

Minutes of the OLSC AGM held in The Penthouse Bar, Horse Show House, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. – Saturday 6th August 2016

Welcome and Introduction

Rebecca Leggett, president of the Official Leinster Supporters Club (OLSC) opened the meeting at 2pm by welcoming those members present to the Tenth AGM of the Official Leinster Supporters Club, the quorum was achieved.

Minutes of the AGM held in the Penthouse Bar on the 11th July 2015, which were available on the club website for the last 12 months, were proposed for approval by Jarrod Bromley and seconded by Nicki Holohan.

Update from Leinster Rugby Commercial and Marketing Department

Rebecca introduced Leinster Rugby's Head of Commercial and Marketing, Paul Dermody and invited him to update those present on the RDS Development.

Paul started out by thanking the season ticket holders and the OLSC for asking him to attend. He also thanked season ticket holders on behalf of the Isa, Leo, Guy and Mick for their continued support through a tough season last year. Paul thanked the outgoing OLSC committee for their work and was looking forward to working closely with the incoming committee.

Paul outlined it has been a long two years working with the RDS to get the new RDS development to planning stage. Planning application for the development was lodged last week and should take 6-12 months for full review.

Paul reiterated that the relationship with supporters and the OLSC is more important than ever with the season ticket holders being Leinster's most important stakeholders. Leinster hopes to have a number of update sessions with the season ticket holders as the planning process progresses.

Paul did note that the new development is not just about the Anglesea Stand but it will be an arena upgrade with supporters seeing benefits in all areas in the ground. Work as long as planning goes to plan is to start at the end of the coming season with completion for the Horse Show in the summer of 2018.

Paul also took questions from those who were in attendance;

Blue Room

Were there any plans to extend the current facility. Paul outlined at present this was not feasible as there was no other locations available to Leinster Rugby in the current RDS.

Catering Facilities

Were there any plans to provide catering options for dietary requirements. Paul advised currently Leinster Rugby can't influence this but they looking to influence the facilities available in the new RDS development.

Ladies Merchandise Range

The lack of Ladies merchandise in the same design and colour scheme as mens stock was raised.

A focus group of female supporters with Leinster Rugby, kit supplier Canterbury of New Zealand and the official retail partner Lifestyle Sports was suggested. Paul is to review this with Canterbury and Lifestyle Sports with the hopes of holding such a focus group.

Presidents Report

Rebecca Leggett remarked on Leinster Rugby having a challenging season, with 18 wins and 12 losses and the introduction of Leo Cullen as Head Coach. The senior team did make it to another Guinness PRO12 Final in Edinburgh, losing out on the day to Connacht. It was also noted that Leinster had a very tough European Champions Cup campaign with Bath, Wasps and Toulon in our pool. Sadly Leinster were unable to make it past the pool stages.

It was also remarked that supporters said goodbye to another two great servant's to Leinster Rugby, Kevin McLoughlin & Isaac Boss. The club presented its standard engraved Dublin Crystal piece to both on behalf of the supporters. Since the end of the season Eoin Redden and Luke Fitzgerald also announced their retirements, Rebecca noted that the OLSC hoped to be in a position to make a presentation to both Eoin and Luke early in the new season.

Supporters also said goodbye at the end of the season to Darragh Fanning, Ian Madigan, Marty Moore, Aaron Dundon, Tom Denton, Royce Burke Flynn, Tadgh Beirne, Ben Te'o, Tony Ryan, Colm O'Shea, Mick McGrath and Richie Murphy. We would wish them all well in the future. The end of season also the departure of the Leinster Rugby Senior Ticketing Officer, Sinead Coffey.

The Club presented a piece of engraved crystal as a token of thanks at the end of the season, Rebecca thanked Sinead for all her work with the OLSC over the last nine seasons.

The OLSC Committee

During the year there were changes to the Committee, Brian Delaney stepped down and in accordance with its constitution co-opted Janine Ryan and Sharon Levy- Valensi onto the committee.

Funding

Rebecca noted the club's income was up on previous seasons despite decrease in merchandise sales and bus seat sales. This was a result of advertising sold to some of our sponsor.

We would like to thank our biggest financial Supporter: Bank of Ireland. Special thanks Ian Murray and the team in Bank of Ireland for their continued support and commitment to the work completed by the OLSC. The Bridge and Aircoach were also thanked for their continued support of the Club via advertising in various publications.

OLSC Buses

Buses were run for all 3 interpro fixtures. The Club feels it is an important service given public transport does not normally cater for supporters to easily get to/from some games given the evening kickoffs. The current pricing of €20 pp return is good value for a direct service to the ground and more importantly means buses do not have to be 100% full to run meaning no supporters are turned away.

Airport Buses

Last season the club ran buses to and from Bristol Airport for the Bath game and from Glasgow Airport to Edinburgh for the Guinness Pro12 Final. These special buses are designed to make airport transfers direct and easy.

Blacklist for future bus services

Last season the OLSC was forced to introduce a black list for our Intropro buses, this was as a result of a few problems with people being intoxicated and a nuisance to others. This will continue for the coming season with offenders not being allowed to travel with the OLSC again.

Merchandise

The Club continues to produce a small amount of branded merchandise as well as our popular legends t-shirt. The shirt released last season was for Sean O'Brien, this had great results in terms of sales.

