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|  | **Preston Grasshoppers RFC Ltd**  **MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** |
| Date | 16th July 2016 |
| Venue | Dooley Suite, Preston Grasshoppers |
| Present | Martin Hothersall, Michael Bailey, George Erdozain, Malcolm Alden, Graham Cox, Mike Forshaw, John Powell, Joe Freeman, Roy Freeman, Phil Watmough, Hadyn Gigg, Ian McFarlane, Michael Lane, Jim Melrose, Ken Moore, H Hardman, Michael Anson, Les Anson, Mel Whittle, Bill Kelly, Bob Thompson, Iain Crossley, Hugh Duckworth, Paul McKernan, John Peterson, Steph Wilson, Joe Moxham, S. Jackson, Dave Parkinson, Peter Ashcroft, Dave Smith, Chris Dew, Stan Threlfall, bob Bailey |
| Apologies | Andy Donovan, Richard Ellis, John King, Les Harrison, John Chesworth, Ennis O'Donnell, John Smith |

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| Ref | Minute/Action | Action by | Deadline |
| 1 | **President's Welcome:**  The President welcomed all those present and in particular Les Anson who was attending his 63rd AGM. The President also advised members that club stalwart, Bert Shepherd, had passed away. Members observed a minute's silence in his memory. |  |  |
| 2 | **Approval of Minutes from 2014 AGM:**  The minutes were proposed by Malcolm Alden and seconded by Harvey Hardman. |  |  |
| 3 | **Matters arising from 2014 AGM not covered in the agenda:**  There were no matters arising. |  |  |
| 4 | **Apologies for absence:**  See the list above. |  |  |
| 5 | **Chairman's report:**  The Chairman George Erdozain presented a report that covered the following items:  We are primarily a rugby club with the first team in National 2 North (4th level of the game). In addition the club has a further 5 senior teams, a ladies team and a colts team. There is a thriving mini junior section with teams at all age groups supported by Hugh Duckworth and a large team of volunteers. A huge debt is owed to Mike Bailey as chairman of rugby.  However we are not just a rugby club. There are sections for squash, archery, cricket (including hosting Ingol CC), shooting and the Hoppers rollers.  This is all paid for by the use of the clubhouse and grounds. This is trading well due to the efforts of the General Manager, Richard Ellis and Gill Parkinson. Room hire bookings are looking strong and we aim to improve from year to year. There is tight budgetary control operated by Richard Ellis and our Treasurer, Martin Hothersall. Thanks are also due to Sharon Judge for her dedication and we welcome Louise Williams who has replaced Sharon.  Dave Robson has settled in well as bar manager. The margins have improved and new events such as the successful beer festival have been introduced. Thwaites have sold their beer brewing business to Marstons which will provide an increased range of beers. Steve Kerry is still looking after us.  On the catering front, Alan Nutter and his team continue to work wonders. He has been joined by Matt Collenridge as assisstant chef. The club has an excellent catering standard and a growing reputation. Last season all first team games were sponsored and many ancillary lunches were sold. There were two sell-out games when we were full to capacity. We need to continue spreading the word about our club.  Dave Preston has taken over as groundsman and has got the pitches in great condition. The slitting, rolling and root separating device is showing good results in improved drainage. There are savings on sand acquisition and spreading thanks to Mark Gale at Clive Hurt.  There have been many successful events at the club – Hoppers Strictly, New Years Eve, bonfire night, Mini'junior sportsman's dinner. Family fun day, summer ball, Hopfest, Hoppers Business Network.  Our social media site has the highest number of hits of any club in the northern region whilst our website is much improved. Thanks go to Michael Lough and John Peterson for this work.  This has been the first year that we have had a turnover of more than £1m. Capital expenditure has included an upgrade of the Dooley suite, 4 new exterior doors, rugby equipment including the gym, bar refrigeration and kitchen equipment.  County Insurance continue to contibute to the club when members insure through them. Mike Forshaw, aka Digger, continues to provide excellent background information for the club programme etc. The 1869 Club have made generous contributions to gym equipment and new balls for the senior sides. Thanks go to Ken Moore for the programme and to Graham Murphy, Dave Parkinson and Mick Smith for regular gate duty and to all other volunteers – too many to mention.  The decision has been taken to stay at Lightfoot Green and we are open to all possibilities and develoments if of benefit to the club. A club survey has been undertaken and the results presented to the club. A masterplan is to be produced. One major event that the club needs to look forward to in order to benefit the club is the Rugby World Cup taking place in the autumn.  Thanks are due to the President, Hadyn Gigg and to the Secretary, Graham Cox, who does a mountain of work for the club. Thanks are also due to Martin Hothersall the club Treasurer. The committee and the rugby development group also deserve thanks from the club as do the professionals who gave their services on a pro bono basis to the club – Harrison Drury, Eckersley & Co and Anderson Gables.  As to next season, let us hope for a successful one. Please do check the website regularly and continue to support the club.  One member requested that it be minuted that the beer festival had been very successful and that everyone involved did a fabulous job job with a lot of work being done. |  |  |
| 6 | **Honorary Treasurer's report and presentation of accounts:**  The Treasurer reported on the Accounts for the year to 30 April 2015 and presented the financial position.  Paul McKernan asked whether we had LED lighting to save money? The Treasurer respoded that about 50% were LEDs. The president responded that we were undertaking a wider exercise of saving money on utilities.  Bob Thompson thanked the management committee for their hard work and asked why the catering figures were lower this year. The Treasurer explained that there had been a change in the way figures were reported and now included sponsorship. The president indicated that management committee were looking at this and the way it was presented in future.  Paul McKernan asked that as there was more money to be allocated to rugby this year is that an indication that the club should do better this year? Michael Bailey explained what was included in the rugby budget and the Treasurer indicated that it was important not to get relegated as that would probably affect the sponsorship income.  The president thanked the Treasurer for his work. |  |  |
