

Council Report to the A.G.M.  
9th November, 2019.

On behalf of the Council, I present its report. We again met with the Board - in April and again in October. As most of you will know by now, these meetings are held so that we can scrutinise firstly, the Board's intentions for the coming year and then its performance - by making positive criticisms and suggestions together with any complaints we've received from yourselves. You've read and/or heard the various reports presented by the officers to this A.G.M and based on them and on our discussions at the two meetings, the comments we'd like to make are as follows:-

We wholeheartedly join with the Chairman in his thanking of Alan Gray and Brian Pocock for their very hard work over the period of their demanding positions on the Board. Also, in his thanking of Grahame Starr for all that he has done for the County Association(s) over the years. We support the idea of all our clubs using the same weekend (Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May is favoured) to welcome visitors and therefore, be able to benefit from county-wide advertising/publicity. This is NOT a suggestion that we should all have our annual Club Open Days on the same date!

Ross would like his circulars to get through to grass root members. He **has** reduced both number and content, so it might well be a good idea for club secretaries to help in these efforts – or he might get even more passionate about things!

Of course, it's good to see the accounts showing a profit rather than the usual loss. A double-edged sword though, as one obvious reason for this was that none of the representative teams did very well this year, so accommodation and travel costs were much lower than in recent years. The Board seemed to be making a real effort to keep costs to a minimum – then it decided to risk making a big hit on our balance sheet – see Match Secretary's report below. If those teams only do as well as they did last year and the cost of the 'friendly match experiment' rolls out as we expect, then the loss on those two items alone will be circa £3.5K!

We were pleased to hear that our Development Manager is really getting out and about and his plans for next year are very welcome. The Facebook Group seems to be very successful and we support the careful vetting of postings by the Board members concerned.

Competitions admin. should be eased in future by having new, simpler forms, available for submission online - via your Club secretary – **not individually!**

You will have seen the details of the experimental provision of eight coaches, plus the halving of coach fares and the reduction in all match fees by a third - in 2020 only. The decision had already been made, we weren't given any figures and in hindsight, perhaps our questions were not as demanding as they should have been - but the increase in cost (plus the loss of revenue) must approach £5K p.a. This is to be offset by increasing the S.B.A affiliation fee for every one of us by 50p and we guess, will reduce the net loss by about half, to some £2.5K. We councillors have always felt that cost (both initial and ongoing) was highly important to members when they were deciding whether to apply for County friendly games. However, perhaps an equally important concern might be that supply is exceeding demand! There are now many meaningful matches to be played at club level, so why should people bother with these friendlies? Therefore, might not reducing the number of matches in 2020 have been better than risking a large financial loss? And ... what if the experiment does solve the application numbers problem? Doesn't that mean that we will then have to continue it in the future – together with the accompanying losses?

It is understood that the S.B.A Patrons have a deposit account balance of some £7K whilst currently considering an increase in their match fees for next season! The main objective of the Patrons must be to financially support the S.B.A whenever (and wherever) possible - not to keep large bank balances whilst seeking to allocate only such donations as they might see fit! Surely, a more proper policy would be to donate all (or almost all) of its 'profit' each year to the Association and leave the Board to decide how that should be spent?

Lastly, we **do** appreciate all the hours of work done for us by our colleagues on the Board, our Presidential team and our Patrons Committee. We thank them all very much for the time, effort and thought which they put into their various jobs.

Derek Whitlock  
Councillor (Area 6)