



Annual General Meeting 2025

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Held at 6pm on 11 June 2025

Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

Voting: UK Engage conducted the online voting. A copy of the voting results is attached.

Presenters: Iain Kirkpatrick (Chair), Matt Bazeley (CEO), Simon Letts (Honorary Treasurer)

Chair: Iain Kirkpatrick

The Chair welcomed members to the AGM.

1. Minutes of the AGM held on 13 June 2024

The Chair proposed acceptance of the minutes as a true and accurate recording of proceedings. The minutes were approved.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from last year's AGM.

3. Appointments and Reappointment of Board Members

The Chair announced the 9 appointments below. Pen pictures for the appointments had been included in Annex A of the AGM agenda.

a. Appointment of Directors:

- i. Max Barnett
- ii. Elaine Benn
- iii. Sarah Homer
- iv. Andrew Jarvis
- v. Tracey Orr
- vi. Katie Simmonds
- vii. Phil Smith

b. Appointment of Vice Chair: Elaine Benn

c. Reappointment of Director: Ian Campbell

4. Annual Report of CSSC Sports and Leisure for 2024

The Chair proposed acceptance of the Annual Report for 2024. The report was approved.

5. To receive and approve the audited Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2024

Simon Letts, Honorary Treasurer, provided a summary of the consolidated income statement and balance sheet for 2024, highlighting the operating loss, net interest payable, and gains from the sale of Roko Health Clubs. He emphasised the need for a sustainable business model and the proposed subscription increase.

- ◇ Income Statement: Simon summarised the consolidated income statement for 2024, noting an operating loss of just under £2 million, net interest payable of just under £1 million, and gains from the sale of Roko Health Clubs amounting to £1.4 million.

- ◇ Balance Sheet: Simon discussed the balance sheet, highlighting the reduction in tangible assets by £7 million, an increase in listed investments by £7 million, and a decrease in cash at bank from £10 million to £3 million. Net assets at the year-end were nearly £36 million.
- ◇ Sustainability: Simon emphasised the need for a sustainable business model, noting that investment returns are volatile and not reliable for covering operating losses. He highlighted the importance of the proposed subscription increase to ensure financial stability.

The Chair proposed acceptance of the accounts. The accounts were approved.

6. Appointment of Auditor

CSSC's current auditor, Moore Kingston Smith, had audited the accounts for several years and had done a very professional and effective job.

The Chair proposed Moore Kingston Smith be reappointed as Auditor for the year ending 31st December 2025. This was approved.

7. Resolution to make partial amendments to the Rules

The Chair advised that the proposed changes to the Rules reflected a partial restructuring of the sub-committees of the Board, as below:

- ◇ The Audit and Risk Committee, Resources Committee and Investment Committee are being merged.
- ◇ The Sports and Leisure Committee and the Volunteer Committee are being merged.
- ◇ The Appointments Committee is being renamed as the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, with additional responsibilities for overseeing remuneration policy and practices across the organisation.
- ◇ Appointments to the Disciplinary and Complaints Committee will be made by the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, rather than the Board, with delegated authority from the Board.

The Chair proposed acceptance of the partial amendments to the Rules as shown in Annex A of the AGM Agenda. The proposed amendments were approved.

8. Resolution to increase the standard CSSC Membership Subscription rate to £5.99 per month with effect from 1st January 2026

Matt Bazeley explained the rationale behind the proposed subscription increase.

Rationale: Matt explained that the subscription increase is necessary to continue developing offers and opportunities for members, improve local services, and reduce dependency on investments. He noted that the last increase was in January 2023, and inflation has risen by over 13% since then.

- ◇ **Service Improvements:** Matt highlighted upcoming improvements, including collaboration with a world-leading digital health and well-being provider to offer personalised health advice and packages. This new service will launch in Q4 of the current year.
- ◇ **Local Offers:** Efforts will continue to improve local offers for members, ensuring that activities and events are accessible within 30 minutes of members' home addresses. This is a fundamental requirement identified through member feedback.
- ◇ **Cost Pressures:** Matt noted the increased costs from suppliers and partners due to inflation and National Insurance contributions. These cost pressures necessitate the subscription increase to

maintain and improve service quality.

The Chair proposed acceptance of the proposed increase in the standard subscription rate to £5.99 per month, with effect from 1st January 2026. This was approved.

