

Birr Town AFC Annual General Meeting – Wednesday May 24th, 2023 Dooly's Hotel

Attendees : There were 35 people in attendance with 34 being confirmed members and one member of the public.

Agenda Item No. 1 – Chairman's Opening Address

Geoff Liffey addressed the meeting and welcomed and thanked all for coming noting there was a great turnout. It was proposed that as there had been some sad bereavements over the 12 months since the last AGM that the attendees would stand and observe a minute's silence. After same Geoff noted that it had been a great season across the Club at both adult and schoolboys/girls levels. Many squads had seen successful campaigns and we had good player representation on the MSL underage squads. Ronan Mungan would update the meeting fully on same in his address.

Geoff continued to pay tribute to both John Corboy and Liam Lennon who stood down from their positions of Chairman and Honorary Secretary respectively over the course of the year. Both had given enormous service to the Club which we were grateful for and would hopefully continue to do so in the future. Geoff also acknowledged the other current Committee members and thanked them for their contributions and support over the year and looked forward to working with them and any new members after the night's vote. The importance of our Lotto was noted and PJ Hctor, Liam Lennon and Willie Coughlan were all thanked for keeping it going for us. The revenue generated here is vital for the Club and this would be illustrated when we discuss the Club accounts in due course. Geoff thanked Morgan Colohan and Tom Shalloe for the great work they were doing regarding our pitches and having them presented to the highest standard always. We have hosted some games recently as a neutral venue and our facilities have been praised and recognised on social media which is great to hear. The Community School was acknowledged as regards providing training facilities during the year and Sylvia Kennedy was thanked for her diligence in collecting the training monies from the managers all season round and liaising with the school as regards training times and our account. The outside groups who hire our facilities during the year were also acknowledged being the Over 40s lads who play every Tuesday night and the Walking Football lads who play on Mondays.

The contribution of our Managers/Coaches was also recognised and the Club appreciates everything they do in this regard. We would be nowhere without them and hopefully all will come back on board for the new season with any extra volunteers we may get. Darragh King was thanked for his services and help over the year and in particular for the provision of the tea/coffee trailer on Saturday matchdays and on other match occasions. It is a great facility to be able to offer. Our various sponsors over the different youth and adult teams were also thanked. Gary Seery and his constant availability whenever needed was mentioned and this is a great resource for us to have. The great work being done at schoolgirls level across the various teams was acknowledged and all our managers/coaches were doing great work. The overseeing of much of this work by Lisa Byrne and Keith Hanniffy was especially appreciated and we are very lucky to have them in that regard. The CCFL and MSL were thanked for providing structures and competitions for our various teams over the season and

for providing support and assistance whenever required.

Finally Geoff briefly updated the members on some of the Committee's ongoing work and future plans. The Club have received a Sports Capital Grant in respect of upgrading the Astroturf dressingrooms and we hope to start work shortly with a preferred bidder in place to begin the works. We are also going to access grant monies to improve our carpark facilities, to have proper car parking spaces marked out and painted and a safe walkway marked out for the kids between our Clubhouse and the Astroturf. We are in the final stages of instructing an expert as regards applying for planning permission to have floodlights installed on our Bottom Pitch. This will be a great amenity once installed and will help us improve our offering. We are constantly looking at things around the club and drawing up and implementing policies and processes. We want to be clear and consistent in all that we do and build trust through transparency with our members.

In conclusion Geoff mentioned the upcoming Ordinary Committee Members election to take place at the end of the meeting and he wished each candidate the best of luck in same.

Agenda Item No. 2 – Approval of the 2022 AGM Minutes

Geoff Liffey introduced the 2022 AGM Minutes noting that same had been circulated in advance of the AGM via our social media channels and that paper copies of the Agenda with the Minutes therein were also available in the room. Most people seemed to have a paper copy in their possession. It was asked if anything arose on the Minutes or were people satisfied with them. Nobody raised an issue and on asking the room the Minutes were proposed by John Bergin and seconded by Andy Murphy and were adopted and approved accordingly. No matters arising stemmed from the Minutes either.

