CHESHIRE CRICKET BOARD LIMITED
MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD AT WARRINGTON SPORTS CLUB
ON FRIDAY 22 MAY 2026 FROM 10.15am

Meet our Staff – Owen Willimson (Senior Manager for Disability Cricket & ECB National Programmes) and Chris Edwards BEM (Disability lead Coach and Coaching Officer). Prior to the meeting proper, Owen and Chris presented an update of Disabilities Cricket in Cheshire. Those present were enthused by the presentation and in particular by the accompanying video 'be part of something special' available to view via the website. It was recommended that we arrange a similar video to promote volunteer involvement in disability cricket.

1. **Attendance**: Di Totty (Vice Chair, in the chair), Richard Newton (Managing Director), David Sharp (Secretary), Nick Brooks (Independent Non-Executive Director), Lauren Forrester (Independent Non-Executive Director), Neeruj Luthra (Independent Non-Executive Director), Helen Nicholson (Independent Non-Executive Director).
   Apologies: Nigel Muirhead (Chair), Scott Elliott (Management Group Chair), Mike Guest (Treasurer), David Humpage (Clubs), Jim Law (County Club), Paul Brown (CYC), Joanna Seddon (Independent Non-Executive Director).
   Note: our quorum for normal meetings is ANY seven (Directors and Member representatives). A quorum for general meetings must include two Member representatives.

2. **Minutes of the meeting 20 February 2026.** The minutes were agreed and signed by the chair as a true record:

3. **Matters arising from the meeting 20 February 2026.**
   3.1 CPA Governance diversity targets (item 7.1 of 20 Feb meeting minutes refers). On 6 March Richard received a call with Nick Ball (ECB EDI and Governance lead) to advise ECB's agreement for Mike to stay on as Director until he retires next February 2027. After that time, we will need to conform with the 40% minimum male/female Director diversity target including two ex-officio Directors.

4. **Management Group (MG).** Richard referred to the minutes of the MG meeting held on 5 May 2026 which had been circulated to the Directors and Member representatives prior to the Board meeting.
   4.1 Annual Performance Review with ECB. CCB representatives (Nigel, Richard, Jess and Gareth) met with ECB representatives led by Samuel Carter on 25th March. Points around income diversity and charitable status were raised by ECB. The Board has previously agreed not to pursue charitable status. The MG agreed that our primary focus for income should continue to be our successful Coaching Development Programme for children.
   4.2 EDI funding. We were successful with our bid to ECB for funding to support the respective priorities in our Countywide Plan.
   4.3 The Hundred. The CCB Facilities Officer continues to seek potential projects for consideration for support from the sale of The Hundred each aligned to the CCB Facilities Strategy.
   4.4 ECB Gamechanger. Suitable projects require external funding before we apply for support from the ECB Gamechanger fund.
   4.5 Cheshire Cricket Trust. The Trust, established in 2012, run independently from the Board by its Trustees offers assistance/support as needed to achieve fairness for all. The Trustees have recently agreed to support mental health training courses held at seven clubs, and to provide a donation towards the purchase of Cheshire kit for members of the Disability squad.
   4.6 Finance
   4.6.1 Account and Investment. Our bank account remains satisfactory to maintain our operation at the current level and our investment provides support as and when needed.
   4.6.2 Financial support for other bodies. Financial support for the Men's 50s, 60s and 70s teams has been agreed by the MG.

5. **Governance/Risk.** The working group met on 1 May, and a report was circulated prior to the meeting (see **Appendix 1**).
   5.1 CPA Governance diversity targets. See item 3.1 above.
   5.2 CPA Gold Accreditation Scheme. As the accreditation process may involve interviews with any of our Directors to ascertain views/understanding of the Board's governance it was agreed that the Governance group at its next meeting would discuss the best way to present aspects of the scheme and our governance to others on the Board at a virtual meeting (to be arranged). It is expected that every Recreational Cricket Board will achieve Gold Accreditation by January 2028.
   5.3 Amendments to Board's Rules. Changes to the Rules listed in appendix 1 and highlighted in a revised version of the Rules circulated to the Board members prior to the meeting were formally adopted.
   5.4 Risk Register (RR). The amended and reviewed version of the RR circulated prior to the meeting was agreed at the meeting. Further amendments concerning operational matters and reducing the risk for EDI will be added in a further review. It was noted that the RR should be reviewed biannually to conform with CPA Governance standards.

