

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Official Leinster Supporters Club
Laighin Out Supporters Bar, RDS, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4
25 June 2019 at 6:30pm**

Welcome & Introduction

Aisling O'Connor (President of the outgoing committee) welcomed attendees to the 13th AGM of the Official Leinster Supporters Club (OLSC), whose number well exceeded the required quorum, and set out the agenda for the evening and described the housekeeping arrangements. Aisling also welcomed Kevin Quinn, Head of Commercial Marketing, and Marcus Ó Buachalla, Head of Communications, from Leinster Rugby and confirmed that both would provide an update to attendees later in the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Sean Redmond proposed and Mary Carroll seconded the approval of the Minutes of AGM of the 4th of October 2018. The meeting then approved these.

President's Report

Aisling gave her outgoing President's report. She began by commenting on how delighted she was that there was another election for the OLSC Committee at the AGM. She briefly outlined the details of the uncertainty and the difficulty the OLSC faced and how the Club was nearly dissolved prior to the last AGM in October 2018 but that things appeared to have turned a corner given the nine nominees seeking election for the seven positions on the Committee for the 2019/2020 season.

Aisling gave a brief recap of the 2018/2019 season and commented on how exceptionally proud Leinster Rugby supporters are of the team for getting to another two finals, one of which resulted in silverware, the Guinness PRO14 trophy.

She then moved on and spoke about the Champions Cup Final in Newcastle and the #SeaofBlue that was waiting for the team as they arrived. She outlined that the #SeaofBlue concept was something the OLSC sat down and spoke about at the start of the season with Leinster Rugby and it had grown from strength to strength with every game. She joked that the #SeaofBlue is known the world over, partly thanks to the "flag gate" incident in Bath in December. She noted that when Leo Cullen visited the Laighin Out at the last home game of the current season, he commented on the reception the team received as they arrived in St. James' Park for the Champions Cup final. It was something special. Aisling thanked anyone who participated in any of the various Seas of Blue over the season. She stated that the OLSC is absolutely nothing without the people who support it and over the course of the season, many people helped the OLSC out and made a difference.

The 2018/2019 season saw the launch of two new OLSC merchandise items, the OLSC hipflask and the OLSC tankard. These items are now part of the OLSC range. Aisling commented that the OLSC is only able produce items that are not already part of the Leinster Rugby merchandise range. With that in mind, Aisling was happy to confirm that over the course of the season the OLSC drew up a list of about 20 items which are now approved for the OLSC to produce in the coming seasons. Aisling offered a special word of thanks to Leinster Rugby who discussed and agreed each item on a case by case basis.

Aisling outlined that the OLSC continues to provide regular content for the Leinster Rugby website as well as match day programmes and the Leinster Rugby ezine which goes out every Friday. The OLSC's main form of communication is however through social media.

As well as being OLSC President, Aisling explained that she took over the social media duties for the 2018/2019 season. She noted that Facebook followers had remained largely unchanged at 65,000. The OLSC's Twitter following had increased slightly from 29,000 to just under 30,000 but most significantly, the Club's Instagram following had increased from 3,000 to just over 7,000.

The OLSC appreciates that not everybody uses social media however and as a result the Club tries to publish as much information as we can in the match day programmes and the Leinster website.

Aisling then turned to OLSC travel information. As has been mentioned before at AGMs, the OLSC is not a bonded travel agent, however the Club puts together travel information for supporters on a game by game basis. This is about getting information out there from various sources (Leinster Rugby sponsors and others) and then supporters can book what suits him/her. Bank of Ireland continue to support the OLSC away guides for Champions Cup games and the OLSC is extremely grateful for their support.

At the end of the 2018/2019 season, the OLSC also produced two ad-hoc away guides for Guinness PRO14 games. These guides were not sponsored by Bank of Ireland but the OLSC did use the advertising space normally occupied by Bank of Ireland to promote the two Leinster Rugby charity partners, MS Ireland and The Down Syndrome Centre.

Aisling explained that interpro buses continue to be popular with all three fixtures covered again this season. Leinster Rugby partner, Aircoach provided the interpro buses and are very good to the OLSC in that they offer the OLSC two free buses per season.

Aisling explained that when she stood before season ticket holders at the AGM in October 2018, looking to be re-elected to the OLSC Committee for the season, she had two main aims: to get people back into the Laighin Out and to raise money for the two Leinster Rugby charities - MS Ireland and The Down Syndrome Centre. Two charities that hold a very special place in her heart.