Agenda Item No. 3 – Annual Report by Secretary

Ronan Mughan addressed the meeting and gave the following report :-

Good evening everyone. My report is in two stages beginning with our schoolboys/schoolgirls seasonal review and I'm indebted to our Underage Secretary John Cahill for collating the following information. The season for our underage teams kicked off on Saturday August 20th 2022 and it will come to a close on this weekend, on Saturday the 27th of May 2023, with the Girls u16 Shield Final. Over the course of the season we have fielded a total of 11 Boys teams and 6 Girls teams, ranging from u9s up to u16s. A season that lasted 41 weeks, saw us provide 377 games of football, 1107 training sessions, we have scored 877 goals so far (hopefully to be further increased by the u16 girls on Friday!!), provided 2 Summer Camps for the boys and girls of the Club and started an Academy for 5 to 8 year olds to help them begin their soccer journey. Along the way, we had a very enjoyable and indeed successful season that saw us make the breakthrough at National level for the first time in a long time with the u13 boys and u12 girls reaching the last 32 of the SFAI Cups and the u14 Girls reaching the last 16 of the SFAI Trophy. Hopefully next season we can build on this and continue to push to be at the business end of these competitions. In our own domestic League, The MSL, we had a few successes collecting League titles at u14 and u15 boys, a Plate title at u16 and u11 boys, Europa wins at u11 and u12 boys, as noted previously our u16 girls are in the Shield Final and the u12 girls were League runners up. While it's always nice

to be on the winner's podium we as a club value every team that represents the Club and hopefully next season we will be naming them on the honours list as well. Great achievements all and well done to all for their season's work.

On the Representative front, we had players reach and play on the MSL squads. We had two players reach the Boys Kennedy Cup squad for this summer's tournament in Daniel Corboy and Peter Spain. We also have one girl on the Gaynor Cup Squad for this summer's Tournament in Aoibhinn Slattery and we wish all 3 of them the best of luck, We know they will do the Club proud. We had 2 girls on the u12 MSL squad in Rachel Lyons and Aoibheann Dooley who played in the interleague finals and brought back 2 ALL IRELAND MEDALS and 1 on the u16 girls Squad in Laia Urresola who unfortunately were beaten. We also had 3 girls travel to Blackpool to represent the MSL, with 1 girl, Laia Urresola again, scoring the winner in the u16 final to claim the Cup for the MSL. Ceola Scully and Cara McLoughlin represented us on the U 13 MSL Girls team very capably as well. A final mention here to our U 12 girls player Rachel Wynne who has blitzed defences up and down competitions all season long and succeeded in equalling and then surpassing Ellen Regan's 39 goal record. This was a fabulous achievement and is worth noting. Well done to all these players and we hope they will go on and continue to represent the club with distinction.

The common denominator in all of last season was, and still is, the continued committed dedication of the most important people we have in this Club, Our Coaches. They have continued the great work that they do week in week out, organising training, matches, transport, continued development of the players under their watch, first in last out every training session, the only people who can't say, you know what it's too wet/cold/ late, I don't feel like going, because without them all of the above falls flat on it's face. On behalf of myself and the club, I thank you for all that you have done and all I hope you will continue to do, to provide football for all the young players of the surrounding areas and hopefully we will give you even greater support and tools to carry out your great work next season.

We intend to continue offering football development courses to all our coaches and any other course they feel they need to do, to further their coaching credentials for the coming season, whether it be 1st Aid, coaching badges etc, feel free to suggest to us what you would like to see offered.

One final note and I know it's a big ask, I have my begging hat on, Andy Murphy has done sterling work with the Academy on a Saturday afternoon and it will be a huge benefit for our club going forward but if anyone can find time to give maybe 1 hour, even every 2 weeks to come up and coach at it, it would be hugely appreciated most of all by the kids themselves who are showing great commitment and dedication down there. Thank you one and all, now enjoy the Summer, recharge and lets go Again

Thanks very much for that comprehensive update John. Some great work being done at underage level across all our squads and I would echo again John's tribute to our managers/coaches and various matchday helpers as none of this works without them. Hopefully they will all be back with us next season again and we are always on the look out for new blood to supplement our management panel so please don't be afraid to make contact and come into us. Every journey has to start somewhere.

It falls to me now to update the meeting on our three adult CCFL teams and their progress during the year. I must confess I felt a bit of pressure on reading the totality of achievement at

underage level but I'm relieved and indeed delighted to report that we have had a very successful year so far with the promise of hopefully more to come.