5.5 **Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP**). The Governance Group continues to progress the SEP. This plan will be aligned with the wider strategic and operational plans and will be built directly and proactively into performance and decision making across all activity and objectives.

5. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).** The EDI group is due to meet again soon after which Neeruj will circulate highlights of the items discussed. It remains the hope that a representative from the Women's league will join the group.

6. **Safeguarding.** Nick confirmed that Julie's Safeguarding report (**see Appendix 2**) circulated prior to the meeting accurately and comprehensively covers our current safeguarding activities. Key points highlighted at the meeting included:

6.1 **"Leading Organisation" Status.** Further to a meeting with the Cricket Regulator County Safeguarding Advisor in March 2026, it was confirmed on 10 April 2026 that the Board had been "Leading Organisation" status for Safeguarding. The Board placed on record their appreciation for the dedication and commitment of Julie Rafferty and Sarah Hallas, and continuing proactive work in respect of safeguarding culture.

6.2 **Training and Development.** Nick highlighted the delivery of key training at a number of venues to Club Safeguarding Officers (Safe Hands (Level 3)), and the update that Board staff had attended key Safeguarding in the Talent Pathway training. It was noted that updated safeguarding culture training for Board members is being arranged, which it is intended will be delivered online prior to the September Board meeting. Additionally, seven online CSO network meetings were delivered during April 2026, with key safeguarding updates and considerations shared. Seven First Aid for Mental Health (FAMH) Awareness Training courses had been delivered by Roger Pickering during March and April 2026, through funding provided by Cheshire Cricket Trust. The developing network of Mental Health Club Champions was welcomed, and the funding support from the Cheshire Cricket Trust for this initiative was recognised and appreciated.

6.3 **Culture, Engagement and embedding Safeguarding Practice.** Continuing CoSO attendance at league meetings, the induction meeting for the County Disability squad and the CAG player and parent induction meetings had proactively highlighted key safeguarding considerations and awareness. The significant expansion of the Player Ambassador Programme was welcomed, with 22 ambassadors across all age groups and genders, strengthening player engagement and voice.

6.4 **Safeguarding Steering & Support Group (SSSG).** The SSSG had met on 12th May with key updates and initiatives shared and discussed. The SSSG will be consulted as work continues to draft a Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy.

6.5 **Safeguarding Themes, Concerns and Panel Activity.** Continuing Threshold and Low-level concerns were noted, highlighting the importance of awareness, reactive reporting and case management.

7. **Women and Girls.** Di referred members to Joanna's league report which was circulated prior to the meeting, and which includes the League's Development Plan **(see Appendix 3).** There was no Girls report.

8. **Cheshire County Cricket Club.** Nick referred members to Jim's report (**see Appendix 4**) circulated prior to the meeting. Nick echoed comments in Jim's report expressing appreciation and gratitude for the support from the Cheshire County League in bringing forward Saturday start times when there is considerable overnight travel for away County games the following day.

9. **Cheshire Clubs Cricket Committee (4Cs)**. Di referred members to David H's report (**see Appendix 5)** circulated prior to the meeting.

10. **Cheshire Youth Cricket (CYC)**. Richard referred members to Paul's report **(see Appendix 6)** circulated prior to the meeting.

11. **AOB**.

12.1 **Cricket Collective Awards 2026.** Nominations have been invited from across the Cheshire cricket network for this year's Awards. The closing date is 5 July. The Board's panel meets on 10 July to consider the nominees and choose our winners for the various categories. Lauren volunteered to join the panel.

12. **Remaining 2026 meetings.**

Friday 18 September 2026 10am at Hartford House.
Friday 4 December 2026 10am at Hartford House.

Signed ……………………….

Appendices follow below.

Appendix 1 – Governance

Highlights from the Governance group's meeting on 1 May 2026

Gold Accreditation scheme. We have advised ECB that we will have reached a stage for consideration for Gold Accreditation by Feb 2027. Once we apply it is likely that any of the Board members may be approached/invited for views/understanding of its Board's Governance. **The Board's Governance group therefore recommends that Board members familiarise themselves with the Board's Rules/Constitution which the group has been aligning with the CPA governance requirements.**

Risk Register review. The Risk Register has been reviewed/updated and circulated to the Board for comments/approval at the Board meeting on 22 May. It was agreed that the Risk Register should form part/be attached to the Board's Operational Plan. It was noted that the CPA requirement for Risk Register is for a biannual review. The Rules will be amended to recognise this requirement, and the Governance group will now review the Register twice a year.