A number of OLSC items have been around for a number of years so the new committee will be looking to freshen these up, suggestions are always welcome on what can be produced and sold.

Brand Additions are licensed by Leinster Rugby to produce a range of general merchandise items that were available to purchase through Lifestyle Sports. These items and the quality of them will continue to be monitored with feedback being relayed to Leinster Rugby by the OLSC.

Brand Additions were responsible for the season ticket holders packs last season, for the coming season Canterbury will be looking after these, with each pack being delivered to each season ticket holder by An Post.

The OLSC continues to discuss with Leinster and our retail partner Lifestyle Sports other clothing options for supporters.

Communication

The Club continues to be an important resource for supporters especially in the area of away travel and ticketing information. Facebook continues to be challenging with some of our posts only being seen by small levels despite having in excess of 60,000 followers. As free advertising on facebook is a thing of the past we have spent a small amount for paid advertising (to get important items into people's newsfeeds). The OLSC continues to reply on the weekly ezine, www.leinsterrugby.ie, ticket office emails issued by Leinster Rugby and the home match programmes to reach as many supporters as possible.

Away Guides

The production of the away guides and travel information continued throughout the season. Our thanks to Jarrod Bromley & Terry Quinlan for their work. These guides take a lot of time to produce (research, edit, design and layout), the OLSC produced its 38th away guide this season.

The guides continue to get great feedback and are being viewed worldwide. Other clubs also use these as a reference point for their supporters. Bank of Ireland continues to sponsor these for which the club is grateful.

The Laighin Out

This season has continued to see the growth of the Laighin Out with new Leinster supporters and away team supporters visiting both before and after the matches.

The amount of money invested in the Laighin Out this season was small and only for essentials needed. For the coming season the committee intend to have a small amount set out for any further essential work needed in the bar.

The OLSC has already set aside €2,000 in a separate deposit account towards the new Laighin Out in the new RDS development. The committee intends to add €1,500 to this in the coming weeks.

RDS Development

The OLSC will continue to seek updates from Leinster Rugby on the progress of the planning application at every opportunity.

Flagging

Flags continue to be provided at key home fixtures as well as all away European Champions Cup fixtures. The club also ensures that at least 10 flags are at every single away game in the Guinness Pro12 fixture.

The OLSC kept with a tradition and handed out our Blue Santa Hats at our Pre Christmas matches with Toulon.

Charity Partner

The committee decided at the start of last season to join forces with Leinster in supporting their chosen charity partners CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young) and the Alzheimer's Society. For the coming season the OLSC will once again be joining forces with the two new charity partners chosen by Leinster Rugby.

The OLSC will be working with both charities to see how the club can help them best.

Volunteers -Thank You

Rebecca concluded her report by thanking a few people on behalf of the OLSC.

To those who volunteered to help out during the season be it with helping out at the season pack distribution days, flagging or bucket collections for the charity partners we thank you for giving up your time to help us out.

To those who have helped in hosting our Q&A events in the Laighin Out. Glenn Clinton, Killian Byrne, and Dave Cahill we thank you for your help and sometimes at short notice. Barry McHugh we thank you for your help with photography of the events.

Two people stepped down from the Committee at the AGM, Glenn Clinton and Berty O'Neill.

Rebecca thanked them for the work they did during their time on the committee.

Treasurers Report

The accounts were presented by, Rebecca Leggett. It was confirmed that there was a surplus of €4802.03 to be carried forward. There were no questions and the accounts were proposed for approval by Aisling O'Connor and seconded by Janine Ryan.

Election of the OLSC Committee for the 2015/2016 Season

Rebecca advised that the required number of 5 members had put their names forward for election to the OLSC Committee. Returning members Rebecca Leggett, Jarrod Bromley, Sharon Levy-Valensi and Janine Ryan will be joined by Eoin Kilkenny. The new committee were proposed for approval by Alison Moore and seconded by Aisling O'Connor.

Rebecca Leggett was the sole member standing for president and was thus re-elected for the 2016/2017 season. Up to two more members will be co-opted onto the committee at a later stage to bring the committee up to a full compliment of seven season ticket holders.

Any Other Business

The issue of the OLSC's profile was highlighted again, it was felt that Leinster need to put some investment into the OLSC to help them to increase their profile. A suggestion was made that Leinster and the OLSC hold a focus group to try and get more people involved and attending the AGM. Many supporters still don't know about the OLSC and the work completed by the club.

It was noted that the way in which Leinster Rugby handled the selling of tickets for the Leinster Awards Ball was not fair. It was suggested that a small number of tickets should be put on general sale on a first come first served basis giving everyone the opportunity to go and not be sold as tables. This item is already under discussion with Leinster Rugby for the next ball in April/May 2017.

Suggestions were made that the OLSC ask the Leinster Ticket office to send a monthly dedicated OLSC Ezine to season ticketholders to ensure supporters get to read supporters club news. The fact that the OLSC update is always at the end of the weekly Leinster ezine was also raised therefore many supporters do not see it.

Contact with Leinster Rugby directly, it was remarked that sometimes emails are not responded to in a timely or proper manner. The OLSC suggested that the club be copied on these emails ensure follow up could be made. This feedback will also be passed on to the administration team in UCD.

Close

With there being no further business to discuss, Rebecca Leggett concluded the 2016 Official Leinster Supporters Club AGM.