First up are the U-19s who acquitted themselves with distinction both on and indeed off the pitch all season long under the stewardship of Tom Shalloe and Joe Scully. This squad as most of you are aware has been sadly affected by bereavements over the course of the season causing them to come together and rally around each other all the more. The lads represented themselves, their families and the Club perfectly no matter the occasion, sad or glad over the season and we are very proud of them. The lads played in Division 1 of the U 19 league and produced some great soccer over the year resulting in a 100% win record in the league. They entered the playoffs thereafter and ended up playing a strong and determined Stradbally Town outfit in a 2 legged final. They emerged from the first leg away with a hard-fought 1-1 draw in an intimidating atmosphere. During the intervening week a rallying call was put out to the club and our supporters and there was a great turnout for the home second leg the following week. The lads gave it everything and emerged 3-0 victors on the day winning 4-1 on aggregate and cementing their position as the best team in that league. The celebrations were long and plentiful and a great night was had by all bringing joy and hope at the conclusion of what was a very challenging season Our hope now is to keep this team together and provide as many of them as may want it with a coherent pathway into senior level soccer as they are the future of the club. Thanks again to both Tom and Joe for their sterling dedicated work all season long and the eventual title success was just reward for both your efforts. James Hayes also helped out at the start of the season and I'd just like to note the contribution of Ricky Fitzsimons with 17 goals over the season which was a fine effort.

Moving on then to the Reserves who were and indeed still are managed by Ross Mitchell. Great success to report here again as Ross very capably steered them to the CCFL Division 3 title. Its worth noting that Ross was unassisted on the sideline but that didn't deter him one bit from training the lads to compete manfully all season culminating in the aforementioned league title win. There is a great mix of old and young in the squad and a great camaraderie between the lads. They played great soccer and enjoyed doing so and provided the fans with some good entertainment over the course of the season. They were competing neck and neck with our local rivals Highfield Utd and just managed to pull clear at the end of the season helped in no small way by an excellent 3-0 win over the same opposition at home on March 26th. Pursuant to a good suggestion from Liam Lennon and taking into account certain sad events around that time in the town the Club ran a gate collection in aid of Pieta House for that particular game which was very generously supported by the townspeople no matter who they were shouting for, The lads then went on to secure the league on April 9th with an utterly convincing 8-0 victory away to a Ballinahown B team who were probably on the beach already but had to be beaten all the same. The highlight was a Derek McLoughlin hat-trick and that helped to add to the spice of the year long battle for top scorer supremacy between Derek and Niall Bradley. Ross reliably informs me that Niall just about got over the line in that battle with a very creditable 23 goals. Overall the lads finished up with 37 pts out of a possible 42 and they now march on into Division 2 for the new season. The Club is pleased to note that Ross intends staying on in his managerial role and despite some possibly creaking legs and indeed potentially creaking relationships most of the lads are willing to come back and give it a go again next season which is great to hear. Well done again Ross and best of luck in Division 2.

Lastly we have our Jako sponsored First Team managed by John Bergin and very capably assisted by his son Ronan who has been unable to fulfill a playing role so far this season

given that he has been recuperating from an unfortunate ACL injury. Thankfully the rehab has gone according to plan and we expect to see Ronan firing on all cylinders again in the very near future. I want to put on record the Club's gratitude to John for taking on the role as for various reasons the contenders for the position fell away during the recruitment process last Summer leaving us potentially managerless but for John accepting the role. The circumstances were not ideal and its fair to say that the lads found the Senior Division a hard graft this year. Results were not ideal but it was notable that in a good few games the team just didnt get the rub of the green whether on disciplinary decisions or the simple fact of the ball just refusing to go into the net. Obviously Ronan's injury and it being the period before Hubert coming back to us were contributors here also. To John's and the team's credit the heads did not go down however, Alan Corboy and Gary Seery helped out with some sessions and drills and the level of performance visibly ramped up over the last few months. Our league position was secured in the division and as most of you are hopefully aware we have recently embarked on a thrilling run in the Counties Cup and are now contesting the final of same against Monksland from Athlone over in Tullamore on Saturday June 3rd next. The highlight of this run was late free-kick winners in the Quarter Final and Semi Final from Nicky Molloy and Johnny Corboy respectively and they will live long in the memory of those present to witness them. The lads are flat out in training now preparing for the big day and we know they are going to acquit themselves very well and hopefully their name is indeed on the cup. I want to thank John again for his efforts over the year and hopefully same will bear fruit on Saturday week.

From a personal point of view my job as acting Club Secretary and CCFL liaison is made much easier by the calibre and manner of the managers of all three adult teams. I am there to support them and try and iron out the various issues which may arise over a long season both on and off the pitch and in fairness we are in a good place at present as can be seen from this report. I look forward to continuing to work with them and indeed any new manager who may come on board in due course.

