

CHESHIRE CRICKET CLUBS COMMITTEE

Executive Committee Meeting – 10th November 2025 Moss Farm 7.00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Opened 7.00 p.m.

Present:

David Humpage (Chairman), Brian Horrocks (Secretary), Martin Roberts (Officials), Gareth Moorhouse (Cheshire Cricket Board), Selwyn Stephenson (Cheshire Cricket League), Caroline Sheridan (Women's Cricket), Barry Harwood (Treasurer), Brian Boys (Cheshire County League), John Petch (Cheshire County Cricket Club)

Guest: Stephen Croft (Derbyshire and Cheshire League)

Apologies for Absence

David Atkinson (Facilities and Grants), Duncan Anderson (Facilities)

Previous Minutes:

The previous minutes were accepted as a true record with a review of the outstanding actions as follows:

- Action – Review the Development Plan for discussion at the next meeting – All **Completed**
- Action - Confirm league web sites quote the correct links to the new legislation (Anti-discrimination) – Brian B, Selwyn **Completed**
- Action – Speak to David Sharp about the potential for Cheshire Cricket Trust assistance with bursaries for these events. – John P **Completed** with the following comment:

The Trust has set up bursaries for both Young Umpires and Young Groundspersons, the former in August 2020, details of how to apply were agreed with ACO. The first and only applicant was Oliver Passant. As for C.A.G a similar scheme was agreed by the Trustees in March 2022 and offered to CAG. To date no applications have been made.

It is more than likely that when the Trustees hold their bi-annual meeting on 10th November that both schemes will be confirmed as still "on offer". It is up to ACO and CAG to advertise these benefits amongst their younger members or to enquire to the C.T.T how they could be made more attractive to encourage applicants.

Note – John sent along some minutes from the Trust meeting after 4Cs met. Those minutes confirmed that the bursaries are still available and we are encouraged to use them in funding young officials and grounds people.

Chairman (David Humpage)

David welcomed the team as usual with an additional and most appreciated attendance from one of our Derbyshire and Cheshire League colleagues – Stephen Croft. Stephen is most welcome to join us whenever possible and as such will be included in our meeting invites.

Treasurer (Barry Harwood)

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Barry is preparing for the close of accounts at 30th November. One outstanding affiliation fee is close to being resolved. Two invoices for payment by 4Cs were cleared and will show in the accounts (umpiring bursaries and Pitchpower visits). It is expected there will be a roughly 4K surplus for use in assisting clubs and officials in their development.

Secretary (Brian Horrocks)

- Correspondence covered the following areas all of which have been completed or were handled in the meeting
 - ✓ Development Plan (David H)
 - ✓ Young Officials/grounds person bursaries
 - ✓ Development Plan (David Humpage)
- The discussion about the Cheshire Trust support grants (to young officials and grounds persons) confirmed that there is no theoretical limit to requests, each to be handled on its merit. To date only one applicant has taken advantage which may mean that the Trust assistance is largely unknown. CCB will continue to promote the bursary scheme to young officials progressing through the Umpire Training and Umpire Development courses who wish to stand in open age cricket. Additionally, CAG and CACO will look at how they can encourage youngsters to take up the offer

Action – Consider ways in which CAG and CACO can enable the offer to be known about, understood, and utilised – Martin and Andy H

Safeguarding (Julie Rafferty)

- Julie has provided a full report attached to these minutes. In it there is news and statistics related to Safe Hands Management, DBS, Training, Safeguarding cases, and concerns. In the case of training, we spent some time discussing the new Anti-discrimination training becoming available. CCB staff, league and club officials are encouraged to complete 'Introducing the Boundary' eLearning (30 minutes with knowledge check)

Action – Consider anti-discrimination training for umpires and scorers – Martin

Action – Encourage league officials to do the anti-discrimination training – Selwyn and David

- Further to Julie's report, Gareth noted that the new 'Introducing the Boundary' anti-discrimination training was now available online. He encouraged all members of the Exec to take the 30 mins module and agreed to share the link post meeting –

<https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/anti-discrimination/introducing-the-boundary/>

- Selwyn suggested he would raise the issue of discipline / spirit of cricket at the next CCL Captain's meeting and would encourage completion of the above module to raise awareness and drive better standards of behaviour.

Facilities and Grants (Duncan Anderson, Dave Atkinson)

Gareth reported back on behalf of Dave.