CPA items from last meeting
Min of 40% male/female Directors by 31 May, and two ex-officio Directors rather than three
Following the discussion at the Feb Board meeting attended by ECB's Leisha Hawkins, ECB has agreed to us retaining our existing situation until our 2027 AGM when Mike Guest retires.
Senior Independent Director – Scott Elliott was appointed senior independent Director and would lead a NED group to conduct the annual valuation of the Chair, and the Board
External evaluation every four years – we need to consult with ECB for guidance/advice on who conducts the operation and when.
Stakeholder Plan - the group continues to work on our Stakeholder Plan

CPA items reviewed since Feb *(ref numbers refer to CPA dashboard)*

G3.3d (Silver) 'In exceptional circumstances and at the decision of the Board, a director or chair may hold office for a further year'. Rule 12.7 states a further term. **Action – amend Rule 12.7** to read a further year.

G3.3f (Silver) 'When a director has completed their maximum term, organisations have the discretion to consider how to retain a director's skills and experience through approaches such as non-voting Board advisors, mentors or Sub-Committee members.' **Action - add to Rules as 12.8**

G4.3 (Silver) 'All committees shall report to the Board and have clear terms of reference which identify its responsibilities, membership (which may include non-executive directors, executive staff and independents), term limits and any powers delegated to it by the Board'. Rule 22. We have a 'terms of reference' for Safeguarding, Governance/Risk and Management groups. **Action – need ToR for EDI Groups, and maybe Nominations Committee.**

G5.2 (Bronze) reads 'The Board shall exercise collective responsibility and no one individual on the Board may have the unfettered ability to take a decision' **Action – amend Rule 3.2.2 and add 3.2.11.**

G11.2 (Bronze) reads 'Prior to appointment, Board Members shall provide the organisation with a Declaration of Good Character.' Rule 10.10 reads 'On appointment new directors shall receive a full, formal and tailored induction. **Action - add 'and provide a declaration of good character' to Rule 10.10**

G16.1 (Bronze) 'The organisation shall maintain a risk register and systems for identifying, assessing and managing risk (including safeguarding, player welfare, health and safety, financial etc). The Board shall regularly (at least bi-annually) review the Risk Register.' Our Rules 3.2.5 and 5.1.10 do not mention review timescale but our Risk Register review infers annually. **Action – add 'and review bi-annually' to Rule 3.2.5, and add next review date on Risk Register**.

Note: Not included specifically in the CPA but Rule 24.7 states 'Each Member shall submit to the Board their audited accounts for their latest accounting year by 31st May in each year.'

It is recommended that the Board agrees the aforementioned amendments/additions to the Rules at the May Board meeting.

Appendix 2 – Safeguarding (Julie Rafferty)

1. CPA2 Safeguarding Review – 'Leading Organisation' Status

The County Safeguarding Officer (CoSO), Richard Newton, Nick Brooks and Gareth Moorhouse met with Fiona Holden, Cricket Regulator County Safeguarding Advisor, on 5 March 2026 as part of the CPA2 review process. Fiona noted the positive attendance and engagement of both the Managing Director and Board Safeguarding Lead, recognising safeguarding as being strategically prioritised within CCB.
On 10 April 2026, Fiona Holden confirmed that, following consultation with Sara Niblock, Director of Operations, the Cricket Regulator had recognised Cheshire Cricket Board as demonstrating high levels of competency and best practice across the CPA2 standards. As a result, CCB has been awarded **'Leading Organisation' status for Safeguarding**.

2. Training and Development

Safe Hands (Level 3) – Club Safeguarding Officers

Between November 2025 and April 2026, six Safe Hands courses were delivered across five locations within Cheshire. A total of 80 Club Safeguarding Officers (CSOs) attended.
As a result, all affiliated clubs, with the exception of one, now have at least one trained CSO in place, supporting compliance with the Safe Hands Management System requirements. Support continues to be provided to the remaining club to complete outstanding safeguarding requirements.