She commented that the OLSC worked closely with Paul, Ailis, Caitriona and the team in MS Ireland and Emma and Madeline in The Down Syndrome Centre over the course of the season. Their work and their passion for what they do is incredibly inspiring so the OLSC Committee were absolutely thrilled to be able to co-ordinate some charity events to raise some funds for each of the charities.

The OLSC held a table quiz at the start of the season in the Horse Show House, with our favourite Munster man Michael Corcoran offering up his free time to be our quizmaster and then the OLSC hosted a Saturday Spectacular event in the Laighin Out in April when Fergus McFadden was announced as the newest OLSC Legend.

Aisling was delighted to confirm that the total amount raised by the OLSC for MS Ireland and The Down Syndrome Centre over the course of the 2018/2019 season was €8,524 (€4,262 each).

Aisling then spoke about the Laighin Out. As she had mentioned earlier in the meeting, one of her two main aims was to get people back into The Laighin Out Supporters Bar. She explained about how the OLSC fought for so long to get this bar and she believed it was back to its best.

Aisling listed the events the OLSC has hosted over the course of the season. A brunch for the Toulouse supporters when they were in Dublin in January and the OLSC also welcomed the Benetton supporters to join Leinster supporters for some pre and post-match drinks when they were here in April. A Pop-up Gaeltacht for Seachtain na Gaelige sponsored by Energia. And of course, there was the traditional mulled wine and mince pies event at Christmas.

The OLSC had two huge Legend's T-Shirt launches for Devin Toner and Fergus McFadden and Aisling noted the fact that as each of Devin's and Fergus' families came and joined supporters in the Laighin Out for each of those events made them even more special.

Aisling explained that the aim was to extend the Leinster Rugby match day experience so that supporters went into the game and enjoyed that and then came over to the bar afterwards for a few drinks with friends or family and then enjoyed a post-match Q&A with someone from Leinster Rugby.

Two notable events were the Q&A with Joe Schmidt and the Q&A with Leo Cullen after our last home game of the season. Aisling stated that the fact that head coaches of both our province and our national team want to come and talk to supporters in our supporters club bar is a testament to us and should not be underrated. She noted that not every supporters club gets this kind of access so we really should be proud of ourselves for the bond we have with players and coaches alike.

To summarise, the OLSC welcomed James Lowe, Joe Tomane, Felipe Contempomi, Tadhg Furlong, Rhys Ruddock, Conor O'Brien, Hughie O'Sullivan, Devin Toner, Fergus McFadden, Joe Schmidt and Leo Cullen to The Laighin Out and, on behalf of supporters, Aisling thanked each of them for their time to chat with supporters post match at those events and then spend time taking photos with supporters and signing autographs.

Aisling also thanked Ronan O'Donnell in Leinster Rugby for putting up with her pestering him week in and week out to ensure that there was always someone in the Laighin Out post-match for each home game.

As Aisling mentioned earlier in the meeting, the OLSC is nothing without the people that are in it and support it and as a result, she had a long list of "Thank Yous" that were incredibly important. Each one just as important as the next.

She stated that the OLSC is a volunteer organisation and as a result, relies solely on donations, sponsorships and the goodwill and generosity of people to give up their free time in order to help us.

Leinster Rugby – Kevin, Marcus, Conor, Shane, Orlagh, Mia, Gary, Claire who the OLSC liaise with on a regular basis.

Aisling thanked the various Leinster Rugby sponsors including Bank of Ireland, Lifestyle Sports, Laya Healthcare, Energia and Aircoach for their support throughout the season.

Bearing Point for producing the foam hands you would have seen in the Seas of Blue.

The InterContinental for hosting the Meet the Coaches event.

David Cahill for his t-shirt design for the two Legend's t-shirts.

Barry McHugh for always taking the time after matches to take photos of our post match events.

Terry Quinlan for the time and effort in creating the away guides up to January of 2019.

The staff of the RDS for always letting us into the Laighin Out midweek if the OLSC needed to get in and to Pdraig for always being very good at getting anything the OLSC needed done without even having to ask twice.

For all the businesses who provided prizes for OLSC charity events. Darragh Fanning in Zambrero, Sportsfile, Mao, The InterContinental, Noel Anderson in The Bridge and Lemon & Duke who as well as providing gift vouchers as prizes, also provides the OLSC with sponsorship of the Dublin Guide. Eoin O'Malley and the Loyola Group for their support in providing very generous vouchers for The Jar, The Landmark, The Bath and Base Pizza. Lifestyle Sports and The Chophouse. The Horse Show House. Leinster Rugby for arranging for the jerseys we purchased to be signed.