9. Update on Transformation of CSSC Business Model

Matt Bazeley discussed the transformation of CSSC's business model, focusing on the need to provide a consistent and high-quality experience for members across the UK. He outlined the trial of a regional hub in the Northwest to improve local activities and support volunteers.

- ◆ **Need for Change:** Matt explained the need for change, citing inconsistent member experiences across the UK, changes in member behaviour post-COVID, and the unsustainable historic business model. He highlighted the importance of addressing these issues to improve member engagement and satisfaction.
 - ◆ **Regional Hub:** A 12-month trial of a regional hub in the Northwest will begin on October 1st. The hub will be staffed by four permanent members and will focus on developing and delivering local activities based on member insights. The hub aims to lift the administrative burden off volunteers, allowing them to focus on delivering enjoyable events.
 - ◆ **Volunteer Support:** The hub will work closely with volunteers to support the delivery of events and activities, removing bureaucratic processes and enhancing the volunteering experience. This approach aims to increase volunteer satisfaction and retention.
 - ◆ **National Rollout:** If successful, the lessons learned from the Northwest hub trial will be used to roll out the model nationally across the UK. The goal is to provide a consistent and high-quality experience for all members.
- **Sports Programme Changes:** Matt detailed the changes to the sports programme, introducing a tiered system to prioritise core sports and local activities. He explained the rationale behind the changes and the focus on delivering memorable events for members.

10. Granting of Life Membership to Paul Hayden

The Board had proposed that CSSC grant Life Membership to Paul Hayden as recipient of The John Whittaker Fellowship Award.

The Chair proposed granting life membership to Paul Hayden. This was approved.

11. Granting of Life Membership to Board members who stepped down from the Board on 5th November 2024

The Chair proposed life membership be granted to Board members who had stepped down from the Board on 5th November 2024, as a token of appreciation for their dedicated service over the years and exceptional foresight in recognising the need for organisational change. This was approved

12. Appointment of Mark Fisher CBE FRSA as a Vice President of CSSC

Mark stepped down as Chair of CSSC at last year's Annual General Meeting after four years in the role. Mark had an extraordinary tenure as CSSC Chair leading the organisation through the Pandemic, the 100th Anniversary Celebrations and the Governance reform work.

As a token of CSSC's sincere appreciation for his significant contribution to CSSC, the Chair proposed appointing Mark as a Vice President of CSSC.

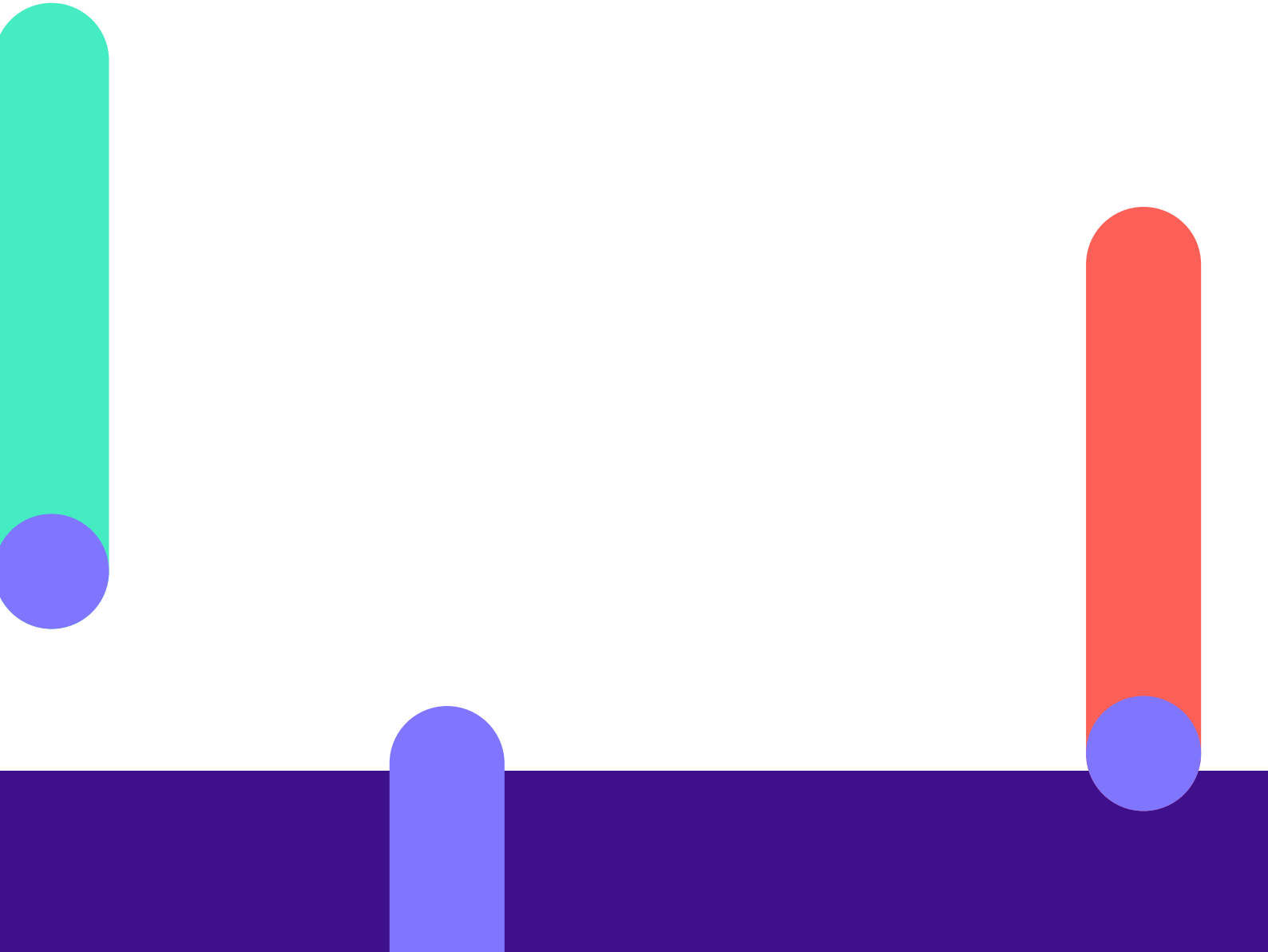
Unfortunately, this resolution was inadvertently missed off the voting ballot. According to the CSSC rules a Vice President can only be appointed following consideration and endorsement at an AGM. This resolution will therefore be taken forward to next year's AGM for consideration.

