

**Leicestershire & Rutland ACO
Minutes of Committee Meeting
Held at Electricity Sports (ES), Leicester**

Meeting commenced at 7 pm on Friday 29th January 2016

Present

Gordon Hubbard (GH) in the chair, Colin Samuels (CS), Phil Palfreyman (PP), Dan Pedley (DP), Chris Day (CD), Richard Whateley-Knight (RWK), Chris Johnson (CJ), Scott Fraser (SF), and Dick Spiers (DS)

Apologies

Bob Sizer (BS), Graham Pickering (GP), Keith Towers (KT), John Edmonds (JE), and Ian Armitage (IA)

In Attendance

Heather Beattie (HB) Leicestershire and Rutland Cricket Ltd

Minutes of last meeting

Approved, then signed by GH

Matters Arising

GH informed the meeting that LRCL had agreed to L&R ACO appointing two umpires to Premier to Division Three, with new umpires standing in division four with an experienced umpire.

LRCL had also agreed to the change in rule 17k. Rule 17k relates to the time which an umpire has to report a discipline matter. PP asked if the LRCL discipline procedure differed from that of ECB and was informed that it did not.

The Premier Division had agreed to match expenses being increased to £40.

Financial Report

RWK gave the meeting an up to date status of the General (£4744.91) and Social (£1553.29) accounts.

Discussions with Heather Beattie

The meeting discussed two meetings GH had with HB. These meetings were about what the ACO provided for its membership, and the benefits of membership. (Notes from these meetings are attached)

Annual Dinner

CD stated that the vegetarian menu option was Chestnut, Parsnip and Wensleydale Bake, with the extra option of having Tomato soup vice mushroom soup.

He also stated that Peter Mitchell had accepted his invitation.

AOB

CJ informed the meeting that the refresher course planned for 14th March was being brought forward to the 7th as City were playing at home on the 14th.

There being no further business, GH closed the meeting at 9-15 pm.

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LRC & ACO Meeting Notes: 21/12/15

No set agenda for the meeting but key items were discussed so that Gordon (GH) and Paul (PW) could bring Laura (LJ) and Heather (HB) up to date with issues faced, opportunities that can be explored and the support needed surrounding courses.

General info/ update;

- Courses planned around time they've run historically, based on needs of existing umpires and tutor availability
- Currently 9 umpires in Div 5 not qualified and show no interest in attending courses

ACTION: need to consider the benefits of them attending and being qualified members of the ACO

- Discussed whether clubs should be incentivised in some way for sending someone on a course

ACTION: GH to raise as an agenda item at next league exec meeting?

- Level 1 costs £105 and includes discount for first year ACO membership
 - £30 – pack, £20 towards membership discount, remainder covers facility hire, tutor expenses and resources
 - Tutors only expensed (don't invoice for deliver)

ACTION: GH to work with HB to look at breakeven costs and determine min numbers needed on each course. GH to speak with ECB ACO for guidance on recommended tutor/ candidate ratios

- Currently 6 tutors for Level 1 courses including John Edmonds who can deliver Level 2 as well
- ACO will continue to run a pre-season meeting – disseminate handbooks, team sheet cards etc. For 2016, will also be an opportunity to go through 5 key principles that have changed e.g. disciplinary reporting, rain affected games etc.

ACO Membership

- Currently c.174 members with roughly 50% actually standing in league cricket
 - Some still playing, some retired, PW raised issue that some not interested due to level of abuse players give umpires
 - Hopefully the new disciplinary procedure will reduce any aggressive behaviour towards umpires but this may take a year or two to filter through and impact on numbers
- Potential to look at tiered membership which could encourage an increase and keep numbers consistent. Could also encourage those not qualified to gain accreditation if discount on membership offered
 - Affiliate e.g. member so can receive information/ updates
 - Non-qualified
 - Qualified

ACTION: GH to raise at next ACO meeting for discussion and ideas?

