Appendix II

Chairman's Report – AGM 2026:

Rugby

I will begin with some comments on the rugby this year – I realise that there will be rugby reports later, so will do my best not to steal any of their thunder!

This time last year at the AGM we reflected on season the 1st team spent in the West league and how much we were looking forward to our return to North 2. As it turned out it has been a superb season with only 6 games lost, 2 before Xmas and 4 afterwards and over 1000 points scored, and 0ver 100 league points, with probably the best set of backs in the league. We finished a narrow 3rd in the league but it could so easily have been 2nd had a couple of results gone our way – Fylde at Home and DMP away!. My congratulations and thanks to the playing squad, the coaches and the DoR Matt Coleridge for a truly exciting and successful season that all fans really enjoyed.

Before I move on, I must warn members that the hoopla about which league the 1st XV play in next season has yet to be confirmed. Put simply 16 clubs in the North will not fit into a 14 team league and so it is possible that Macc might be allocated once again to the West. The club – myself, Matt Coleridge, Pete Harper, Rhys Davies, Steve Burnage and Rob Oliver - has already made strong representations to the RFU, The National Leagues and Cheshire, as well as our RFU Council member in advance. Once I am advised we will continue to fight against it.

One other area of our Senior rugby that has had an great season is the Women's 1st XV. This time last year they were a little apprehensive about promotion, but have not only thrived, but finished an excellent 2nd in the league behind Sale Bees – again! To highlight the growing reputation of the team 7 of the Women's team were selected in the Cheshire Women's Squad, including Emma and Kacie Lawton – a mother and daughter - fantastic. I and the club are very proud of the "magnificent 7" – well done to you all. As is clear, the Womens team continues to develop and grow and when you consider that some of the players – even some of those in the county squad are relative newcomers to the game it shows the very real potential there is. I look forward to seeing this potential realized as we move into next season. Well done Jacko! One of the other things worthy of note is the growth in the Girls rugby coached by Ria Horsley and Ric Cotton this will eventually become the pathway into the Women's teams and is to be encouraged and nurtured at all costs.

While on the subject of Women's rugby – what a day we had on the 4th October when we entertained two members of the Red Roses who ran a training session and we had the Women's World Cup on display in the Priory Suite. The event was packed and everyone had a superb time with all the different activities there were to do on the day.

Steve Burnage will comment on the other senior teams, the 2nd XV and 3rd XV in his reports, but I would like to speak for a moment about the 3rd team. It's a reality in a growing number of clubs – the shrinking level of participation in the game, and especially the social game –

and here at Macc over the last season there have been times when we have really struggled to put out a team. James Keep has done a great job in trying to pull a team together – and sometimes it just has not been possible. In my experience, once a team is allowed to go it is almost impossible to revive it so we must all do whatever we can to help maintain mens social rugby here at Macc – the available/floating population of players is there, but getting a regular group to form a team has been a real challenge. I am aware some of our players are now playing at other clubs, we need to do our best to encourage them back if we can. My thanks to James for his efforts and whatever we can do as a club we must do to preserve social rugby.

Our M&Y section is also thriving, although membership numbers were down a little this season – more about that a little later. If you have not been up to the club on a Sunday morning, it is so full of passion and energy as the young people train and play. This season has seen some notable successes in county championships, and I am sure Nicky Griffin will touch on those in her report. I was also here for the U8's Festival this year in March, and not only was it very well organized but the young players all had a super time even though the weather was a bit iffy. Similarly. Cheshire Colts finals day was a good day here with the three finals all being played by local clubs – including Macc. The M&Y end of season event last Saturday was very well attended, with members of the senior teams in attendance, with bouncy castles etc and an excellent mixed age group touch rugby for the Stockwell Memorial trophy, earlier there had been tag rugby, rugby tennis as well as tug of war! An especial well-done to everyone who helped organize and run the day.

The Club

Last season as members will know, we made a modest profit after several poor years. As Simon will report in a minute, this season has been quite challenging. Like all clubs, and it's the same for us as individuals, there is no avoiding increasing costs and prices and although our events have again been very successful and Rob Oliver has again generated record levels of sponsorship, money is as always tight. Away from the financials, one of the biggest issues we, like other clubs face, is a societal change – reduced participation. As I mentioned earlier, the M&Y membership was down this year – there is quite simply an enormous amount of activities that the young people can and are involved in and that directly competes with Rugby. In the senior club, membership was also down, much of it to do with the reduced social rugby activity ive already touched on and this has a direct knock on effect upon several things; not only subscriptions but the gate on 1st XV matchdays, reduced spend over the bar and participation at events and so on. Recruitment is a priority for this season and this will be helped by the recent appointment of Vicky Brearley as Membership Secretary. It is not all bad news however – the Women's section and the Girls section have both grown this year and I believe that trend will continue.