The Chair thanked everyone for joining the AGM and closed the meeting.



Annual General Meeting 2025

Voting Results



Ordinary Resolution 1 – Minutes	For	Against	Abstain
To approve the minutes from the AGM held on 13 June 2024 as a true and accurate recording of proceedings.	84	0	8
Ordinary Resolution 2 – Annual Report	For	Against	Abstain
To approve the Annual Report of CSSC Sports and Leisure for 2024	89	0	3
Ordinary Resolution 3 – Accounts	For	Against	Abstain
To approve the audited Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2024	88	1	4
Ordinary Resolution 4 – Auditors	For	Against	Abstain
To reappoint Moore Kingston Smith as Auditors of the Company	87	1	5
Ordinary Resolution 5 – Amendments to the Rules	For	Against	Abstain
To approve the partial amendments to the Rules proposed	86	3	4
Ordinary Resolution 6 – Membership Subscription Rate	For	Against	Abstain
To approve that from 1st January 2026, the standard CSSC Membership Subscription rate will be £5.99 per month	63	26	4
Ordinary Resolution 7 – Life Membership (John Whittaker Fellowship Award)	For	Against	Abstain
To grant Life Membership to Paul Hayden, recipient of the John Whittaker Fellowship Award, which has been considered and approved by the Board	88	0	5
Ordinary Resolution 8 – Life Membership (Board Member)	For	Against	Abstain
To grant life membership to Board members who stepped down from the Board on 5th November 2024	71	13	8
Electorate		168	
Total number of votes cast		93	
Number of rejected votes		0	
Number of valid votes		93	



Annual General Meeting 2025

Q&A



Question/Observation

Answer

AGM structure (holding questions until the end) sidelined members, especially compared to community benefit societies where members have more immediate opportunity to speak.

This is a standard AGM approach to ensure resolutions are discussed and the meeting concludes in a timely fashion.

How were the new directors selected, and are there any member-nominated ones?

Kinsey Sears, Recruitment agents, led the process, starting with the Chair. A robust process ensured a match of willingness and capability. Applications were invited from the membership (only 11 out of 100+ applicants). Candidates were reviewed for suitability based on knowledge, skills and experience and 25–30 candidates were interviewed. The board was chosen based on a skills gap analysis, seeking complementary skills (e.g., financial, digital, marketing, legal).