Safeguarding in the Talent Pathway

CCB staff attended Safeguarding in the Talent Pathway training on 7 April 2026 at Wilmslow High School.
All lead coaches and managers across District and County Age Group programmes have now completed the training, strengthening understanding of safeguarding risks, responsibilities and professional boundaries within the talent pathway environment.

Anti-Discrimination Training

The ECB "Introducing the Boundary" and "Youth Boundary" eLearning packages continue to be promoted across clubs via the CCB website and individual ECB eLearning accounts.

Board Safeguarding Training

Updated safeguarding culture training for Board members is currently being arranged and will be delivered online prior to the September Board meeting. Delivery has been delayed due to competing organisational priorities.

CSO Network Meetings

Seven online CSO network meetings were delivered during April 2026. These sessions provided:

- updates on safeguarding themes emerging from the 2025 season;
- key considerations for the 2026 season;
- opportunities for CSOs to raise questions and share practice.

Attendance levels were positive, with 65% of clubs represented.

First Aid for Mental Health (FAMH) Awareness Training

Through funding provided by Cheshire Cricket Trust, seven FAMH awareness courses were delivered during March and April 2026 by Roger Pickering.
A total of 64 attendees from 39 clubs (35%) completed the training. This pilot initiative has created a developing network of Mental Health Club Champions, who will continue to receive support, guidance and resources from the CoSO.
This work directly supports delivery of the CCB Wellbeing & Mental Health Strategy.

3. Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy

CCB remains committed to promoting the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of all participants, staff, volunteers, coaches and officials. Mental health continues to be recognised as equally important as physical health, with an emphasis on creating safe, supportive and inclusive cricket environments.
Current activity includes:

- participation in the Safe and Effective Practice pilot with Active Cheshire and Cheshire Mind, influencing practice changes within the Talent Pathway Mind's Safe & Effective Practice in Action - CCB participation
- development of a draft Wellbeing & Mental Health Policy for wider consultation;
- accredited FAMH training completed by 18 CCB staff in December 2025;
- delivery of seven pilot FAMH awareness courses, establishing Mental Health Club Champions across at least 39 clubs.

4. Culture, Engagement and embedding Safeguarding Practice

The CoSO attended Cheshire County Cricket League (CCCL), Cheshire Cricket League (CCL) and Cheshire Women's Cricket League (CWCL) meetings to provide safeguarding updates, outline key considerations for the forthcoming season and promote available support for clubs.
Plans are in place for club visits between May and August 2026 to:

- observe cricket activity and safeguarding practice;
- support clubs in completing safeguarding self-assessments;
- continue embedding safeguarding across all cricket activity.

Codes of Conduct for junior and senior county teams have been reviewed and updated to better reflect CCB values. In particular, County Age Group (CAG) Codes of Conduct have been revised using a more trauma-informed approach.
The CoSO also supported:

- the County Disability Squad induction meeting in January 2026; and
- the CAG player and parent induction meeting in April 2026,

providing safeguarding information and reassurance to players and parents/ carers.

5. Policy Development
Current policy development work includes:

- continued drafting of the Wellbeing & Mental Health Policy, which will be circulated to Board members, the Safeguarding Steering & Support Group (SSSG) and key club officials for consultation;
- ongoing review of safeguarding policies to ensure they reflect trauma-informed principles and language.

6. Player Ambassador Programme
The Player Ambassador programme has expanded significantly, increasing from 2 to 22 ambassadors, with representation now across all age groups and genders.
Following an online induction meeting in February 2026, monthly Player Ambassador forums have been established. Discussions are informed by player feedback and survey responses, with topics including:

- mindset and mental skills;
- cricket as a safe environment to make mistakes;
- transition into senior cricket;
- recognising and reporting concerns.

The programme continues to strengthen youth voice and player engagement within safeguarding and wellbeing activity.

7. Safeguarding Steering & Support Group (SSSG)
The SSSG met on 12 May 2026 and recognised the positive progress made across several key areas, including:

- mental health and wellbeing initiatives;
- expansion of the Player Ambassador programme;
- continued improvement in club safeguarding culture, evidenced through CSO feedback;
- further development of trauma-informed Codes of Conduct and policies.