I would now like to touch on some other topics;

Project Priory

Project Priory continues to develop. This is the project to sell two pieces of land and HBV the developers intend to build a nursing home where the mound is at the front of our site and some sheltered bungalows on the land between the Astro and the front of our land where it meets the main road. Rob Oliver is the member of the Executive who is acting as Project Sponsor and Lead. One lesson of this project is that things sometimes take a lot of time to move forwards through the various phases. We exchanged contracts with HBV on 31st July 2025 and since then the time has been spent on getting things ready for the submission of the planning application. HBV began the planning of their development in earnest after exchange as well as the elements that affect the club. This has included a wide range of preparatory surveys, roads, light – including the inevitable bat survey which, by coincidence, is happening this evening! Whilst HBV work on the many aspects of preparation of the planning application submission, there is a small group including Rob, myself and Alex Willson working with our architect to design the proposed layout of the refurbished clubhouse and other associated MRUFC pieces. The most important challenge at present is to ensure that the clubhouse proposal is within the available budget. Work continues on that design as well as cost assessment and when a finalized proposal for the layout is agreed we will share it probably with a representative group of members. Both the club and HBV the purchasers and developers are both working towards submission of the planning application soon, ideally before the end of June. That would hopefully mean we might receive a positive decision towards the end of the year or early in 2027 when the sale to HBV would be completed and works begin. I have skated over the fundamentals here, but if there are questions later, either Rob or I will answer them.

One of the other things the Exec has been concerned with this year is - Governance

In 2026 the legislation and policies that affect a rugby club are very significant, as it is extremely important to keep all members and visitors safe and the club a happy and secure place – so from Health and Safety to Noise pollution, safeguarding, discipline, GDPR, HR, codes of conduct and new amendments of regulations. We are in the process of a rolling programme of updating and reviewing all policies that relate to the club and ensuring that they are in place. This is a short paragraph in this report but represents a large body of work!

Although the communications will be forthcoming in due course I can confirm that a new Safeguarding Officer for the club and a new deputy Safeguarding Officer have been appointed to take effect on July 1st. These are very important appointments and involve two people with very significant experience in this area.

Strategy

Last year I spoke about our priority to review our club strategy. We did make some headway with this project, however it was overtaken by other priorities that the Executive team had to manage. It is always difficult to nail down strategy in a moving environment, fortunately the principal components usually remain relatively constant. Project Priory is certainly part

of our medium-term strategy and will influence the way forward for the club and its future. Our central strategy however remains:

”to be a happy, successful and sustainable rugby club at the heart of the community that plays at the highest levels we can achieve across all grades and types of rugby within our means.”

This is an area that we hope to return to this year.

One Club is a phrase we all see and use quite frequently

Our club is a real social hub and it is great to see all categories and sections of our membership enjoying their time at Priory Park. We must all make an effort to integrate the different parts of our club and try where practical to get away from being a member of just one part of the club, rather than the club itself. This is challenging because of the different times we all use the facilities at Priory Park, whether it is Saturdays for the senior club, or in the case of M&Y and sometimes the Womens XV on a Sunday. One thing that has been very good this year has been the support from the 1st XV squad and the Women’s squad to the M&Y both on Sundays and at the various events such as the U8 festival. This really matters to the young players as they look up to their adult players in the senior club, and now even more so that the girls section is growing, and is a great example of the synergy and integration and OneClub we are all aiming for. Another example of this cooperation and integration is I know that there are occasions when the Womens team train jointly with members of the Senior mens squad. I’m sure this has benefits to both groups and is also great fun. I hope these are trends that will continue.

I hope you all continue to enjoy the club and play your part in making it the great club that it is. Many visitors from other visiting clubs always remark on the enjoyable atmosphere and hospitable welcome at Macc rugby. I can assure you I visit many clubs who do not have the same feeling or receptive members and fans.

Thanks

Before I finish, I want to offer my thanks those people who help and support the club and help make it what it is. Firstly I offer my thanks to my fellow Exec colleagues who work so hard on all aspects of the club – many of them have demanding and successful careers that sometimes make it a challenge! We are also lucky in our President Pete Harper who is a very active president and a great supporter of the club. Andy Appleyard – Apps – our GM for all his good work in keeping things working and especially his continuing success with events, that generate a significant part of the revenue of the club

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A special thank you to all our sponsors – without them this club would not be able to perform as it does.

Thank you to all our volunteers – all the devoted coaches, first aiders, team managers in the M&Y, the Roustabouts who do so much remedial work around the club saving up a lot of money, the grounds staff, the gate team, Lara and Annie who do such a great job with the social media. Last year I mentioned Wilkey was standing down – which he has but did return for a couple of virtuoso performances on the Mic after Christmas – but this season has seen

a new matchday star on the Mic – Bex Ward. Without a doubt a great as well as very popular replacement!

Finally, my thanks to all of you members for your support of the club, on the field as well as off it. I continue to be thrilled to see the numbers of members who travel to support the 1st XV at away matches and I understand the Women's section had a veritable invasion force when they travelled to play Vagabonds in the Isle of Man!

Please continue to support your club, and if you can spare some of your time, no matter how much or little that may be, please think about volunteering to do something to help our wonderful club continue to thrive.

Thank you

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