



THE CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF CRICKET OFFICIALS

Chairman

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CACO Executive Committee Meeting Minutes 22nd June 2026 – Toft CC

Present

Martin Roberts, Brian Horrocks, Ian Greensmith, Peter Hayes, Graham Church, Emma Mallinson, Sandra Mason, Derek Barnett, Debayan Dey.

Apologies

Inge Bevers, Barrie Burns, Julie Rafferty, Barry Harwood.

Meeting Opened – 7.02 pm

Previous Minutes

These were accepted as a true record. There were no previous actions to discuss.

Chairman

- Martin opened up by welcoming Debayan to the team in his role as the new BAME representative.
- We reflected on the sad passing of Steve Wright who had been scorer at Grappenhall for 20+ years. Martin will be attending the funeral on behalf of CACO.
- There are no changes to the development plan at this stage. It is prudent to await the proposed merger of the cricket leagues before looking at this again. It was queried whether the new league would need to consider a development plan, this will be fed back to the development team.

Offer the possibility to the Merger development Team	Brian
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- ECB has launched its membership hub IT portal. Whilst well intentioned in bringing together all of the membership data to a single portal there are early teething problems. There are several aspects of the data (e.g. DBS) which are clearly not quite correct and need further refinement. We have been promised resolutions imminently. One of our members has suffered some exasperating several-month delays in establishing the correct membership and fee payment. We understand this was resolved only very recently.
- The proposed merger of the CCCL and CCL cricket leagues continues with recent club forums indication a majority of favourable opinions. The merger is likely to take place, the main areas for concern currently relate to positioning of teams within the open structure. The development team are reviewing the forum output in order to prepare their final recommendations which will be put to clubs towards the end of the season. Several aspects of the merger will have consequential effects on officials such as: clothing, expenses,



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- appointment policy etc.
- Experience this season suggest that umpire facilities at clubs are varying dramatically. Most clubs do provide satisfactory facilities for changing, leaving valuables, privacy etc, however, there are many instances of inadequate facilities brought about by either: a genuine lack of space or a nonchalant attitude to receiving guests. We will be pressing the management of the merged league to look again at specifications and urging clubs to ensure a welcoming atmosphere. A basic principle is at play that is umpires will spend anything from 3 hours (cup) to 7 hours (league) on the field of play in all weather conditions, and will need somewhere to feel comfortable during off field time and refreshment breaks.
- Well intentioned rule changes introduced in April to make spare ball management better are not yet functioning fully. We will press the league execs (and in future the single exec) to emphasise the rule energetically. The rule is intended to make matches progress smoothly in the case of lost balls and potential match delays.
- We have been requested to hold a mid-season review with Michael Grosset (ECB) via Zoom. Details are yet to be established. There is no demand for a CACO general members mid-season review.
- Payment of expenses still experiences a few failures on the part of Captains. In two incidences this season umpires have refused to take (re-take) the field unless the admin rules are followed correctly.
- In the rare event that a club expresses a wish not to have an umpire based on previous experiences we will ensure that he/she will not return to that club in the current season provided it is in the best interest of the umpire(s). However, our policies state that no club can dictate which umpires they will and won't accept. Correspondingly, no umpire can dictate where they will be appointed.
- Fair Play marks have been published based on the first few games of the season. Some clubs have expressed surprise at lower than expected marks despite leaving a match under the impression that no incidents or attitudes would lead to a lower than average mark. Umpires are to be urged to ensure post-match discussions take place to avoid these misunderstandings. It is recognised that many Captains (and umpires) do not actively engage in post-match meetings. Further, umpires do need to avoid marking down after assuring the Captains that nothing untoward has happened. We are considering a proposal to the new league exec that we hold mid-season workshops to explain the fair play rationale to lower placed clubs in the fair play table in order to explain and hopefully improve their position.

Secretary

Correspondence was summarised from the following areas, all of which was covered to some degree in the agenda:

- ✓ League AGMs
- ✓ Membership details for Graham
- ✓ AGM related
- ✓ Education team notices, CPD sessions
- ✓ Umpire pathway related



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- ✓ WTU set up
 - ✓ ACO officiating hub
 - ✓ Pre-season meeting
 - ✓ BAME officer role
 - ✓ League handbook
 - ✓ Gatley ground issues
 - ✓ 2026 umpire numbers and availability
 - ✓ Phil Gibbon membership
 - ✓ Cup umpires admin concerns
 - ✓ Alvanley CC cup fixture

Treasurer

- Barry had provided a brief written statement in his absence:

Finances are in good order and all expenses have been paid (as of this morning).

A list of possible missing subscriptions will be sent separately in the next few days to Graham, Ian and Martin for comment on whether I should chase them up, dependent on their current status.