Finally a couple of late Fogra as our GAA cousins would say. Firstly we have been allocated 200 tickets by the CCFL to sell for the Counties Cup Final. They are retailing at 10e each and I'm grateful to John Bergin for collecting and bringing same back to us when he represented us at a Press Night last Monday in the Bridge House Hotel in Tullamore for the forthcoming Cup Final. We have the tickets here tonight so please come forward at the end and we will get you looked after if you want to get in ahead of the rush. We will be providing details on our social media in the next day or so of other purchasing opportunities for fans. Its on the bank holiday weekend as you know and the Saturday evening at that so I would implore the support to come out as it always does and get behind the lads.

Secondly and lastly we want to formally announce that it is our intention to run three Senior teams next season and we will be applying to the CCFL in that regard when the time comes. The plan is to have our standard-bearing First Team and then Tom Shalloe and Joe Scully are coming on board to help manage a second team which we hope to have entered in Division 1. This will be formed in the main from their successful U-19 team this season supplanted by a bit of experience from other lads who are around but may not have been playing for whatever reason over the last few seasons . I know Tom is out actively recruiting at present and hopes to be well strengthened in time for the new season. This harks back to my earlier comment about providing a pathway to senior level soccer for our U 19s, to keep them involved and active and hopefully pushing to perform and strive even for a First team place. I think as a club that we should be striving to get as many possible players out as we can playing soccer

and not having them drift away to rival teams or from the sport altogether. Finally then Ross will be taking what will effectively be our Third team into Division 2 and the beauty of this plan is to facilitate Ross' lads as well that they can go again if all feeling up to it and not feel that they are potentially blocking younger lads coming through or that they are creating an issue. As a club we have a duty as well to provide these lads with soccer and let them at it for as long as they want. We are still in the process of putting this plan together and will update everyone in due course.

Thanks everyone and particularly my fellow Committee members for making me feel so welcome since I was co-opted just after Christmas. I am learning the whole time and have good people around me. Its an excellent club that we have here and the intention now is to drive forward both on and off the pitch so that we can provide a product that we all can be proud of. Thank you.

Agenda Item No. 4 –Finance Update by Treasurer

PJ Hoctor began by thanking Liam Lennon, Willie Coughlan and Andy Murphy for their help with the Lotto every week. Its thankless work having to be there and ready every Monday night. The Club needs to get others involved as its wrong to have just 6 people in charge of the tickets. People need to support the Lotto or even buy tickets, some don't which is wrong. PJ thanked our coaches/managers and groundspeople and John Bergin for his help with the accounts and in getting them finalised by RSM accountants for us. He further thanked the Committee members for all that they do and everyone who was involved in the raising of funds via open days, bake-sales, raffles etc. He especially thanked John Nettleship for all his support over the year and in particular with the managing of our U-16 Boys squad.

The yearly accounts were next up and paper copies had been circulated around the room. There were no immediate questions. John Bergin noted that the Lotto net income was € 43,754 which is huge and our online sales had generated € 20,000 odd of that since last August alone. PJ Hoctor noted that our online sales did drop, perhaps by up to 40%, when the € 30,000 jackpot was won. Overall the cash sales are down and we need to get them driven up again. John Bergin stated that overall we were in a very healthy financial state.

John Corboy queried the differential between the FAI Summer Camp income of € 10,240 in 2022 compared with just € 1,834 this year for 2023. PJ explained the big sum for 2022 was because our own Club Summer Camp money was included in that whereas it was separated out in the 2023 figure. Barry Hayes contributed that there was very little money made on our own Summer Camp and Geoff agreed stating that maybe € 200 was the height of it. PJ explained that coaches had to be paid, there was a bill for the Open Day medals, there was € 1,158 due to Galactico Sports and this comprised mainly of supplies to include footballs, space markers and hurdles etc. Geoff noted that the FAI Summer Camp was a better runner financially and our own Camp doesn't have the same moneymaking ethos. Everything was bought out of what came into the club. John Corboy stated that we charged an extra € 5 per head than the FAI Camp yet somehow we came out with less. John Cahill stated this was easily explained in that we provided an extra hours coaching and fun for the kids every day compared to the 3 hour FAI Camp. Lisa Byrne noted that when her kids did the various soccer camps they always said the Club Camp was better than the FAI Camp and whilst not much money may be made at least the kids all had their Birr Town gear replenished for the new season. John Cahill said that we actually made double what the FAI Camp made but we

chose to spend it on supplies and coaches. Lisa said that in her opinion it was well worth running our own Club Camp. Dawn Guilfoyle said that both her sons did each camp over the years and our own Club Camp was far better in their views, there was better football and training and the kids felt they learned more.

PJ and John Bergin stated that they had studied the accounts and the differential between the 2 years was readily explainable and they had no concerns over same.

