Minutes of Gloucestershire County Cricket Club Members' Working Group Meeting

Held at Seat Unique Stadium and via Teams
on
Thursday 4th September 2025 4pm – 6pm

In attendance:

Members
Chris Toft
Matt Davies
Wendy Body
George Cook
John Gordon
Max Wiltshire
David Oates
Ruth Sharville

Also in attendance	Role
Neil Priscott	CEO, chairing the meeting
David Finch	Club Administrator
Austen Cornell	Head of Ground Operations
Ollie Bennet	Ticketing & Data Operations Manager
Peter Matthews	Club Chair

Club Update

Domestic Schedule

The Blast format has been settled from 2026. Discussions around the County Championship are proving more complex and divisive.

- Some counties are vociferous in wanting change
- The Club view is that there are not enough options on the table. We are being portrayed, inaccurately, as being blockers to change.
- The most favoured format proposal is a 12/6 split. We are not supportive -
    - It would mean that those in the second tier play some counties three times over the season.

    - There is an integrity issue around making this change with only two games remaining as there would be no relegation this season from the existing Division 1.
    - Once the 'big' clubs are in the 12, they could move to block promotion and relegation.
- The counter argument being put to us is that a third of the teams in the second tier would go up at the end of each season.

There is further consultation and lobbying going on. A change in the volume of cricket requires support from 12 counties, a change in format requires a simple majority.

The MWG were supportive of the Club's opposition to the 12/6 proposal.

Recruitment

We are out for recruitment for a Head of Audience Development and Director of Cricket

Masterplan

It is hoped there will be major work over the winter on the dressing rooms and PMOA area to make us compliant with ECB and ICC requirements.

The tender process is underway, albeit the timescale is tight.

Matt suggested the Club should offer a tour of the new facilities to Members prior to the start of the season; NP was supportive of this proposal.

Cheltenham

2025 Review

NP reminded the group that we had asked for people to support the event. Attendances were good, the financial results will certainly be more positive than in 2024.

Austen acknowledged that the expense on the previous Festival had been too high. Costs were reduced this year and arrangements ran smoothly. He highlighted improvements required with the toilet provision.

John has received generally positive feedback; the closure of the Members' Gate was the only negative point. Matt reported that Lancashire members he recently met were very complimentary about the Festival.

Looking ahead

PM asserted that everyone wants the Festival to continue. However, due to the Test Match and Hundred schedule, there will be no Championship cricket in July in even numbered years for the foreseeable future.

Can the College host Championship cricket at the end of August?

- The first of two matches in August 2026 is scheduled to start on 20th.
- It is hoped the College could host that one, however it is unlikely to be able to host a match starting on 27th due to the proximity to the start of term and the need to turn around the facilities for their rugby fixtures.
- Therefore, next year's Festival is likely to comprise of one Championship match and possibly two One-Day Cup matches with some women's fixtures completing the programme. This would all need to be approved and arranged by ECB, so is not guaranteed.
- Ruth highlighted that the quality of opposition is a crucial factor to the success of the Festival. NP advised that we would be looking to host Lancashire again if possible.

PM advised that the Club are considering the possibility of an additional stand-alone Championship match at Cheltenham during the May Half-Term holiday.

Membership

Current situation

OB advised that there had been a 10% uplift in membership numbers from 2024 to 2025, in part due to a successful launch of the Associate Membership. There was however a drop in Junior Memberships, influenced by the early and short notice deadline from Addidas for the shirt orders.

NP is not happy with membership numbers; we are looking to improve. PM advised that the commercial plan is for 5000 members by 2028.

2026 Plans

We aim to have 2026 membership available to purchase during the final home game despite ongoing uncertainty around next year's fixture schedule.

NP confirmed prices need to go up as costs always rise. How can we improve members' experience?

- The plan is to make the Grace Room, Grace Room balcony and Korev Terrace available for Members' exclusive use during County Championship matches.

- The Hammond Roof stand will be moved to become the permanent Zaheer Abbas Stand and this will be the Members' stand.

NP asked the group's view as to whether Members' facilities should be for Members only or for Members with guests. Chris proposed that there should be a charge for guests who do not have a Members' Guest Pass as a ticket; the group agreed.