8. Safeguarding Themes, Concerns and Panel Activity

Threshold Concerns
Since the last board meeting, threshold-level safeguarding concerns included:

- a player managed as a conditional participant being arrested and recalled to prison;
- the arrest of a player for threatening behaviour;
- the arrest of a player for possession of indecent images.

Low-Level Concerns
Ten low-level concerns were reported during the period, relating to:

- coach behaviour towards children;
- discrimination;
- bullying;
- a medical incident;
- inappropriate social media content; and
- mental health concerns.

Safeguarding Panel Activity
A player/coach subject to a 12-month suspension appealed the Safeguarding Panel decision. Following the appeal outcome, the individual was permitted to return to cricket activity under an agreed supervision deed and management arrangements.

Appendix 3 Women and Girls (Joanna Seddon)

CWCL update

League fixtures and highlights

Women's league fixtures commenced on 19th April with a full complement of Division 1 games, and have continued mostly uninterrupted for the first month of the season. The top division has seen a mixed set of results so far, with only Didsbury remaining unbeaten thus far, but obviously many more games to come. The clashes with ECB Women's Tier 3 fixtures continue to present challenges for some clubs, with a significant group of Div 1 players regularly playing representative cricket. Whilst this provides a great opportunity for others to step up, there is undoubtedly an impact on CWCL games. Scheduling around Thunder Cup and National Knock-out fixtures is handled expertly by the fixtures secretary, but remains an increasing challenge, particularly with some short notice changes to schedules having to be accommodated only a week before the start of the league season. This will remain a point to monitor through the 2026 season and looking ahead to 2027.

Fixtures in other Divisions are also progressing well – Division 2 increases in teams (7) this year, and adopts the majority of Division 1 rules (40 overs, fielding restrictions etc.) in a continued push to drive up the standard of the second level of CWCL cricket. Divisions 3 and 4 both see new teams progressing up through the Pyramid, and starting their campaigns well.

The introduction of repurposed Div 5 (hardball pairs) and Div 6 and 7 (softball 'out you're out' and softball pairs respectively) has started well and seems to be generating good energy and momentum at the base of the Pyramid, with continued growth in participating teams and clubs.

The washed out 2025 finals day (Senior and Development T20 Knock-out cups) was played on Sunday 3rd May at Grappenhall CC. Whilst the weather wasn't quite as pleasant as hoped, it did at least enable two good competitive games of cricket to be played and conclude the last fixtures of the 2025 season. In the development cup final, Lindow 2nd XI emerged as winners over Alvanley, and in the senior cup final, Lindow 1st XI completed the double with a last ball victory over Didsbury in a very close low scoring game. Big thank you to Grappenhall CC for hosting.

League exec and strategy

CWCL Executive committee met earlier this month to review progress against our previous 5-year plan and to draft a set of aims and ambitions for the coming 3-5 years. Overall, progress vs 2020 is far beyond expectations, with significant growth, progress in standard, and a resulting ambition to grow and push the boundaries further in line with the growth of the game. Below shows a summary of the current thinking, short term actions, and medium-term ambitions against key themes. The exec will continue to work this over the season with the aim to finalise a concrete plan and propose relevant changes, new officers etc. by the 2026 AGM in November.

As plans are reviewed and become more concrete, including defining key KPIs for 2029+, the CWCL will bring further updates to CCB. The below is very much work in progress.

Theme	Comments	Key short-term actions
Safeguarding and EDI	New safeguarding officer elected at 2025 AGM and connected to CSO. No EDI officer in place. Policies are in place but require review and update.	Propose CWCL representative on CCB EDI working group. Review CWCL safeguarding and EDI documents.
Administration and Volunteers	Increase in CWCL officers from 7 to 14, although some gaps remain. Need to continue to work to spread workload across wider volunteer group, with non-exec officers playing more of a role in running of the CWCL	Recruit to fill remaining gaps (EDI, strategy, media and comms, Div 3 lead)
CWCL Division aims and structure	Div 1 – sustain at current size and manage through challenge of fixture clashes and premier league set-up. Div 2 – sustain and grow – consolidate increased standards to close the gap to Div 1. Consider increase in size to 8-10 teams. Div 3 – sustain East and grow West – continued focus on progressing clubs in Div 4 up to Div 3 in the West. Div 4 – sustain at current size – as teams move up to Div 3 ensure support is sustained	Further review support required in West and for transition from soft to hardball. Remain closely involved in Premier League discussions to ensure sustainability of CWCL structure through any proposed changes.

