

# EASTERN COUNTIES RUGBY UNION LIMITED

## SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING



Minutes of the above Meeting, held via Zoom on  
Friday, November 20, 2020, commencing at 19.00

**1. Present:** John Winders (President – in the Chair), and:-

Alasdair Bovaird (EC chairman),  
Chris Capps-Jenner (ECRU DORR),  
Russell Clarke (EC M & C chair),  
Ian Forton (ECRU IPP),  
Stephanie Hanratty EC W & Gs  
Jeremy Kendall (Suffolk)  
Steve Knights (Norfolk),  
John Langford  
Gary Lee  
Steve Mackee (ECRU Hon Treasurer),  
Roger Pierson (EC Council Member),  
Robert Temple (ECRU Hon Secretary),  
Richard Watson (ECRU Governance chair),

Brian Bale (Diss)  
Martin Barnard (Stowmarket)  
Pamela Clarke (Norwich Union),  
Ross Cowie (Colchester/S&NEERefs),  
James Crouchman (Swaffham),  
Steve Drawbridge (Cambridgeshire)  
Alison Graveston (Mildenhall & Red Lodge)  
Martyn Jackson (Holt)  
Barry Male (Harwich)  
Dennis Murphy (Haverhill)  
Simon Podd (Ipswich YM),  
Will Riggs (Cantabrigian),  
Aaron Stokoe (Thetford),  
Gavin Thompson (BGY)  
Roy Wood (Haverhill)

**2. Apologies:**

Huw Davies,  
Leonard Veenendaal (Wisbech)  
*Darren Wright (EC DPP).*

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### 3. To consider as a special resolution the following proposed addition and alterations to the Rules (duly proposed in accordance with Rule 7.2.5)

*(SM explained that the genesis of this proposal was our aim to acquire software from Microsoft, but MS would not let us have this at the discounted price they charge non-profit-making organisations, unless we achieved tax-free status. To do so we were told by HMRC that we would need to make amendments to our constitution, and those changes were the ones to be considered by the Meeting. The changes would enable us to save money in purchases, and also to be exempt from liabilities such as corporation tax.*

*RJW added that the first change sought to make our "Objects" more charitable, the second prevented us subsequently changing back to a non-charitable set of Rules and the third ensured that should ECRU ever be dissolved, our assets would go to a similar charitable organisation or organisations)*

*In response to questions it was stressed that this change would not have any direct impact on any of the three counties (although they would be advised to consider a similar change for themselves) and that should Eastern Counties ever have to be dissolved, then the three counties would qualify as possible bodies to receive some of any remaining funds or property.)*

#### a. Amend Rule 3 as follows:

*This proposal had been the subject of an amendment, proposed by Gary Lee and seconded by Richard Watson, to add the words "(but not limited to)" after "supporting the sport of rugby union football through in 3.1.2"*

#### Existing:

##### **"3. Objects**

The objects of the Constituent Body (CB) shall be:

- 3.1 To administer the game in the county of Cambridgeshire, the county of Norfolk and the county of Suffolk (as recognized prior to the reorganisation of local government in 1974) (the CB Area) and for such other clubs as the Union allocates to the CB on behalf of the Union.
- 3.2 To promote, encourage and extend the Game throughout the CB Area including (but not limited to) the coaching thereof, its development in schools and at all youth levels and the recruitment, administration and training of referees.
- 3.3 To ensure that the Game is played in accordance with the Laws of the Game and is administered in accordance with World Rugby Regulations and the Rules of the Union.
- 3.4 To arrange and undertake representative and other matches as the Management Committee may decide."

#### Proposed:

##### **"3. Object**

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3.1 To promote, encourage and extend participation in amateur sport by:

3.1.1 effectively administering and managing the sport of rugby union football in the county of Cambridgeshire, the county of Norfolk and the county of Suffolk (as recognized prior to the reorganisation of local government in 1974) (the CB Area) and for such other clubs as the Rugby Football Union allocates to the CB on behalf of the Union.

3.1.2 supporting the sport of rugby union football through **(but not limited to)**:

- coaching,
- player development in schools and at all youth levels,
- by providing advice, support and guidance to clubs,
- by providing, where possible, finance to clubs for investment in facilities,
- by the recruitment and training of referees, and,
- by arranging representative and other matches."

***On being put to the vote this proposal was carried by 26 votes to none, with one recorded abstention.***

b. Addition to Rule 10 (Rules) as follows:

**new para 10.3:**

*"10.3 No new Rule shall be made, nor shall any Rule be amended or rescinded in such a way as to make the CB cease to be a charity at law."*

***On being put to the vote this proposal was carried by 26 votes to none.***

c. Amend Rule Section 27 (Dissolution) as follows:

### Existing

*"In the event of it becoming necessary for the Members to discontinue the activities of the Constituent Body and to dissolve the Constituent Body under the provisions of the Act, its funds and property shall be appropriated or divided amongst the Members in such manner as the Management Committee consider to be fair and reasonable."*

### Proposed

*"In the event of it becoming necessary for the Members to discontinue the activities of the Constituent Body and to dissolve the Constituent Body under the provisions of the Act, its funds and property shall be transferred to any charity or charities for purposes similar to the objects listed in Rule 3."*

***On being put to the vote this proposal was carried by 26 votes to none.***

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**4. To receive, consider and approve the accounts for the 12 months to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

The Accounts had been previously circulated. The Hon Treasurer explained that these were very different to our usual figures because of Covid-19; our income from both the RFU and sponsorship had reduced considerably, but we had been able to make savings and so break even on the year maintain our reserves at around £100,000.

In addition we are presently holding £37,000 in a fund for clubs in immediate financial difficulties; this does not appear in the accounts because it is money held for a specific purpose, and should it not be needed then RFU might recover it from us. The chairman explained that we maintain frequent contact with every club in order to keep abreast of any financial difficulties they may have.

**It was proposed by Richard Watson and seconded by Alasdair Bovaird that the accounts be approved, and on being put to the vote this was carried by 26 votes to none.**

**5. To seek approval to add Steve Mackee and Robert Temple to the list of authorised signatories for such accounts as Eastern Counties Rugby Union hold with National Savings and Investments.**

The Hon Secretary explained that this was a banking requirement, over which we have no control.

***On being put to the vote this proposal was carried by 26 votes to none.***

The Chairman reminded all that next week there will be conference calls on a county-wide basis for all clubs to consider our Return to Rugby; Cambridgeshire on Monday 23, Norfolk on Wednesday 25 and Suffolk on Thursday 26.

The Meeting closed at 19.45