- Another strong year for Cheshire with circa £160,000 allocated to 21 clubs via the ECB County Grants Fund. This included an uplift from an initial budget of £113,000, with Cheshire claiming some money that was unspent by other counties. Guidance notes for the 2026 scheme are expected shortly – early indications are an increased overall pot and the

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- opportunity to increase the £10K grant limit for some projects linked to strategic aims.
- Gareth suggested that another round of Grant Funding workshops would be well received by clubs and asked for permission to approach Steve Wright for some quotes, which was granted. He explained the ECB fund may only be open to clubs with women's and girls' sections in 2026, meaning there would be some clubs who were ineligible. Dave Atkinson continues to meet clubs on a 1:1 basis to discuss facility needs, signposting club officials to funding as appropriate. 4Cs is open to the prospect of assisting in this respect.
- There are growing concerns over a smaller number of clubs and the security of tenure at their respective grounds. Gareth and Dave continue to work closely with club officials and representatives from local authorities, updating the respective playing pitch strategies to ensure each facility is included and protected in the local plan.

Senior Open Leagues - Cheshire County Cricket League and Cheshire Cricket League (Brian Boys and Selwyn Stpehenson)

- The leagues are now in close season, with preparations underway for 2026, within the next month league playing rules will be reviewed. In CCCL and CCL the most prominent news concerns a potential merger to create a single Cheshire Senior Open structure. The proposal was made to start a consultation process, this being accepted by both league execs. A meeting has been arranged for 4th December to start the process which will include all aspects of senior cricket across the two leagues.
- Each league summarised the seasons events. Kerridge have now resigned from CCL to move to Derbyshire and Cheshire. There are numerous concerns related to ground availability/suitability that are being reviewed by the leagues and the Board. Our aim is to maintain our clubs and maintain our playing surfaces. The two can be independent. There are also positive stories concerning club ambitions and playing areas e.g. Lymm
- Both open leagues reported an improved disciplinary year although many more instances of lack of 'Spirit of Cricket' are being observed, particularly in non-umpired cricket. Left unchecked, it is felt that cricket will be in long term decline. Both senior open league Chairmen will emphasise the importance of Spirit of Cricket at pre-season events. Currently there are no drastic penalties for such instances, however, it is felt we may have to review this policy, with potential points deduction an inevitable outcome. More worrying still, we feel that instances of this kind of disregard for Spirit of cricket are creeping into Junior cricket. Where senior players lead – junior players will follow! Clubs are encouraged to develop and maintain their own internal disciplinary processes, some more successfully than others.

Action – Emphasise Spirit of Cricket in pre-season club events and meetings – David H and Selwyn

Senior Leagues – Women (Caroline Sheridan)

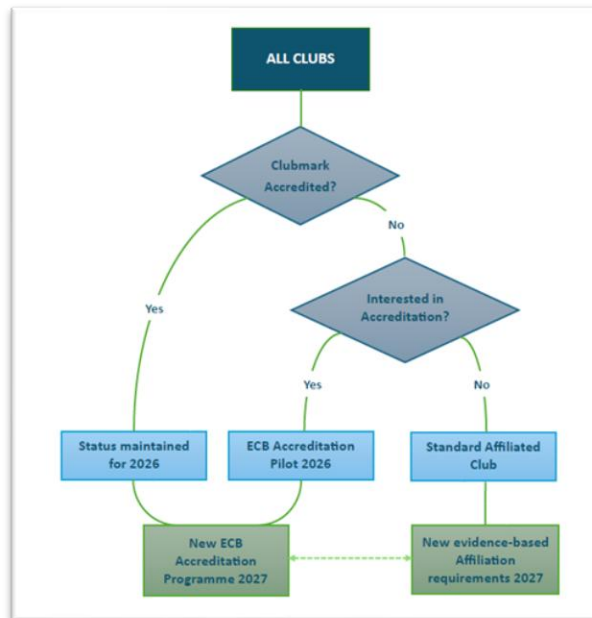
- Caroline reported on an interesting Women's season in which we had increased participation including the Lancashire Thunder competition. The AGM is imminent for 2026 season where league expansion (including out of county clubs) will figure. The constitution and playing regulations are due for review.
- Gareth acknowledged the updates to the ECB Premier Leagues criteria for clubs (in the top two divisions), which include the requirement for an active girls' section. CCB staff can support clubs with player and volunteer recruitment and facilitation of fixtures, including indoor softball festivals over the winter. These events have been advertised to clubs via email, WhatsApp and across CCB social media channels.

Clubs Development Manager (Gareth Moorhouse)

- Gareth GM noted that 108/109 clubs had paid their affiliation fees for the 2025 season, with one outstanding payment expected this week.

