

CHESHIRE CRICKET CLUBS COMMITTEE

Executive Committee Meeting – 18th February 2026 Moss Farm 7.00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Opened 7.08 p.m.

Present:

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

Apologies for Absence

David Atkinson (Grants) Barry Harwood, Andy Horsfield (Grounds Representative) Julie Rafferty (Safeguarding), Duncan Anderson (Facilities)

Previous Minutes:

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

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

This had been shared amongst the officials. Currently there are no potential recipients but CACO are aware of the fund.

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

This has been built into the Code of Conduct and it has been recommended to officials.

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

This has been done and at least one exec official in each league has done the training. The invitation to all exec officials has been made. Introducing the Boundary Training, now available free online via The Cricket Regulator. According to the ECB Premier League criteria, at least one member of each League's executive committee must complete the Introducing the Boundary Training course before the start of every season. 4Cs colleagues are encouraged to share the link below:

Link - [Introducing the Boundary | Cheshire Cricket Board](#)

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

Planned for pre-season meetings in both leagues

Chairman (David Humpage)

No specific issues

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Treasurer (Barry Harwood)

Barry had effectively presented his report at the AGM minutes previously. The report is replicated here.

- 4Cs accounts had been circulated in advance
- Barry reported that the accounts had been audited by Jim Rafferty. Thanks were given. It was noted that Jim was standing down as auditor for 2026 so our task is to find an replacement. We discussed the potential of a known Oulton Park member who may be in a position to help. Barry will sound out the possibilities.
- All monies due had been collected with some late submissions from Alsager and the Chester Mid-Week League. A surplus of £4640 was realized in 2025. Contributions have been made from the 4Cs to Cheshire Cup and Cheshire Grounds Pitchpower visits.
- The general fund of £34,460 leaves us in a strong financial position to support any challenges ahead.

Secretary (Brian Horrocks)

Brian had effectively presented his report at the AGM minutes previously. The report is replicated here.

- The Correspondence file was reviewed and included:
 - Request for contact details
 - Pitch Advisor visits
 - Umpires pre-season meeting
 - Web site publication
 - Affiliation fees collection
 - Development Plan
 - Young Official /grounds person bursaries
 - Development Plan
- Development Plan used in exec meetings to provide context to reports has been updated as at February 2026.
- New ECB policy documents with minor changes received and managed
- The senior leagues are gearing up for a potential merger in 2027. The 4Cs role in this scenario should remain unchanged other than one league representative required. This will be reviewed at a subsequent meeting when more is known.

Safeguarding (Julie Rafferty)

- Julie was unable to join the meeting. Her report was sent in electronically and summarised by Gareth. It is attached to these minutes. The report covers: Training Opportunities, SMS updates, DBS updates, Club Safeguarding Officer survey and network meetings.
- Gareth kindly summarized as follows: Clubs should prioritise getting their SHMS in order — including a spring clean of DBS checks and CSO qualifications — as this is the only area that can jeopardise their Clubmark status. Clubs will be reminded of this at next week's Forums. Julie will also be delivering Safe Hands courses and hosting pre-season networking meetings.

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Facilities and Grants (Duncan Anderson, Dave Atkinson)

Gareth reported back on behalf of David and Duncan who were unavailable.

- We have scheduled three funding workshops at Upton, Moss Farm, and Bredbury. Bookings are starting to come in, but we need to increase promotion. The details will be shared again at the Club Online Forums next Thursday and the following Wednesday. Dave will co-deliver the sessions alongside Steve Wright, covering a mix of England and Wales Cricket Board grant guidance and general advice, including how to write a successful funding bid.

[Link - Grant Aid workshops for Cheshire clubs | Cheshire Cricket Board](#)

- Thanks to the work of the Prioritisation Panel over the past few years, we've secured an increased allocation from the England and Wales Cricket Board for the 2026 County Grants Fund, totaling £190,000.
- The maximum amount clubs can now apply for has risen from £10,000 to £15,000, with some projects eligible for grants of up to £50,000 if they meet specific criteria. To be eligible, all clubs must now be delivering women's and girls' or disability cricket. The first grants panel meets on 13th March. Seven applications have already been submitted, with many more expected.
- A Sustainability Fund (e.g. solar panels and other 'green' initiatives) will launch in 2026, meaning environmental projects will no longer fall under the County Grants Fund.
- Additional ECB funding may become available this year following the sale of The Hundred. We are awaiting confirmation on how this will be distributed and how CCBs can apply. This is likely to be a strategic fund linked to CCB facility strategies, rather than an open application process like the CGF. Potential projects could include installing new flooring or netting in school halls to expand indoor training capacity for clubs.
- Ground tenure remains the number one issue, with several clubs continuing to negotiate with private landlords and local authorities to secure long-term access. There have been some positive outcomes (e.g. Lymm and Torr Park), but significant challenges remain. The respective leagues have been kept informed throughout.

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

- Both leagues are gearing up for what may be the final season as two separate leagues. A potential merger is being discussed. Good progress indicates that it is likely to go ahead in 2027 season. For 2026 both leagues have presented the rule changes and most have been accepted. The leagues are currently establishing fixtures based on the structure after last year's promotion/relegation and also club/team changes. As usual, we must take account of adjacent leagues arrangements and unfortunately North Staffs suffered a late change at the higher level which has resulted in lower level fixture changes impacting some of our clubs who participate in both leagues.
- The question of Junior Cricketers minimum ages was discussed. Currently we have two different league decisions on this. CCL have adopted ECB regulation as written and allow 12 year olds to participate irrespective of school year. CCCL have extended the ECB regulation to over 12 year old and school year 8. We have been trying to closely align the two leagues on their rules. This one will remain different for the time being. CCCL have constitutionally established the arrangements and change was not forthcoming for 2026. In the event of a league merger, an opportunity exists to re-visit the issue and introduce a single interpretation into the new league rule set. It is recognised that the two leagues have closed the gap between them progressively over the years and what seems possible now would have been distant five years ago. That is a great credit to both chairmen.