	(particularly in West) for clubs transitioning from soft to hardball to replace promoted teams.	
Divisions 5-7	Consider options to work closely with CCB to adopt Div 5 into CWCL administration, thereby adopting the full hardball league cricket pyramid under one umbrella structure. Keep focus on sustainability of Pyramid at all levels.	Further discussion and review with CCB.
T20 competitions	Review T20 competition structure and in particular test appetite for additional competition for Div 2 / Div 3 to bridge the gap between Development cup (currently >20 entries annually) and Senior cup (currently limited entries).	Gather feedback and propose changes for 2027 competitions.
Events	MCC fixture (vs League XI) – continue to promote fixture and raise profile. Finals Day – continue with fixture; publicise to drive greater attendance. League awards event – aim to re-establish in 2026	Review social media and comms options (connected to vacant officer role above) to drive greater CWCL publicity. Identify volunteers to lead on key events

Appendix 4 Cheshire County Cricket Club (Jim Law)

At a glance

- NCCA new Chair
- Preparation
- Communications
- Performance
- Showcase match
- Finance

Martin Dawson takes over as NCCA Chair

The NCCA welcomed a new chair at the 2026 AGM at Banbury. Martin Dawson succeeds Nick Archer with Geoff Eliis as vice chair. Dawson brings an abundance of experience having previously held a director post with the ECB.

Preparation

An extended pre-season net programme has led to a well-focused 1st XI squad hitting the ground running in the KO Trophy.
Nick Brooks seamlessly assumed the role of 1st Team Manager (as well as leading the 2s) working closely with coach, Gavin Colebourn and white ball skippers Sam Perry and Harry Dearden. They've introduced slick pre-match administration procedures enhancing our preparation, communication and performance.
Players have also embraced our revised governance and safeguarding procedures.
New NCCA back-office procedures have been (somewhat painfully!) implemented and whilst not totally effective, Cheshire are leading the way in 'adherence'.
The Cheshire County League remains supportive in bringing forward Saturday start times for us when there is considerable overnight travel for away games. We're hugely grateful for this. Discussions are underway re some Cheshire Cup fixtures too.

Communications

New NCCA regulations require dual-camera coverage at all white ball games and where possible, home match commentary.
This is a challenge for all counties, but Cheshire have led the way, assisting other counties too with our commentator travelling where possible. It's early days but Luke Edward's commentary, enlisting support from officials, players and even spectators, has been well received and applauded by the NCCA. Catch it if you can on Play-Cricket and YouTube.

Performance

Cheshire has completed four KO Trophy fixtures, finishing as runners-up to Cumbria.
Convincing wins over Cambridgeshire at Peterborough and Suffolk at Toft were followed by a tight win over Shropshire at Oxton. The deciding 'shoot-out' with Cumbria at a cold and wet Keswick saw us fall the wrong side of a close DLS result, meaning an away quarter final at Norwich on 7 June. We're talking with the County League about potential Cheshire Cup date changes to avoid player clashes.
Two young players who have particularly caught the eye are Toft's Henry Murray with a hundred under his belt in our first game, and Lindow's Isaac Brooks with nine wickets to date.
This Sunday (24 May) we switch our attention to T20 cricket with a 'double header' against Shropshire at Didsbury with games to follow against Staffordshire (Burslem), Northumberland (Newcastle) and Cumbria (Nantwich).
Nick and Gavin announced a promising, young 2nd XI side to take on Cumbria at Macclesfield on Tuesday, led by Andy Dufty. Sadly, the weather intervened but it's hoped the game will be rearranged later in the season.
Cheshire's 2nd XI fixture list is as full and varied as any other national county and includes home games at Macclesfield, Neston, Marple and Chester Boughton Hall. There is also a match against the MCC at New Brighton on 1 July.

Showcase
Our hastily arranged 'Showcase' game sees us face Derbyshire at Nantwich on Wednesday 20 May as part of their Metro Bank warm-up programme. This may have been completed by the time you read this – Andy Newton's post-match John Morris meal and Q&A should make it an enjoyable afternoon/evening.