Ruth – could we offer a flexible multi-day package? NP was concerned that whilst this might attract some new members, we might equally have some existing members downgrading.

David – we don't want to make the membership offering too complicated.

Max was very positive and grateful about the revised Grace Room offering for members.

OB advised that all members will be issued with new membership cards ahead of the new season.

Matt suggested a Members' Event over the winter. Wendy advised that the Heritage Trust will be arranging a Christmas Lunch and an October event **ACTION: The Club will liaise with the Trust to combine the two events or otherwise avoid a clash.**

Regions

A single committee was previously proposed, this met with a mixed response.

David acknowledged that the Bristol Region is very down on numbers. Have the regional committees run their course?

It was noted however that the Cirencester and North Cotswolds Region is still flourishing, George's passion and significant contribution was acknowledged.

John - could we have fewer regions? There is only one that is active. PM countered that what Cirencester and North Cotswolds achieve shows what can be done.

ACTION: Include this topic again on the agenda for the next meeting.

ACTION: George to provide the paper he has written to the group.

Shop/Retail

It was acknowledged that the shop at Cheltenham was not advertised well. There was a limited range available and items ran out.

NP advised that 3 members of staff were at Addidas HQ today, looking at additional items we can add to our range.

The Club are looking at a possible second retail unit at the bigger matches.

AOB

Roger Gibbons collection & Museum

Wendy confirmed that, after a lengthy period of negotiation, agreement has been reached for The Heritage Trust to take permanent ownership of Roger's books and memorabilia.

The intention is to hold an official re-opening of the museum at the start of next season.

Plans will continue for a library bearing Roger's name.

ACTION – Liaise with Marcoms Team around a story on this topic (DF)

Scoreboards

It was acknowledged that the smaller scoreboard is not able to display clearly all the figures that are on the large board. This issue has been remedied, the small board now shows less information.

John - Can we have a different layout for each competition, as is the case at Somerset and Glamorgan?

ACTION – Investigate cost of having a different layout on the scoreboards for each competition (as it would require the building of a bespoke software package).

Hospitality offering for 2026

Chris Adamson is doing a full review. The intention is to introduce a low range 'pizza and drink' package on the Terrace. The mid-range category of hospitality is struggling across the country.

Yearbook

Chris confirmed that the Highlights book will continue to be produced annually by the Heritage Trust.

The Club and The Trust are looking at ways of including it in certain membership packages.

It was asked whether the statistics, previously included within the Yearbook, are available and up to date on the new website.

ACTION – Check whether the statistics, up to date as at the end of the 2024 season, are included within the new website (DF)

WhatsApp Communications

It was raised by the group that there had been little or no communication via WhatsApp over the last few weeks.

NP confirmed that, once appointed, the new Head of Audience Development will devise a new communication strategy. There are lots of channels we use, however he acknowledged that we should be consistent in the way we communicate and if we have said we are going to do so via WhatsApp, then that should continue.

Hearing Loop

Austen confirmed that this will be in place by the start of next season once the Masterplan work affecting areas of The Pavilion had been completed.

After Tea charges

This policy has been a great success.

- Season to date, we are now averaging 67 customers per day paying the discounted rate to watch the evening session (more than the average who entered for free in previous years).
- We also have sold 35 Associate Memberships on the back of this policy.
- This will therefore continue in 2026.

Members' Survey

It was agreed that the results of the survey carried out on the ground at Cheltenham and the recent Two Circles survey of the membership will be available to review at the next meeting.

Mike Procter memorial

NP is not supportive of the proposal to change the stand names due to the risk of causing confusion for long standing ticket purchasers.

It was agreed that a section of the newly developed PMOA area could be named after Mike Procter as a permanent tribute.

Conclusion

NP concluded the meeting by thanking Members for their outstanding support and contribution. He invited them, prior to the next meeting and following the process informally agreed previously, to discuss amongst themselves as to who might consider

standing down from the group ahead of the pre-season meeting in March, in line with the agreed terms of office.

Next meeting – Early December 2025 - tbc