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- CCL are delighted to announce that Graham Beckett has been made a vice-president in recognition of his many years' service to the game. The concept of carrying over Vice-Presidencies to a new league structure has yet to be considered.

Senior Leagues – Women (Caroline Sheridan)

- Caroline explained that the rules and AGM meetings had been completed. The league continues to strengthen, despite losing a couple of teams, new hardball and softball teams were being introduced. The league now caters for traditional hardball cricket, Hardball pairs, Softball and Softball pairs.
- Panel umpires are being introduced in Division 1 and 40 over matches will take place in division 2 (up from 35 overs).
- The star player process is being strengthened to produce fairer outcomes. Last season there was latitude allowing teams to field artificially strong teams.
- The Board is active in encouraging clubs to introduce both women's and girl's offerings. In the higher divisions ECB are expecting clubs to do this.

Clubs Development Manager (Gareth Moorhouse)

- The new Accreditation Pilot launches in 2026, with several Cheshire clubs keen to participate. Meetings have already taken place with Styal Cricket Club and Trafford Metrovics Cricket Club, with further sessions planned at Birkenhead St Mary's Cricket Club and Mellor. The criteria has been circulated to all Cheshire clubs. A key consideration for leagues moving forward is how the new tiered accreditation framework will determine eligibility for league divisions. Currently, Clubmark is required to compete at Tier 4 (CCCL Division 3) and above, but this will need reviewing under the new structure. Gareth is happy
- The affiliation process moved to Play-Cricket this year and, so far, it has run smoothly. As of 18.02.26, 99 clubs have affiliated, leaving 9–10 outstanding (depending on whether Merseyside and Cultural Club are included). Gareth will continue to follow these up individually, but it would help if leagues could include a reminder in their club correspondence to complete affiliation. This is referenced in both handbooks and is a pre-requisite for ECB Premier Leagues. I'm confident all clubs will be completed by early March.
- A reminder that 2026 is the final year of 'self-certification' for affiliation. From 2027, clubs may need to upload key compliance documents (constitution, insurance, safeguarding policy, etc.) and demonstrate they are compliant on the Safe Hands system. During 2026, CCB will share resources to support smaller (non-Clubmark) clubs in preparing for this change.

Action – Include a reminder in all formal club correspondence and meetings – Brian B and Selwyn

- A key consideration for leagues moving forward is how the new tiered accreditation framework will determine eligibility for league divisions. Currently, Clubmark is required to compete at Tier 4 (CCCL Division 3) and above, but this will need reviewing under the new structure. Gareth is happy to support league steering groups in shaping this approach.

Action – Ensure merger workstreams are aware of this topic in their deliberations – Brian B and Selwyn

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Officials (Martin Roberts)

- ECB have consolidated their regional support structure. The result is that we have lost our Northern representative and now a Welsh representative is looking after Wales, North West, North and Midlands. ACO have a meeting with the new representative in early March.
- The funding plan has been submitted for 2026. We believe we will fare well compared to some of the larger counties especially where they fail to spend the budget. However, budgets are generally being tightened by ECB. Our development plan puts us in a stronger position.
- Winter CPD offerings have had a reasonable up take, however, the attendees tend to be those who already have a good grounding. Spring CPD courses have started. Looking ahead to 2027 there are scheduled over 70 law changes. We will be expecting 100% attendance from all umpires and this will influence their joining the panel.
- Umpire numbers will be down in 2026. To date 5 have joined but 17 have left. There are currently 91 umpires available to us.
- Further attention will be given to discipline in 2026. Last season there were many occasions where disciplinary measures were not taken which subsequently (in training sessions) were deemed to warrant intervention.

Cheshire Cup (David Gane)

David has 35 entries to date with an end of February deadline. We are confident of achieving at least last season numbers. We speculated on the potential for automatic entry as a default. Clubs would need to actively choose not to enter and inform 4Cs as such. This will not be used in 2026 but is under consideration. It has worked well in other sports and scenarios.

Grounds (Andy Horsfield)

- Over 18 grounds managers joined clubs from Cumbria and Lancashire for a pre-season webinar on winter preparation, delivered by the Grounds Management Association (GMA), one of our partners.
- CAG are planning to run a pre-season workshop (date TBC on AH's return to the country), along with additional in-season workshops to further support clubs. AJ or CAG will share details with League Secretaries once confirmed, for onward circulation.
- The CPA team will again deliver supported visits, as agreed previously. As a county, we're targeting a further 15–20 visits, subject to filling one of the vacant CPA roles — thank you to the leagues for sharing the advert. Could leagues please provide a copy of the contacts listed in their handbooks, so we can ensure key messages are shared directly with each club's grounds lead

Action –Share Groundsmens details with CAG – Brian B and Brian H

- If leagues do merge, CAG would welcome the opportunity to act as the central point of contact for all grounds-related queries and support, working alongside league representatives to shape what that provision looks like.
- Finally, the persistently wet winter is likely to impact pre-season preparations. Clubs experiencing ongoing issues are encouraged to contact the CAG team for advice and support. Hopefully, a sustained dry spell will help improve conditions soon.

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Cheshire County Cricket Club (John Petch)

- John had provided a report beforehand – reattached with these minutes. The showcase game was proving elusive as Yorkshire cannot accommodate us. We await a reply from Lancashire. Showcase matches are very effective revenue generators

AOB

None

Meeting closed 8.55 pm