Membership

- Graham reported on managing membership data which as recorded earlier is not fully accurate from ECB. The task is made more difficult because of this.
- We have now exhausted the supply of older scoring cards. The newer thicker card versions have proved popular so far. Graham has located a favourably priced printer in Northwich. It remains to decide whether the new cards for 2027 should have specific league identification, different cup and league versions, different versions for each tier of cricket etc. This is detail to emerge from the merger process.
- Graham reflected on how the role has emerged over time and is actually much larger than originally scoped. In particular, the appointments process for CYC, Women, Schools, representative, disability matches. In 2027 we must seek to re-apportion tasks and appointments does need to be done elsewhere. (Note that appointment processes for the league are also far larger than the current two people can accommodate which is an issue for the league management to address). One issue we can address in CACO is that some officials have not mastered the art of maintaining their availability well enough. WTU relies on this to automate the process. In the event availability is not managed properly the officials themselves cause rear guard action to place them and the appointers have emergency actions to seek out available umpires. This adds a great deal of time and frustration to the process. Graham propose that we develop some clear instructions for all users of WTU to help appointers.
- To underpin the above Graham provided a short summary of the additional appointment task as below:

Manual umpire match appointments 2026

Completed:



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CWCL rearranged 2025 finals day
NCJCA rearranged 2025 U13 & U15 finals days
Cheshire Disability Cricket 9 appointments of 13 fixtures during 2026 season
Didsbury junior U13 & U15 north boys finals
Schools cricket appointments to 16 fixtures
Manchester Lions (Sri Lankan team) appointments to 3/3 fixtures

To be arranged:

CWCL 2026 finals day
NCJCA 2026 U13 & U15 finals days
Schools' national semi-finals fixtures - tbc

WTU umpire appointments 2026

CWCL Div 1

Appointments completed to end July 38 of 56 fixtures during 2026 season

CYC & Cheshire Men's 2nd XI

Appointments completed to mid-July 41 of 62 fixtures during 2026 season

Draft something on WTU discipline for the association to offer all officials	Graham
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Appointments

- Ian brought us up to speed with the umpiring status. June has proved a difficult month for availability. July (currently) seems to be better. The bulk of the cup matches has passed and Ian recognised Ian Goldstones excellent support at this time. In the main umpires are accommodating for (both) Ians.
- It was noted that many cup matches involved second, third and fourth teams, historically not matches we would appoint to. If availability is constrained for mid-week (because of representative, women's, schools and other matches) then maybe appointment policy will need review. It has already been suggested by clubs that too many cup matches are needed (for example the qualifying groups, plate competitions) and the new league management could review cup policies.

Education

Inge had pre-circulated her report in her absence and it is reproduced here



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The Board is organising 3 courses during the season, one earlier this month at Upton, 3 candidates of whom 1 or 2 might join us (one in Wythenshawe and one in North Wales). Tonight and next week I'm joined by Stewart to instruct 15 female candidates. The 3rd course is later this summer. No activity as Education Officer apart from collecting material for the upcoming Thundering Thursdays (if you see something weird on a clip, let me know please; or if something 'rare' happens and it's on a club's you tube, let me know as well please

Umpire Development

Barrie had provided a report in advance in his absence. It is reproduced below.

- There are 15 umpires that have applied to move from M6 & W6 to M5 & W5. I am awaiting evidence of the 5 completed games from 4 of those 15.
- There were 27 applications from umpires that require observations with a minimum total of 32 observations needed between them.
- However 2 umpires have not completed the exam in time, so will not be able to proceed any further this year.
- 4 observations have had to be sourced from outside of the county i.e. Lancashire.
- I have performed an observation on an umpire from North Wales. As they do not have any developers. Graham Church is performing his second observation on Saturday 1st August 2026.
- 13 observations have already been performed, with another 12 still to do. If time permits this will increase to 15 as some umpires have requested a second observation

Scorers

Sandra recorded continued success in getting people on the scoring courses. It is our belief that all scorers should do the on-line course as a minimum. AJ reported that ytd 108 candidates had completed the on line scorers course and 76 had completed the on line umpiring course.

Women's Cricket

- Emma reflected on the inaugural division 1 matches with independent umpires. There had been a few inconsistencies with playing regulations which may be a combination of loosely specified regulations and umpires failing to understand them in the first place. Further feedback is welcomed as the first year is a learning year. Graham has offered to write a paper for the league exec to help them stabilise this. WTU has been well managed and is appreciated.

Write a few instructive notes as a discussion paper for the CWCL exec in the management of regulations
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Graham



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- It is noted in many Women's matches that pitch preparation is often questionable. Sunday matches played on Saturday pitches rarely have work done on them, In particular, foot holes can be exaggerated. This is of course a matter for ground authorities.
- With the advent of independently umpired matches in division 1 the question arises – 'should we institute captains feedback as in the men's game'. It is recognised that Captains education would be needed, however, in principle we should encourage it for the betterment of the Women's game.
- A further question for the league is whether to extend independent umpires to division 2. The current feeling is that umpire numbers will not support this considering the many conflicting demands (Cheshire Cup, representative, league cup, other Sunday cricket). Youth cricket especially emphasises where priorities should be placed in terms of developing county players. The league exec will need to review their policy for appointing in lower divisions as there are concerns that non-CACO individuals are undertaking this role.

