SGM Minutes of Meeting

Subject: Ashford Rugby Club SGM – Members Copy

Date (Time): 02-Sep-2026

Minutes: Charlie Vavasour

Meeting Attendees - See Last Page	

Apologies For Absence	**02-Sep-2026**	**Charlie Vavasour**
Apologies received from Rob Miller, Rory McShane, Noelle McShane, Stuart McKillop, Aaron Bowes, Kevin Hammond, Tony Wood, Scott Booth and Aaron Sage.		
Presentation of Accounts	**02-Sep-2026**	**Roger Spicer**

Chair Roger Spicer talked the meeting through the financial accounts for 2025/26 and then invited questions from the floor.

Mark Bowes: Why is there such a big difference in subscriptions to last year? John Norman: Actual subscriptions are actually up on the previous year, but the subscriptions category in the previous year included income from the ball, fireworks along with other miscellaneous items, so it presents a slightly confused picture.

Nigel Champion asked to see the balance sheet figures and then commented that these were comforting.

Mark Bowes: Why is there a £10k difference between years for kit? Roger Spicer: the increase is mainly due to mini tour kits.

John Norman explained to the meeting that there have been some issues with VAT analysis during the year, and that the club expects to get a refund of around £10k during the current financial year.

Elly Cole: Can we not publish the club accounts with more details? Roger Spicer: That's a good suggestion and happy to do that in future.

Tristam Burgess agreed that the accounts need additional notes to break down some of the categories. Noted.

Mark Bowes: Where does the money that is pre-paid on membership cards show in the accounts? Roger Spicer: It sits as a credit on the EPOS system and is shown in the income figure.

Amber Shepherd: Does the club keep 100% of sponsorship received? John Norman: 10% of age group sponsorship stays with the club.

George Shepherd: We need to make sure we are not too hard on people who are late paying their subs. John Norman: Absolutely, and as a CASC we have a responsibility to enable anyone to access rugby and arrangements can be made.

A series of questions were then read out by Ollie Jones who had received them from a number of mini parents via email. Responses were not made at the time, but have been included in the minutes for completeness:

1. We don't seem to be maximising opportunity for external income - the club isn't hosting summer or autumn holiday clubs for example. Lots of club parents would use this.Harlequins camp is at Norton Knatchbull instead of Arfc. If the club works on it's "goodwill" issue, you could have Coaches run it with their kids attending free, win for the club and the parents.

Response: The club held four weeks of holiday camps over the school summer holidays, enabling under-privileged local children to attend free of charge, with the club charging for hire and catering. This is booked to be enhanced next summer and discussions are being held for autumn camps.

2. The accounts refer to various one off large financial commitments being Electrics, Shutters, showers and ground maintenance. We were told by the 100 club at the AGM that they had given £5k towards the showers, and things like ground maintenance, shutters, those are not unforeseen expenses- those are foreseeable ongoing commitments. It is concerning that these have not been planned for as such.

Response: The electrical mechanism in the shutters broke, so needed to be replaced. The grounds cost was in addition to general maintenance, it was a restoration including fertilising, drilling and reseeding. Both of these were unforeseen, like the electrics and the showers. Luckily the club had enough of a reserve to sort these issues out quickly with no need to raise subscriptions.

3. The accounts refer to coaching fees of £25k being paid, but it doesn't say who they are paid to. Given we're all volunteers, we should know where a cost that accounts for almost half the subs income is going.

Response: The coaching fees include the Director of Rugby, men's 1st XV coach, the cost of courses that mini and junior coaches attend, and any external coaches.

4. Fundraising is listed at £30k but we need a breakdown of what events did that come from and where has it been spent. How much was raised from the Easter and Christmas events, and summer? Where is it, and what has it been spent on?

Response: The Easter and Christmas events held at the club are non-profit making.

5. The money from the 100 club hasn't been accounted for in the accounts. They confirmed at the AGM Athey also gave money for coaches kit. That kit hasn't been ordered, never mind appeared, so where is the kit, why hasn't it been ordered and where's the money for it from the 100 club?

Response: The 100 club has always been independent of ARFC and has its own bank facilities overseen by trustees. The coach's kit has been ordered and is on its way.

6. Outside of subs what is being done to increase revenue through private hire, general over the bar money (bar should be open if training/ games / international games on - training volunteers to support) - family days / events to promote the club - VP/Captains / mayors lunches - increasing club food options for busy days rather than bringing in third parties - Club level sponsorship deals rather than team specific.

Response: There is a great deal of activity underway to increase revenue. For example, over the summer 14 new sponsors were sourced for boards at the club as well as bigger sponsorship opportunities. The club lunch in September is a new initiative that will raise money, and we have appointed a new commercial manager to coordinate and enhance all commercial activities.

7. What financial provision is being made for the minis over winter training to avoid a repeat of last year? And if none will there be a subs reimbursement to reflect the fact they cab it use the club facilities? If there isn't the ability to provide financial provision for this , which is foreseeable, then has the club considered increasing its fees to ensure it can provide a correct service? This is key given the minis membership constitutes the bulk of the income.

Response: winter training at a club located in the flood plain always has been tricky at times. Alternative venues were booked at times for the minis. It is an issue that is constantly being assessed to find the best solutions and feedback from members is always welcome regarding increasing subscriptions etc.

8. Payments should be monthly with installments set up and the first one paid before the first Sunday of the new season to allow families to better budget.

Response: There is an option to pay mini and junior subs over six months within Spond.