- Currently the only major benefit promoted as part of membership is insurance and FOC DBS
 - Do receive an ECB ACO newsletter but not a great deal of local information shared regularly unless you are a league umpire

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- ECB provide updated contact database of members to local ACO
- Discussed opportunity to look at a quarterly newsletter, shared through mailchimp that would enable local ACO to communicate with members regularly
 - Share good practice, CPD opportunities, course information, membership benefits and any other information deemed relevant

ACTION: **GH/HB** to investigate this further and develop a clear plan, roles and responsibilities for increasing engagement with members.

ACTION: **GH/HB** to look at survey for existing members – what do they want to hear about and how often, when do they want courses and CPD opportunities to be run etc.

ACTION: **GH** to speak to league about survey to clubs & players – which courses would they like to see organised and when would they ideally like them to run? **HB** to support in developing the survey via google forms.

ACTION: **GH/ HB** to begin developing a clear list of benefits/ unique selling points that will make it easy for people to understand what they get

ACTION: **GH** to contact ECB ACO to see what they use to promote membership and see if these can be pushed more locally

Scorers Courses;

- GH asked how we get more scorers becoming members. LJ suggested again that the benefits of becoming a member need to be sold better
- ECB ACO are developing a new syllabus although this is taking some time and delaying ability to organise and promote. There will be an online assessment.
- Expectation for online scoring in Premier League from 2017

Courses planned and promoted for 2016;

- Currently 4 signed up for Jan and 4 for Feb course – may need to look at combining if numbers don't increase

ACTION: **LJ** to re-send information to other local leagues and affiliated clubs playing in other leagues (neighbouring counties), **HB** to send information out to lapsed, occasional and cameo players again.

GH to touch base with other local counties regarding their course numbers and establish whether opportunities to combine or promote each other's courses.

- Ability to progress on courses is based on umpires grading and the level they consistently officiate at which does make it complicated planning and delivering courses
 - Currently GH uses the database to determine which courses are planned and who they are promoted to. Discussed the opportunity to promote the courses to all members as a way to at least keep them updated and communicating with the ACO.
- Will be delivering a L2 C course in Sept 2016 as will be two full weekends
- Have refresher courses planned nearer the season for existing umpires/ members – 3 nights covering 2 subjects per night (usually get around 45 attending)
- ECB ACO are looking to develop a new online course for 2016/17 although local ACO are still awaiting the course syllabus etc.

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Future Courses;

- Discussed the need to start planning and promoting the courses prior to the end of the 2016 season
- This provides plenty of time to promote through Clubs, Websites, Newsletters, Social media etc.

ACTION: **HB** to support ACO with developing, planning & promotion of course information asap for 2016/17

ACTION: **GH** to contact ECB ACO about the need to have course syllabus information early in 2016 so planning and promotion can begin. In line with wanting to improve umpire quality as highlighted by the NCPS. Need to copy **LJ & HB** into this so we can ask ECB Business support manager to apply additional pressure

- Local ACO to look at planning more 'Introduction to Officiating' courses that will help those standing in lower divisions to feel more confident. LJ agreed they wouldn't be qualified and so shouldn't be deployed by the ACO to stand in league cricket but will help people to feel more comfortable doing the role
 - This could be incentivised by the league
 - Survey developed to generate interest and plan appropriate number of courses

Other Items;

- LRC to look at what if any financial support can be offered to support ACO
- LRC to discuss with LCCC the ACO being able to use meeting room facilities at Grace Road for committee meetings and courses
- LJ to get Gordon George removed from DBS verifiers list and GH from Nov 2016
- Discussed developing an FAQ sheet for courses to help people understand a little more

ACO Meeting – Course Planning
Tuesday 26th January 2016, 10:30am

Laura Joyce, Heather Beattie, Gordon Hubbard, Chris Johnson, Paul Whiteman

1. Update and Actions meeting 21st December 2015

A number of actions from the meeting are outstanding but an ACO committee meeting is planned for Friday 29th Jan and will be explored further then.

Notes from meeting 21st December attached separately with actions highlighted for discussion at committee meeting. There are a number of actions from this meeting that could also be explored.

a. Membership

We discussed at length the need to have two way engagement with entire membership locally (will help promote the benefits of being a member). Refresher courses/ meetings are planned and subject matters are based around issues raised by captains or members however LJ and HB stressed the importance of formalising a two way communication process. LJ proposed that a survey (doesn't have to be long) could be developed to support with planning content, getting more to attend and finding out what CPD opportunities members want. Perhaps consider asking for feedback on most appropriate times to run courses etc.?