Discuss appointment policy with CWCL chair to establish working relationship with CACO	Emma
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BAME

Debayan reported on his enthusiastic start to his role. He has made many contacts and held discussions with the South Asian community. He has been pleased with the level of questions and interest shown in officiating. The offer is already on the table to hold special; BAME officiating workshops similar to those held exclusively for Ladies in the Women's game.

Disability cricket

AJ reported on behalf of the Board. In addition to last night's notes, AJ has followed up with some additional details as below.

- There is a potential for disabled cricketers to consider officiating. This is to be encouraged
- Players in disability cricket have fed back how much they enjoy having officials from the association.
- **Disability training sessions:** Officials can drop in to support familiarisation for both players and officials. AJ has reached out to the squad and will share details with GC as soon as they are confirmed. Our thanks to the 8 officials who have made themselves available.

Publish any known training dates/venues in order to invite umpires to attend	AJ
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- **Useful QR link:** Please see the attached link here: [Officials Useful Links](#). As a group, please advise if there is anything else you would like included on this page. The QR code will direct users to this page, from which they can navigate to other relevant pages (e.g. courses).
- **Cricket Collective:** Please find the [link](#) to nominate and view guidance for the *Official of the Year* eligibility (p.13). As discussed, it would be great to submit appropriate nominations to recognise the excellent work taking place.
- **Inge/Sandra:** I will send out my monthly update to new online completions this week so they are aware, and I will also update the links you have access to

Safeguarding

Julie had offered apologies with one note to share. We are experiencing under age players umpiring (in non-umpired matches) at the bowlers end. This has already been banned by ECB and our own leagues at the start of the season. No under 18 player should stand at the bowlers end, and no under 15 player should stand at square leg – both assuming the player is not UTC trained in which case it is permissible. There can be (and have been) unsavoury consequences of young players being castigated by senior players for decision making.

Inform both cricket league execs that the principle must be reinforced
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Brian

Discipline

Derek had attended in order to report back on the disciplinary status. His report is reproduced below and will be used in the league meetings as well.

Introduction

This report covers the period 18th April-20th June 2026 (Weeks 1-10) and includes all cases dealt with under the provisions of the ECB GCR for the following leagues:

- Cheshire County Cricket League
- Cheshire Cricket League
- Cheshire Women's Cricket League

Reported Cases

League	Reported	Concluded	Outstanding
CCCL	12	12	0
CCL	4	3	1
CWCL	2	0	2
Misc	1	1	0
Total	19	16	3



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The number of cases at this stage of the season suggests a downward trend compared with previous seasons.

Sanctions have been applied in line with the GCR tariff and ranged from official reprimand to suspensions.

All suspensions are applied from midnight on the Friday following the date on which the breach occurred and include all forms of cricket played under the auspices of the ECB

Cricket Regulator

All serious or complex cases are referred to the Cricket Regulator and the County Safeguarding Officer. There have been none reported to the Regulator; however, one case has been referred to the County Safeguarding Officer to note.

In conjunction with the Cheshire Cricket Board, we have conducted an audit of how the discipline results, ECB GCR documents and templates are published on the three respective Playcricket sites. This has provided easier access and visibility of discipline matters, and the format is now consistent across the three leagues.

The Cricket Regulator has recently completed an inspection of the Cheshire Cricket Board, including discipline arrangements. It concluded:

Cheshire are on track for this standard, and then some. The impression gained, not only discipline, but about the league's engagement generally, is that is handled incredibly professionally. I am sure it is not coincidental that the Cheshire leagues are by far the best I have experienced with regard to publication of procedures and disciplinary documents.

Cheshire is clearly a candidate for leading status in this standard.

Cheshire are currently a leading organisation with T/Cs acceptance rate from clubs 100%.

Emerging Trends

The ECB GCR provides the opportunity for the reporting of breaches of the regulations other than by appointed umpires. In games without panel umpires we are seeing an increasing number of 'third party' complaints.

These invariably are more complex and challenging in the absence of independent umpire accounts, often leading to a 'tit for tat' response. Wherever possible discipline sanctions are applied, where on the balance of probability a clear breach has occurred.

What is apparent in each of the third-party complaints, is a failure to observe the spirit of cricket.

This includes lack of respect for opponents and players who undertake the role of umpire, and clear examples of player umpires failing to apply the laws of cricket fairly. This leads to allegations of cheating and results in heightened tensions on the field of play.

This is a matter for the respective leagues to note.

Meeting closed 9.02 pm