9. In the accounts, subs and donations are one category. It should be split into Minis subs, Adult subs and then separately, donations so we can have a more accurate reflection of where the money is coming from. At the AGM, it was clear we have over 400 minis members paying subs, and perhaps half that is adults subs. But we can't see money being spent on minis. Things which should be centralised (providing team gazebos, equipment the children need, basic things like bibs,) is all funded by asking parents or team fundraising. That should be done by the club, to ensure bulk orders, better discounts and cohesion in design etc, if we are to be "one club".

Response: Agreed, it would be helpful to split subs and donations in the accounts and have more explanatory notes, which will be addressed before the next AGM. The committee very much views it as one club and not separate franchises. Regarding what money is being spent on minis, a few items are:

- **All teams are provided with a pitch/area to play, which needs to be seeded, fertilised, mown, line marked and maintained.**
- **Every member has access to the clubhouse to meet, change, hold meetings, have a drink/eat etc.**
- **All teams are supplied with (as a minimum) balls, bibs, cones, nets and a first aid kit. Lead coaches request equipment required before the start of the season.**
- **The club pays for all the entries to mini and junior festivals and tournaments.**
- **The club also pays for all age group coaches to go through their RFU coaching courses, as well as paying for the safeguarding courses and management, to try and ensure that every junior member is getting a good quality of coaching in a safe environment.**
- **There are, obviously, many other items of expenditure such as electricity, water, insurance, cleaning, accountancy, etc. The current junior subscription of £170 is about the lowest in Kent (Canterbury junior sub this year is £324).**

10. A kit inventory is carried out by the mini co ord, so why is the disparity between what teams have, apparent and addressed?

Response: As detailed above, the club supplies each age group with the kit they need. Where additional kit is wanted, individual age groups can find sponsors (in partnership with the commercial manager) and sometimes parents make donations for specific items.

11. Will the club be opening up and showing the games for both Men's and Women's International Series plus both Mens and Women's 6Nations- disappointingly the club wasn't opening up for any of the women's 6N matches unlike other local clubs.

Response: Yes, the club will be open. The opening for international matches is reviewed regularly as there have been many occasions when the attendance/bar takings have not covered the cost of staff wages etc, so it becomes a loss-making enterprise.

Similarly for PWR/Gallagher Prem Games. A lot of families don't have TNT sports and so would love to watch the games but the club isn't accessible- even if a £5pp ticket/deposit is required to ensure the numbers.

12. What is the financial provision for girls teams when they age out of minis- as an example u10 girls supported fundraising when they were minis for things such as Gazebos and now do not have access to that equipment and have to start from scratch.
Supporting tools such as bibs/cones are hand me downs which are either ill fitting or not great condition.

Response: Items such as age group gazebos should remain the property of that age group as they progress. Bibs and cones are supplied by the club for each age group, and lead coaches should identify their needs.

We are now start of season and our team has very little equipment. It seems that there are some teams who have a lot of coaching kit provided I believe from the club yet others are left to look like poor relatives.
And where are our subs are going? Minis won't benefit from changing rooms or the like and are shunned to a corner on wet muddy days and feel they are lower priority

Response: See answers above.

13. We need to increase revenue. A key way to do that is to make ARFC more visible in the community and to improve community engagement. What is being done to achieve that? We need to go into all Ashford primary schools and do taster sessions, outreach in the local community, bag packing in supermarkets, attend school fêtes and do demos, improve the social media so we're not relying on AI which takes away our individuality.

Response: As detailed above, there is a new commercial manager in place who is addressing many of these issues. It also should be said that ARFC relies on volunteers and the committee will always welcome individual members coming forward with a proposal.

14. We have a number of businesses/organisations that have partnership with the club and therefore use the club facilities to host events. How are these charged or reflected in the accounts? Or is there a contractual standing in place to allow this to take place. Examples include The Rugby Project, TSC and Kent Rugby.

If on a contractual agreement, how is the hiring balanced to ensure we do not miss out on revenue opportunities?

Response: Yes all organisations such as TCS and Kent Rugby are charged for using the facilities.

A vote was then held to ratify the accounts for 2025/06 - approved unanimously.

AOB	**02-Sep-2026**	**Roger Spicer**

Mark Bowes: Is the committee comfortable about last year's financial loss? Charlie Vavasour: While it is never comfortable, we had financial reserves in place from previous profit-making years to enable the club to fix a number of unexpected issues.

What is happening with the ladies toilet problem? Roger Spicer: We have a new clubhouse manager in place and that issue is on her list to investigate.

George Shepherd: Are there any other unforeseen issues coming up? Roger Spicer: Not that we know of.

Mark Bowes: What's happening with the showers? John Norman: We have a solution and they should be fixed before the season starts.

Grant Wilson: it would be sensible to have an on-going maintenance programme in place. Roger Spicer: Agreed.

Elly Cole: What is happening with the big build? John Norman: that is still on hold for now.

With no further business, the SGM closed at 7.35pm

ARFC Special General Meeting 2026

Sign	Print
	C.VAVASOUR
	R. SPICER.
	J. NORMAN.
	E. FUNNELL
	Mike James
	LARA OLDFIELD
	TRISTAM BURGESS
	BEN FENSDALE
	Elly Cole
	Chris Payne
	CHRIS LOGAN.
	Olwen Jones
	GRANT WILSON
	J HEAVER
	S Burgess
	G. Sheffield

AShepherd	Amber Shepherd
[illegible]	Chelsea Pearce
NEChampion	N.E. CHAMPION
MBowes	MARK BOWES
[illegible]	Malcolm [illegible]
[illegible]	Tim Cast.
[illegible]	Meghan Cordey