Aisling also thanked all those companies who offer OLSC discounts to supporters.

Last but not least, Aisling gave a special word of thanks to the volunteers who helped the current OLSC Committee over the course of the season. She said it again because it couldn't be said enough – the OLSC is nothing without the people that are in it and support it. The OLSC really appreciates the support of the volunteers and Aisling offered a round of applause in support of the volunteers.

Aisling finished her President's report by stating that she was very proud to hold a Leinster Rugby season ticket and therefore be able to attend Leinster Rugby games every time they play in the RDS. As well as all of that, it had been a pleasure for her to come back and be the President of the OLSC for the past season. She commented that the last time she was President; she could not fulfil the role to the best of her ability because of some health issues. She explained that the role requires a lot of work and even though this season had not been the easiest, she was extremely proud of what the Committee had managed to achieve and she could walk away with her head held high knowing that absolutely everything she did throughout the season was the BEST she could have done. Every step along the way and every decision was made with OLSC members and Leinster Rugby supporters in mind. She re-iterated that it was an absolute pleasure and an honour to be the President of the Official Leinster Supporters Club again and wished the incoming OLSC Committee and new President Laura Lysaght the very best of luck for the coming season.

Treasurer's Report

David Ryan presented the OLSC's annual accounts as of the 31st May 2019. He informed the meeting that the club continues to have a healthy balance. The club's assets remain strong with a special savings account for the development of a club house at the time of the meeting being €10,000. This will be used for a new club house development when the RDS site is redeveloped. The projected opening balance is €3,698.54.

Hugh Hagan proposed the acceptance of the annual accounts and Eugene Canavan seconded the motion. The accounts were accepted unanimously.

Motions Tabled

There were no motions received for consideration at the AGM.

Election for 2018/2019 Committee

The following season ticket holders were nominated to serve on the OLSC Committee for the 2019/2020 season:

Laura Lysaght – standing re-election having served on the 2018/19 committee

David Ryan – standing re-election having served on the 2018/19 committee

Eugene Canavan – standing re-election having served on the 2018/19 committee

Alan Mooney – standing re-election having served previously on the committee

Liz Power – standing for re-election having served previously on the committee

Denise O'Brien – new nomination

Hazel Brown – new nomination

Mary Carroll – new nomination

Eoin Kilkenny – new nomination

The candidates were allowed to address the meeting.

Following a ballot of the season ticket holders present at the AGM, the seven people elected to the OLSC Committee were as follows:

Laura Lysaght – President

Hazel Brown

Mary Carroll

Liz Power

Eoin Kilkenny

Alan Mooney

David Ryan

Update from Leinster

Kevin Quinn, Head of Commercial Marketing for Leinster Rugby addressed the group he was joined by Marcus Ó Buachalla Head of Communications.

Kevin gave a description of his role, what Leinster Rugby office does and how it operates. He made the following points:

- The commercial and marketing department team has grown over the past season to 10 people.
- Leinster Rugby's sponsors and partners are a key stakeholder group contributing to Leinster Rugby's ongoing success
- RDS Redevelopment - the proposal on the RDS redevelopment was required to be submitted by the IRFU and Leinster Rugby along with other provinces to the IRFU and a decision should be received before the end of this year.

Bank of Ireland will continue as our sponsor until 2023. The team also worked with six Premium Partners BearingPoint, Laya Healthcare, Energia, Guinness, adidas and Lifestyle and these are locked in as sponsors for the next few years giving short to medium-term financial planning stability.

Kevin referred to Leo Cullen's and the team's repeated positive comments about supporters efforts in this season's Sea of Blue.

He thanked the outgoing OLSC Committee for their phenomenal work over the course of the season.

Questions and Answers –

There were various questions from the AGM attendees for Marcus and Kevin mostly around RDS redevelopment and Leinster Rugby merchandise. The Q&A ended with a round of applause for the Leinster Rugby representatives.

Approval of the 2019/2020 Committee

The meeting formally approved the committee (proposed by Robert Donaldson and seconded by Jarrod Bromley) and Laura Lysaght was confirmed as President as the only person who had put herself forward for that position among the committee.

Any Other Business

Aisling O'Connor thanked everyone for attending and for voting in the election.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded.