Access to middle balcony</b> – comms to be sent out to Members regarding process to upgrade tickets on the day	JP/JN
5.10 (Jan)	<b>Membership guide</b> – Club to review with MRG and ensure all relevant membership information is captured in one place	JN/GM
5.11 (Jan)	<b>Music at 50 over matches</b> – no music to be arranged and attendees to be surveyed after the matches	PJ
5.13 (Jan)	<b>Coaches for away games</b> – Club to communicate with Members regarding a potential travel club to gauge interest	GM
5.14 (Jan)	<b>Player of the Year Award</b> – Club to ensure that Members will be able to vote in the future and will review the pricing offered to Members to attend the event	GM
5.15 (Jan)	<b>Phone issues during the season</b> – Club to actively explore how to improve Member queries. Wider Guest Experience staff to receive basic training on the Ticketing System	GM

Should Members wish to contact the MRG about any of these items or if there is anything that they would like to be raised at a future meeting, please use the email address [membership@lancashirecricket.co.uk](mailto:membership@lancashirecricket.co.uk)

Green background	Action complete – item to be removed, following approval of minutes.
Yellow background	On-going action.
White background	A new action from the most current minutes
Turquoise background	Action postponed to a later date