| 7 | **Reporting Accountant's report:**  The Treasurer reported that the Melia Partnership were giving a "clean" Accountants' Report |  |  |
| 8 | **Approval of accounts:**  Approval of the accounts was proposed by Stan Threlfall, seconded by Bob Thompson and approved unanimously. |  |  |
| 9 | **Chairman of Rugby's report:**  The 2014/15 season was a tough one but provided excitement down to the last game – the players showed nerve and determination to stay up. It is however apparent that the club haas to change its approach looking into the future. In recent seasons the club has been conservative in its expenditure and our squad lacked both clear leaders and pace out wide. The club fully recognized that oppostion teams were getting stronger and we were standing still.  12 months ago we invested in the gym and strength & conditioning coaches. Players are now getting stronger and fitter. In pre-season traing the emphasis has been on ensuring players reach peak fitness.  Unfotunately we lost 4 players to Fylde in well publicised circumstances. This was not all down to money but players wishing to improve their rugby and they have left on good terms. If we had been pushing up the leagues it is likely that they would not all have left but we hope that they will return in the near future.  There are now 5 north west clubs in our league which makes chasing players more difficult. In adddition we have lost Gareth Dyer as director of rugby – he undertook a massive amount of work and we thank him for all that he has done.  In March a rugby development group was set up chaired by George Erdozain that includes representatives of the mini/juniors and the lower senior sides. The early ideas include a pathway to work programme, a junior rugby acadamey, new external partnerships & community engagement, rugby manager and external benchmarking with Hartpury College.  Garth Dew is head coach, Alan Holmes is director of rugby and Ollie Viney is backs coach. Sean Taylor has re-joined the club and is community coach – a position that we are hoping to make self-funding in the near future.  In terms of players we are still looking for an experienced no. 10 and besides Sean Taylor & Ollie Viney two forwards have signed that we hope will be exciting for the club.  The second team is managed by John Young with assistance from Ade Jebb, Craig Steel and Tino. Tom Peterson captains the third team and represents the junior sides which have gone from strength to strength – we should be immensley proud of putting out six sides each Saturday when other clubs are losing sides. These junior sides are critical to the overall success of the club.  The ladies team continues to be a great success and we are proud of them. They provide a true rugby atmosphere around the club.  The colts will be down to a single under 18 side in the coming season managed by Gareth Pearson.  Harvey Hardman asked whether we should put more money into our rugby team as other clubs do? Micael Bailey responded that he was worried by the demands of some players – the 20% or so that are in the game for money as a means of recognition. The club is most successful off the field to make us sustainable while other clubs depend on benefactors – what happens if they leave? The president indicated that he would like more sponsorship.  Malcolm Alden asked what position were the new players? Michael Bailey reiterated the information given in his report.  Paul McKernan asked if there was good progression from the the junior sides like the colts. Micael Bailey indicated that we do, but that it is a big jump.  Dave Smith commented that we do lose a percentage of colts to university. Michael Bailey responded that we were trying to ensure that they could be loyal to the club by helping with future jobs for example.  John Peterson asked whether there plans to sponsor colts and to identify those who would be at local universities who we could persuade to stay at the club? Michael Bailey replied that we had overlooked this aspect in the past and we need to do this now.  Bob Thompson asked whether we had identified a captain yet and whether it was based on popularity or leadership? Michael Bailey indicated that there were some ideas and that they were based on leadership.  Stan Threlfall asked whether the reorganisation of leagues was to proceed. The chairman explained the current proposals in that no full survey had taken place as indicated originally and as a result the proposals had been postponed. |  |  |
| 10 | **Election of Officers and committee:**  The Honorary Secretary advised that all existing officers and committee members had put forward themselves for nominations and that there were no other nominations.  Steph Wilson proposed that they be re-elected and this was seconded by Paul McKernan. All members agreed. |  |  |
| 11 | **Appointment of Reporting Accountants:**  The Honorary Treasurer indicated that the Melia Partnership was willing to be appointed again. This wa proposed by Mike Forshaw and seconded by Bill Kelly. All members agreed. |  |  |
| 12 | **Any Other Business:**  Stan Threlfall thanked all the Management Committee members for their efforts over the last 12 months. This was supported by Jim Melrose.  A member asked about the the management of concussion within the club. Michael Bailey advised that we had a fully qualified physiotherapist at the each first team game whilst there was a doctor and a paramedic at each home game.  Michael Lane indicated that we have produced some great players but this needs more publicity. Both the president and Hugh Duckworth indicated that we always display the shirts of these players in the club.  The meeting closed at 8.58pm |  |  |

Minutes recorded by GC