Member-nominated directors include Elaine Benn, Devi Verdi, Simon Letts and Tracey Orr. Sarah Homer (from Defra) and Phil Smith (Sport England) are drawn from our membership and stakeholder groups. Ian Campbell, previous Vice Chair, has close connections with CSSC. These Directors ensure that CSSC has Board members drawn from the membership and can represent the members' voice.

The online rules state "amended SGM October 2023" on both versions. This should be removed from the new version.

The approved partial amendments to the Rules will now be registered with the FCA. Once confirmation is received back from the FCA the front page of the updated Rules will be updated with "amended AGM June 2025".

The membership fee increase resolution didn't state the increase amount. The £5.99 per month is a 20% increase from £4.99, which should have been clearly stated for members.

Noted the feedback on transparency. The board discussed the £1 (20%) increase at length, noting it will be the first increase in three years, and necessary for a self-sustaining organisation.

Question/Observation

Answer

Where does table tennis (a sport with casual and regular league participation) sit in the new tier system, given its consistent London participation, especially as it needs year-round support?

Difficulty in finding table tennis on the CSSC website previously may have impacted survey results, but this has now been corrected.

Member surveys and engagement with SRBs informed the tiering. Table tennis is not widely popular among CSSC's 125,000 members and did not score highly in research. A full list of sports will be published on the website after the roadshows. The focus is on where the majority of members want to consume activities. Engagement from some SRB representatives has been challenging. Acknowledged the passion of individual players but highlighted low national take-up.

Asked where nominations for directors were invited.

All members were emailed and invited to apply online. There was a dedicated page on our website with all the details and application process inviting nominations. Kinsey Sears also made direct approaches to key civil servants. Members were invited to self-nominate.

Asked to confirm the current membership subscription and the definition of a "modest increase" when it's 20%.

Acknowledged the 20% increase but stressed it's a £1 increase and the first in three years, necessary for the organisation's self-sustainability.

Supported previous member's views on the AGM format, noting the time guillotine and the importance of allowing members to ask questions and have them answered, especially for optics.

Reiterated that the current AGM structure is standard for discussing resolutions before Q&A.

Did not receive a push email informing where AGM documents were available, only for signing up and voting. Suggested this would be helpful going forward.

The email announcing the AGM and the email with voting details contained the link below to the AGM documentation on our website.

<https://store.cssc.co.uk/agm>

Next year we will arrange for the link to the AGM documentation to also be included in the email containing the webinar joining details.

Question/Observation

Answer

For the board appointments, did all 100+ applicants get sifted or spoken to by Kinsey Sears, and how was it narrowed down to 35 candidates?

All candidates were initially sifted by Kinsey Sears. The sifting focused on candidates' time commitment as volunteers and specific skills to add value to CSSC, identified through a skills gap analysis. Kinsey Sears spoke to all candidates deemed to have the requisite knowledge skills and experience.

Regarding the new way forward (hub trial), is there an inherent increase in costs immediately, and is there a risk of losing volunteers in the Northwest if the hub is not continued after 12 months? What mitigation is in place to prevent volunteer loss?

Welcomed discussion on this on Friday in Manchester, noting it was a significant board deliberation.

The 20% increase when inflation was 13% is not well-received, and a £1 increase can be significant for members on smaller salaries. Acknowledged the need for CSSC to be more efficient, effective, and relevant as membership has changed (locality, time availability, working patterns). Expressed concern about the lack of membership growth from the NHS and local authorities. Felt the consultation on the new way of working (sports tiers) could have been better, as he, as a Tier 1 sport representative, had not had a conversation with head office and was unaware of the criteria for assessing sports.

Pushed back strongly on the lack of consultation, stating vast consultation occurred through the Sports and Leisure Committee and three external sports and volunteer workshops, to which SRB representatives were invited. Apologised if they hadn't been directly contacted by the sports team as national organiser for volleyball, but reiterated that SRBs had generally been disappointing in engagement. Stated that sports have been in deteriorating status for decades, and the current changes are necessary because the model is unsustainable. The criteria used by the board were comprehensive.

Afternote: The questioner later acknowledged that he had been spoken to at length by the Sports Team and that he may have misrepresented some aspects of detail.

Question/Observation

Answer

Members want to do things locally with friends and family, but a surcharge is now applied for non-members joining activities, making it embarrassing for volunteers to offer discounted tickets to members and charge non-members full price, especially for seated events where they want to sit together.

Supported the idea of different membership types. Clarified that members always received a cheaper ticket due to a 35% discount, so non-members were paying at cost, not being "price gouged".

