

Neon Cricket Wiltshire County Cricket League

Admin Officer: David Norman, 2 Manley Close, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8DT.

Minutes of the WCCL 2025 AGM held at Devizes Town Football Club on Monday 24th November 2025.

Present:

WCCL Clubs, and members of the WCCL Committee.

The League's Chairman, Mike J Smith, took the chair, and welcomed everybody to the AGM. He also thanks Devizes Town FC for hosting the event.

Coastal Cobras CC, Devizes CC, Lacock CC and Norton St Philip CC failed to provide a representative.

1. Minutes of the 2024 AGM.

The minutes of the 2024 AGM were proposed as a true record subject to a correction in the title. Proposed by Wilcot CC, seconded by Corsham CC, and passed unanimously.

2. Matters Arising from the 2023 AGM Minutes.

John Gale (Corsham) asked about alternative comms. David advised that he was continuing to look at this.

John Gale (Corsham) asked about the new cricket facilities at Moredon. David reported that the artificial pitches were OK but the outfielders are poor. Wiltshire Cricket are in discussion with the council, as is David, and they are actively working to improve the situation for the 2026 season.

3. Chairman's Report

Mike started by reporting that next season we have 9 new teams, which brings us to 106 teams in 11 divisions. This shows the health of recreational cricket.

Mike congratulated Warminster and Burbage 2 on their promotion to WEPL Tier 3. Chippenham 2 actually finished 2nd, but because their 1st XI were relegated into Tier 3, the 2nd XI couldn't go up. Winsley and Biddestone are returning to us from WEPL.

Mike congratulated all those who won and were runners up, and commiserated with those who were relegated.

The potential return of the Tier 3 WEPL teams into the WCCL will not be happening.

The ECB ACO have surveyed all members, and asked what the umpires think would benefit them, the top answer was improved player behaviour. In 2023, we had 12 disciplinary issues to deal with. In 2024, we had 4. In 2025, it was back up to 11. This isn't many in terms of the amount of cricket played, but they can be complicated because we get two conflicting reports, and have to make a decision. Discipline is down to captains – it is their responsibility. The disciplinary issues this year have been in the bottom divisions. Anton Newton, the disciplinary officer, spends a lot of time trying to sort them out. One of the other committee members drove around to see matches at this level.

This year has been a very difficult year, because of the dry summer. Mike thanked all the groundsmen, who did a good job in difficult circumstances. Clubs will need sufficient watering systems to be able to cope with this. There is also an issue with the amount of cricket being played. It's not leaving any time for watering the pitch.

We are told that Thames water only allowed a single strip to be watered. The league will feed this through to Pete Sykes at Wiltshire Cricket, as this is not their understanding of the rules around

hosepipe bans.

David reminded clubs that there are grants available for improving watering systems, or anything else.

Mike, Niall MacDougal and Alan Biggins ran five umpires forums prior to the 2025 season. We will look to run these again in 2026. It was asked as to whether we could run these online, but the ECB no longer have a suitable course. It was also asked as to whether another country's board offers a suitable course (Australia, NZ, South Africa).

Mike thanked the following:

- All the committee members for their work, especially Niall with the umpires forums, David for the administration, and Anton who does the disciplinary work. We do need new committee members, so if you are considering volunteering, please let us know at the end of the meeting.
- Adam Bolton and Neon Cricket for their continued sponsorship.
- Paul Stevens, who is stepping down from the committee due to ill health. The cricket community are trying to raise funds to get Paul an adapted vehicle. He has done a lot of work, 35 years on the league committee, 8 years as fixtures and results officer, being on the disciplinary committees for the WCCL and WEPL, and umpiring and scoring,

Shrivenham CC raised that they have been denied promotion on the grounds of pitch marks. They objected to the fact that they have not been allowed an appeal, especially the difference in pitch marks between their two teams, and the fact that if clubs don't gain promotion, there is no punishment for poor pitch marks unless it happens in three consecutive years. Mike responded that the decision was as stated in the league rules. We have had the pitch marking system for 30 years. Mike reminded clubs that they can propose changes to the league rules, by proposing them, with a seconder, by the end of September.

4. Admin Officer's Report

David started by continuing Mike's point about league discipline. Due to the number of disciplinary issues in the lower divisions, a number of committee members will be making unannounced visits to a number of matches during the season to observe behaviour in the match. It is hoped that this will improve the behaviour of players in the lower divisions.

Following the re-introduction of umpires forums in 2024, these will be running again in 2025. We will look to run them at both ends of the county once again, and will run some earlier in the Spring, as well as some in the run-up to the season.