Barry Hayes queried the expenditure figure of € 2,868 for Trophies Medals & Events. Geoff outlined the costs associated with our Marian Hall Awards Night and then the Open Day prizes during Vintage Week. The plan for the future was to set a yearly budget to prepare for these outgoings in advance and to let our managers know that we have a kitty and things like buses and pitch maintenance can be covered also. PJ wanted to clarify that the bus bill of € 1,800 was not included in this year's accounts and John Bergin confirmed that we have a general accrual of € 5,000 to cover this. John Corboy noted that we had to buy extra medals for the kids teams as well during the season.

PJ explained our sponsorship income of € 4,308. Tom Shalloe got in some monies and we made money on the open day and our bake-sale/raffle event. Andy got in € 2,800 odd and Stuart Devine came in with € 928 for jersies. John Bergin confirmed PJ's figures. Barry Hayes queried if the Lotto accordingly was the Club's main income. Both Geoff and PJ confirmed that it was.

Agenda Item No. 5 – General Motions

Geoff referred to Stuart Devine's motion to have the First Team Manager position advertised in local press and online and an interview process to follow upon application. He asked Stuart if he wished to speak on same or was he happy that it was self-explanatory. Liam Lennon stated that this was not really required as it was something that the Club always did over the years in any event, We did the advertising as a matter of routine so the facility is already there. Geoff put that to the floor that unless there were any objections there was no requirement to vote on the motion so. There were no objections.

Geoff then outlined his own motion regarding the proposed rotation schedule for Committee Members with each having to do 3 years before going up for election again. 4 members would go up each year and they would either be contested or not. The 4 would be evenly split between office-holders and Ordinary Members. Geoff then read out the 3 year schedule.

Barry Hayes interjected to query why he got no notification of the recent EGM. Geoff stated that this was due to simple oversight as we had mainly advertised it on our social media. The EGM outcome had been publicized since and it states in the Minutes that anyone who may take an issue with same or anything that occurred therein would have the opportunity to motion for the AGM if they wished to challenge anything. Ronan Mugan queried off John Corboy if Barry Hayes was one of the 3 or 4 people John had referred to during the EGM earlier back in April as not having got sufficient notice of it and being very disappointed that they could not attend. John clarified that one was his own sister Caroline and he referred to 3 other people also but not by name. In any event Barry Hayes was not mentioned by John as being one of those people.

As this motion would insert further changes into our Club Constitution it had to be voted on

at the meeting. Geoff proposed a hand vote and noted that 2/3 of members present and entitled to vote would be required to carry the motion. The hand vote took place with the required 2/3 vote being clearly visible and the motion was carried accordingly.

Agenda Item No. 6 - Election of Officers

Geoff proposed that as per our Club Constitution it is necessary for Committee Members who have been co-opted since the last AGM be ratified at the next AGM. Accordingly the 3 names of Geoff Liffey, Ronan Mugan and Erin Byrne were proposed for ratification by hand vote and a clear majority was found in favour of same.

Geoff then explained the election process to date. Nomination forms had been sent out and 10 people were running for 6 Ordinary Member positions. It was explained that the voting would be by secret ballot on the voting sheets which had been circulated to all. Everyone was entitled to vote for as many or as few as they liked but any more than 6 votes on a form would see the form deemed spoiled and invalid. Sean Maher and Dawn Guilfoyle were acceptable to all to do the vote counting and verification and PJ Hctor would supervise the count. Tom Shalloe announced at this stage that he was withdrawing his candidacy and the field was down to 9 candidates accordingly.

Liam Lennon asked to speak and announced that it was his intention now to withdraw from the voting process. He had served the Club for over 31 years as a volunteer and enjoyed every bit of it. It was time to move on and he had been in contact with Andy Murphy over another potential role that would help him retain an interest and an involvement in the Club and he would follow this up later with Andy. Liam wished all his fellow candidates well with the vote. He stated that selling the Lotto tickets was testing and he was standing back from that now and he hoped we would be able to sell his allocation in the future. He wished everyone well for the future and especially John Bergin and the Senior First Team in the upcoming Counties Cup Final. Finally Liam congratulated all the club teams at every level who were successful this season.

The election took place by secret ballot thereafter and the votes were counted and verified by Sean, Dawn and PJ

The result of the vote was the election of the following 6 candidates, in no particular order, as the new Ordinary Committee Members :- Alan Hoare, John Bergin, Theresa Wynne, Derval Scully, John Nettleship and Sylvia Kennedy.

The meeting concluded and Geoff thanked all for coming.

Proposed :

Signed : _____

Seconded :

Geoff Liffey

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