Acknowledged that many non-members previously enjoyed benefits without paying membership fees. While it's now more challenging for non-members, historically CSSC was "giving away" its product. The £6 non-member fee hasn't been catastrophic for ticket purchases, and many booking agencies apply similar administration fees. Recognised it feels uncomfortable for volunteers. This is an area the board may review as part of the business model transformation, alongside considering different membership tiering structures (e.g., family, sports-only, U25 memberships).

Agreed that in some cases, both members and non-members received discounts, costing CSSC money. Acknowledged the feedback and the need for increased flexibility.

Thanked the questioner for the eloquent feedback, noting it's helpful for the board to continue challenging the team to find appropriate solutions for wider membership.

Couldn't find information on the John Whittaker Fellowship Award on the website and wasn't sure what it was for.

The John Whittaker Award is the highest level of CSSC volunteer award, akin to an Oscar for volunteers.

The winner of this award will have shown unwavering dedication to CSSC; be it through their chosen sport, club, association or team, or indeed a combination.

Be known and recognised within CSSC as having made a real difference to CSSC's effectiveness through their persistent hard work, integrity and endeavour.

Ideally they will have already received a CSSC Merit Award or appropriate recognition from their sport or other worthy source.

They will have served as a CSSC volunteer for at least fifteen years.

Information on the John Whittaker Fellowship Award will be added to the CSSC Awards page on our website.

Question/Observation

Answer

<p>Requested transparency on the criteria for awarding life membership to board members who stepped down in November 2024, and whether this is a future precedent for all serving board members as an incentive.</p>	<p>This was not seen as setting a precedent; rather, it could be proposed for consideration. Highlighted that the previous board's exceptional job in recognising the need for organisational change was the reason for their particular thanks.</p>
<p>Suggested having profiles and pictures of board members on the website, as was the case when AGMs were in person.</p>	<p>Board member profiles are available on the page below on the website. Meet our New Board</p>
<p>For the Northwest hub trial, will the four staff members be permanent headquarters staff, or based regionally?</p>	<p>They will be salaried staff based in the Northwest region, not High Wycombe, for the trial period.</p>
<p>How will my role as a volunteer be affected if the trial is successful and rolled out, and how will it ensure volunteers still want to participate when staff are doing jobs volunteers currently do?</p>	<p>The change is an enhancement for volunteers, as it removes the bureaucracy and burden (e.g., public liability insurance, venue booking, ticketing, communications, AGMs), allowing volunteers to focus on the enjoyable aspects of delivering events.</p>
<p>How do workplace associations fit into the new business model?</p>	<p>They will be linked into the local hub by the hub manager, working locally.</p>
<p>The entry process for major events like the Civil Service Track and Field Championships is too complicated (e.g., new tickets, email with code, registration on another site, long process). Suggested making it simpler if using "nutickets".</p>	<p>Agreed that anything more than four or five clicks for a person wanting to buy or access an experience is too much. The team is working to reduce this burden, especially for new or less IT-friendly members. A new board member, Max Barnett (digital background), is helping improve this challenge.</p>

Question/Observation

Answer

What proactive measures is CSSC taking to encourage and recruit new members?

Vast effort is put into recruitment across three stages:

Awareness: Making the 6 million public sector employees aware of CSSC's existence through conventional communications (email, Facebook), radio advertising, and increased social media presence (TikTok, Instagram, LinkedIn) to reach different communities.

Direct Selling: Recruitment and marketing teams attend conferences, fairs, and festivals (like CS Live events) for face-to-face selling. Increased engagement with departmental and public sector HR departments (e.g., Local Government Association).

Smooth Joiner Journey: Wendy Eley, Group Operations Director, is leading efforts to smooth the joiner experience, ensuring it is "joyous, positive and engaging" so members stay.

To put the price increase into perspective, the proposed new monthly membership cost (£5.99) is equivalent to a pint or a glass of wine.

Suggested that the tiered sports list be published on the website sooner rather than later to generate earlier conversations and clarity for sports unhappy with their positioning.

All SRBs and National Organisers have been spoken to. The list will be released in the next couple of weeks after the roadshows are completed. Explained that providing verbal coverage during the roadshows allows for explanation of criteria, preventing a "bow wave of questions by email" if just published as a blank sheet. The full list and slides will be uploaded to the website along with a recording of the presentation at the end of the roadshows.