Finance
Cheshire CCC's 2025 accounts were posted in March. Available here
An expensive season ahead sees long distance trips to Norwich, Wimborne and Redruth. A little different to last year's 'local' jaunts.
See you on the boundary – don't forget to join the 200 Club

Appendix 5 - Cheshire Clubs Cricket Committee (David Humpage)

The season is now well under way despite the somewhat changeable weather, with last weekend virtually all games were abandoned as rain swept across the county in late afternoon.

Early days but Lindow are leading the way in the CCCL Premier Division, closely followed by the usual suspects led by Hyde and Didsbury.

Elworth is the leading Cheshire based club in the North Staffs and S Cheshire League, and Wallasey currently flying the flag in the Liverpool Competition. Nantwich and Didsbury have both progressed in the ECB National Club knock out are both in their group semi-finals - a long way to go.

The concept of the merger between the CCCL and the CCL is gathering pace with draft proposals for a Constitution, Playing Regulations, etc. being distributed round the clubs. Four Forums have been arranged so that clubs can have their say on the proposals before they are finalized. The first of which was held last Monday and led to some interesting discussions.

I think that the merger will be approved by the clubs – the concept of an open league is rather more questionable. We shall see.

What of the game in the county overall?

As I said previously current ECB policies are concentrated on girls/females, disability cricket and ethnic participation. Whilst these are laudable causes, the impact of expansion in these fields on facilities, volunteer levels, is already being felt. There are reports of an increase in the number of enquiries relating to pitch hires as clubs struggle to find places where their new sides can play.

ECB have embarked on a national survey carried out by independent consultants on the Premier Leagues, their purpose and future. I took part in a Teams call with Alison Finnegan the Consultant and the Secretary of the Northern Cricket League which I gather was the first of many as she talks to leagues across the country. Good to have the opportunity to express my thoughts.

I am pleased to say that all the Cheshire clubs in the top two divisions have now set up girls' teams in accordance with the ECB directive. Many thanks to Gareth and Jess for their hard work in getting us to this position.

I will, as always, leave Di and Jo to report in detail on the Women's League, but suffice to say that side of the game continues to grow with a number of new clubs joining the hardball section in 2026.

We continue to seek more umpires at all levels, and I am pleased to note that more female umpires are now appearing on the panels. Appointments are now being made for Division 1 of the Women's League, and this is working well.

The County Grant Fund has been launched and was almost immediately fully taken up by clubs. As I previously reported we have around190K to distribute to deserving club schemes, but hopefully this can be increased as other counties, somewhat remarkably, do not take up their allocation of funds. The maximum grant has been increased to £15K for 2026.

Finally, the now customary thanks to Gareth, Jess and Dave - well deserved.

Appendix 6 - Cheshire Youth Cricket (Paul Brown)

Boys County Age Groups/District cricket

We had over 1,000 children on courses over the winter and more than 400 will be taking part in either district or county age group cricket over the summer.

There is still considerable uncertainty about the impact of the ECB's early engagement strategy. There is a continued push for counties to select squads at the start of the winter which we are concerned may lead to counties largely picking the same players each year and actually closing off opportunities for later developing players. It remains a concern that this may compromise course income for the county as players not selected may be less willing to attend courses.

Girls cricket

We have noted that there is a significant drop off in numbers playing girls cricket at older age group particularly as more social players drop out. We are looking at adapting the strategy to increase numbers with support from clubs with a focus on development and participation. It was also noted that in older age groups a lot of girls are brought into adult sides so there is no age group competition at those age groups – this is linked to the issue Di has raised in the past about older players in women's cricket feeling "pushed out" by younger players.

Club junior leagues

Dave Atkinson had met with the leagues at the end of February – team numbers continue to be stable. The South Cheshire league now has a new committee following the retirements at the end of last season.

Kit deal

Samples of new kit from Surridge are available and online ordering has opened for county age group and district players. We have agreed a five-year deal in line with the previous deal.

Selection policy (GC)

It is a County Partnership Agreement requirement that the county has a selection policy for county age group sides. Gavin and Jess are developing a policy based on best practice from examples obtained from other Counties with a view to having this in place in time for next year's county age group and district selections.

Treasurer Role

Given Mike's retirement at the end of the season a succession plan is needed for the CYC Treasurer Role. The new Board's finance person (Tim) may be able to take on parts of Mike's role with Paul taking on a slimmed down treasurer role along with his secretary role.

-End-