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- Payments made to reimburse (50% of the course fee) for four candidates who completed the ECB Umpire Course and stood in 5 matches. Additional payments made to cover the cost of Pitch Power reports for Cheshire clubs, funded jointly by ECB, CAG and 4Cs
- Gareth shared some slides outlining updates to ECB Accreditation (formerly Clubmark) from 2026 onwards (see image below). The information will be shared with clubs at the November Forums.



- Key updates include:
- Affiliation - All clubs must affiliate to CCB/ECB ahead of 2026 season (deadline end of April). Clubs must sign the updated ECB Terms and Conditions – via Play-Cricket – and continue to pay their affiliation fees direct to 4Cs. ECB have produced a guide to affiliation, which includes some template wording clubs can drop into their membership forms to capture consent from all members.
- Clubmark – has been replaced with ‘ECB Accreditation’. 2026 is a pilot year for the new scheme, and counties are invited to nominate (non Clubmark) clubs to take part. Existing Clubmark clubs will retain their accreditation until 2027, providing they continue to be compliant on SHMS.
- From 2027 onwards, the new accreditation / assessment criteria will be applicable to all clubs and will focus on 4 buckets – playing offer, people, governance, and facilities.
- During the transition period, GM encouraged leagues to retain the rule in handbooks which says all clubs ‘must be affiliated to CCB/ECB’ and to replace referenced to ECB Clubmark with ‘ECB Accreditation’. GM suggested a further meeting with league reps in the New Year to discuss the Accreditation Scheme and how this might impact future promotion/relegation.
- Over the next 12 months, CCB will work closely with all affiliated clubs to ensure they are ready for 2027, where they will need to submit evidence against the new criteria for both affiliation and accreditation. CCB would target the ‘non Clubmark’ clubs to get closer to them and drive up basic standards of governance as well as offering bespoke support.

Officials (Martin Roberts)

- Martin summarised the CACO (Cheshire Association of Cricket Officials) position. We are now in the funding cycle with submissions due in draft by 19th November and final submission by early 2026. A greater emphasis on Scorer development is being encouraged by ECB. The current number of 37 scorers needs to increase rapidly.

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- County scoring arrangements are also an ECB target for development, however, currently we feel that Cheshire is well served by Sandra Mason acting as focal point.
- Umpire training within ECB continues to change with regularity. Two offerings – UTC and UDC are on offer with UTC (Umpire Training Course) to get a beginner trained to a level of knowledge but not readiness for panel umpiring, with UDC (Umpire Development Course) to get the umpire to practical panel level. Our own training and development team will deliver UDC.
- A programme of Winter continual professional development and refresher training is planned. Retained status on the panel will be contingent on maintaining professional development.
- ECB membership fees are to rise next year from £30 to £35.
- ECB pathways for umpiring in the Men's and the Women's game continue to frustrate as there is no direct correlation between the two. Experienced Men's game umpires are not necessarily deemed able to umpire Women's games. ECB continue to look at this anomaly.

Cheshire Cup (David Gane)

David summarized the 2025 event won by Didsbury, beating Lindow in the final, Lindow were praised for staging an excellent final despite weather interruptions. The 2026 competition is now under consideration with no planned changes to format (despite continued conversations concerning coloured clothing) and encouraging as many larger and smaller clubs as possible. Once again, the Cheshire Shield is not planned. Gareth asked if there was a target for the number of competing clubs after a small reduction from the 2024 season. David noted that Sundays were a challenge for some clubs and that the majority of entries were from CCCL clubs (only 2 from CCL). No plans to reintroduce the Shield.

Grounds (Andy Horsfield)

- Andy reported on two workshops held in May with good attendance. Encouragingly, a young grounds person's course attracted 10 delegates.
- 25 Pitch Power visits were conducted in 2025 (37 in 2024) which gives us around 50% coverage of the entire league. There will be further visits in 2026 allowing us to build a database of club and ground status to use as our benchmark.
- The AGM will be held in December and once again a part business part social event is planned. The WhatsApp group is working well.

Cheshire County Cricket Club (John Petch)

- John had provided a report before hand – reattached with these minutes. Discussion during the meeting informed that Peter Babbage had now stepped down and will become president.
- The 2026 travel commitment looks substantial with venues including: Cumbria, Northumberland, Cambridgeshire, Dorset and Cornwall. Logistics will be difficult and the club will be seeking assistance from leagues to facilitate these matches. In comparison there are three home games against local neighbours Shropshire.

AOB

- Gareth shared details of the ECB Young Cricket Collective scheme, which aims to equip teenagers with the skills to volunteer at their clubs. There will be three modules – coaching, umpiring/scoring and club development, and each club will appoint a mentor to approve any volunteer hours that are completed. All members of the Exec were encouraged to support and promote the scheme once finalised.

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Meeting closed 9.20pm