David highlighted that the league has expanded rapidly in the past five years, from 88 teams in 2021 to 106 teams in 2026. This has increased the number of divisions from 9 to 11. Prior to the start of the 2025 season, it was announced that there would be a minor restructure of the lower divisions at the end of the season. This has now happened, with the result being that divisions 1-7 will be broadly the same strength as in 2025. Division 11 will be similar to Division 10 in 2025, with Divisions 8-10 spread out between them. This means that teams in the lower divisions who have been relegated should not expect the drop in standard to be the same as they would normally expect following relegation, while those who have stayed in the same division should expect the division to be stronger than in 2025.

Prior to the AGM, the league received a request for regionalisation to be considered once again. However, it was too late to do this for 2026. Therefore during the spring and summer of 2026, the league will put together a proposal for regionalisation, to be put to clubs and voted on via email around the end of the season, so that if the proposal is carried, it can be implemented for the 2027 season.

5. Disciplinary Officer's Report

Mike reiterated that we have gone from 12 reports in 2023, to 4 in 2024, to 11 in 2025. Clubs need to remember that captains are responsible for discipline, not umpires.

Mike also reiterated that the biggest problem for umpires is the player discipline.

It was questioned as to whether we should have a captain's meeting once again.

6. Honourable Treasurer's Report

Matt provided a report in advance.

The league ran to a loss in 2025 of £1,443. This follows two years of surplus (£273 and £295 respectively). Reserves remain high however at £9,709.

Income – There was a £427 increase in income v 2024, £240 in fees due to an increase in teams plus £200 more in fines in the year.

Expenditure – This increased by £2,143 v 2024. There were expected increases in the cost of scorebooks, trophies & remuneration but was also accompanied by increases in grants and rebates.

The accounts were adopted as a true record, proposed by Trowbridge CC, seconded by Winsley CC, and carried unanimously.

With the recorded loss in 2025, the expectation for 2026 is that costs should remain similar to 2025. With a likely increase to 106 teams in 2026 I feel it would be prudent to increase membership fees per team by £10 for 2026 in order to recover the operating loss seen. This will be the first membership fee increase since 2018. A £10 increase, coupled with 6 new teams would yield an additional £1,540 income and should put us back to a broadly breakeven position. We can review again the following year as reserves do remain strong. It was proposed by Malmesbury CC, seconded Nationwide House CC that this increase is accepted. This was carried with two votes against.

7. Rule Amendments and Additions

The league proposed the following corrections, clarifications and minor rule changes:

- That players can play twice in a weekend if one of those instances is as a loan player.
- That the requirement to inform both clubs that a disciplinary report is to be submitted, is removed when the reporter is an ACO-Trained umpire.
- That the rules around teams having to forfeit their lowest team first only apply when the forfeit is due to player availability.
- That where a pitch is unsafe, the home team shall receive zero points and the away team shall receive a forfeit win.
- Three minor corrections.

It was also proposed that the rules state that the main body of the rules can only be amended at a general meeting, while the appendices can be amended by the committee. It was also proposed that all information which is brought into the rules from an external source (e.g. ECB directives) are moved to the appendices. This proposal was amended so that only the information from external sources could be amended by the committee.

These were proposed en bloc by the committee, seconded by Trowbridge CC, and carried unanimously.

It was then proposed by the committee and seconded by Melksham CC, that the points for forum-trained umpires in the playing XI was increased to require three forum-trained umpires rather than two. The proposal was narrowly rejected, 28 votes in favour, 30 votes against.

8. Election of Officers

Graham Chandler, the Vice Chairman, ran the election of the chairman. Mike Smith offered to remain as chairman, proposed by Trowbridge CC, seconded by Winsley CC. With no other

nominations, Mike was re-elected unanimously.

The remaining officers were proposed en bloc. As previously stated, Paul Stevens is stepping down from the committee, but otherwise, these were the same officers as in 2024 (details provided prior to the meeting). This was proposed by Calne CC, seconded by Swindon Titans CC, and passed unanimously.

Mike stated that the committee is always looking for new members. Anybody who is interested should approach him or David at the end of the meeting, or get in touch with any committee member.

9. AOB

John Gale announced that Tom Cooper, the first chairman of the league, passed away this year.

Mike announced that Pete Marshall, who compiled the WEPL and Feeder Leagues handbook, has passed away this summer.

Allington reported that they lost their Honorary Chairman earlier in the month.

It was confirmed that the league will continue to provide scorebooks, and that all league matches should be scored in at least one paper scorebook, as electronic scoring can be unreliable. We will ask if clubs need a scorebook.

It was queried as to whether we could get better balls, at a higher price. We will look into this and put it to clubs in the next two divisions once we have a price, for 2027.