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Action – **HB** to support with production of a google form survey. **ACO** to help develop questions and seek feedback from members about what they feel their development needs are.

It's still not entirely clear what the benefits are of being an ACO member and we discussed developing local benefits (not just relying on ECB ones) would further improve this relationship and get more people involved. Some specific local benefits were – refreshers course, review of league playing regulations, dinner with guest speakers.

We also touched briefly on being able to offer members a route to 'appointment' for games but there will be further discussions needed with those who do this across the County as it is currently a little disjointed. LRC would be happy to facilitate this meeting but would need guidance on who to involve.

Action – Committee to develop clear benefits of membership beyond the national ECB ones.

Action – Need to also seek committee's view on whether membership included in course costs.

a. Survey

As well as discussions about a short survey for existing members, LJ/HB proposed that a survey could be developed and distributed widely (lapsed and cameo players, captains) in order to begin planning and developing courses for 2016/17. Important to try and develop a better understanding of what people want and when they want it so we can increase the number of qualified umpires as well as members. Would be worth looking at what the barriers or perceived barriers are to people coming on courses.

Action – As above, **HB** to support with pulling together and **ACO** to help formulate questions. Once developed we'll explore next steps

Courses

Although different platforms used to promote Level 1 courses this year, the numbers are lower than ever. Discussed potential reasons for this and although not entirely clear think the cost is a potential barrier. Resource costs and membership are fixed however if a suitable venue can be identified then this would enable them to be run cheaper.

Action – **LJ** to work with LCCC to see if media centre could form a base for courses. **GH** to confirm what current costs are for facility hire

There is currently some cross-border learning/ sharing of best practice taking place at Midlands's conferences. LJ suggested that there is a need to speak to other local ACO's about how they fill their courses, what they cost and how they continue engaging with and developing people who become members.

Action – **ACO** committee to speak to other local ACO's to share ideas, discuss opportunities and explore ways to increase numbers on courses.

CJ speaks to candidates when they book onto the level 1 about their reasons for attending and this is used as an opportunity to consider what their next steps could be once qualified. If increased member engagement through surveys, newsletters and regular communications are developed these conversations could be ongoing with opportunities to develop further explored.

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Action – PW to raise question at League Exec about whether a subsidy or refund could be offered to those attending once they've stood in 'X' number of games in the league?

2. Introductory Course

Although candidates wouldn't be qualified or appointed in the league, this course provides a platform for people keen to understand more about umpiring and widens the pool of individuals likely to be interested in the Level 1 courses.

Would take approximately 6 hours to deliver and content could be expanded upon slightly to provide a more local context and discussion about next steps and opportunities to progress.

Clear route to market through youth league, L&RC league (captains and volunteers within clubs), those who've attended coach support worker/ activator courses, lapsed & cameo players, websites and social media.

CJ is happy to run one prior to the season and is available 3rd, 4th, 9th or 10th April.

Actions:

CJ to find out what resources cost and **LJ/HB** to look at Grace Rd and facility costs

PW to ask league exec whether any subsidy. **LJ** to ask your

HB/ CJ to work together to produce accurate promotional material with LRC then leading on promotion

CJ to take enquiries and bookings for the course.

3. ACO Development Plan

a. 2016/17

b. Agree deliverables and targets (tangible outcomes and specific timeframes)

Due to time we didn't get onto exploring this in any great detail but is certainly a need to start looking at formalising a development plan that all can buy into and support.

LRC are happy to continue providing funding however clarity on what this funding is for is needed. A development plan with some clear deliverables and targets included will help to measure success and justify the need for funding.

As an example the Lancashire development plan can be found;

http://www.lancashirecricket.co.uk/files/LCBACO/LCB_ACO_Business_Plan_2014_2017.pdf

LRC are happy to offer support and guidance if required in pulling a plan together. To be explored further.

4. AOB

Discussed the need to start looking at scoring courses as this is an essential part of the ACO's work and no courses currently offered locally. Will be explored further in future meetings and will form part of the development plan.

Share development plan for Lancs