



# OLD IPSWICHIAN

## **The Old Ipswichian Club and Ipswich School – Securing the Club’s Future**

December 2023

Dear Old Ipswichian

Before the Old Ipswichian Club’s next AGM on 31st January 2024, I want to bring all members up to speed with some important developments which will have a bearing on the future success of the Club and its working relationship with Ipswich School. To comply with its constitution, the Club must observe certain formalities to bring about some necessary changes which I explain below. As you read on, please be reassured that the formalities and rule changes proposed are very much ‘behind the scenes’; the Club will continue to function as normal during and after the planned transition.

Since February 2022, your committee has been engaged in ongoing discussions with the School. These have focused on:

- Securing the Club’s future
- The Club’s membership
- The Club’s subscription income and finances
- The administration of the Club’s activities
- The Club’s obligations to its members

Your committee, on behalf of the membership, prior to endorsement at the AGM, has reached an understanding and agreement with Ipswich School about how the future of the Club should be secured which we unanimously recommend to you.

### **Security**

In recent years, many school alumni groups have shifted from being entities largely independent of their schools to becoming increasingly integrated with their alma maters. It has been clear throughout our discussions that Ipswich School wants to foster close, supportive and lasting relationships with its alumni. In times of political and economic uncertainty, it seems wise for the Club to strive to achieve a mutually beneficial relationship with the School to ensure the Club’s long-term security and prosperity.

### **Membership**

Historically, membership of the Club has been dependent on a subscription paid by some parents, but not all, collected over a student’s final terms at school. Most leavers have joined the Club, but not all. Committee and School believe that membership of the Club should be open to all leavers of good standing with the School, recommended by the Headteacher.

## **Income and finances**

The annual income collected from leavers' parents each year is not enough to cover the full range of the Club's activities. For some years, it has been the case that the Club cannot function and honour its commitments to existing members without the generous support of the School. It is proposed that from 1st September 2024, the School will cease to collect subscriptions on behalf of the Club. The Club's activities will be funded from then on solely by the School apart from certain events, such as annual dinners, for which members already pay. Part of the proposed financial settlement between the Club and the School will be the transfer to the Club of a significant sum raised through subscriptions already collected. These funds will be invested, with professional advice, and safeguarded by the Club committee, in case at any date in the future the Club should need to once again function independently.

## **Administration**

In recent years, the School, through the Development Office, has played an increasingly important and direct role in the provision of the Club's programme of activities. Legislation and regulations covering everything from data protection to health & safety have made the Club dependent on the professional input provided by the School. The Club committee recognises that its role has changed from executive to non-executive. A new committee structure and programme of meetings with the School starting in September 2024 will ensure the smooth running of Club events in the future.

## **Obligations to Members**

Central to our discussions has been the need, recognised by Club and School, to honour our commitment to existing life members and the importance of maintaining and protecting the Club's core activities: the Ipswich and London dinners, the publication of the OI Journal and a planned programme of regular reunions, sporting and social events. The committee, on behalf of the membership, has negotiated a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the School to safeguard the Club's programme and to ensure good communication between Club and School.

## **Rule Changes**

In order for the changes described above to be implemented, the Club will need to follow certain formalities in order to comply with its rules. Prior to the AGM on 31st January 2024, members will be informed in detail about proposed changes to the Club's rules. I am most grateful to our President, Sir Neil Garnham, who has been closely involved in this necessary redrafting and general tidying-up of the rules. Changes to the rules will be recommended and proposed by the committee at the AGM and, we hope, adopted by a majority of voting members present.

Assuming all the proposed rule changes are endorsed by the membership, the Club will enter a new relationship with the School from 1st September 2024.

- all leavers of good standing will automatically become Old Ipswichians
- the collection of subscriptions will cease
- the running of the Club's activities will be 'contracted out' to the School and run by the Development Office

- a new committee structure and pattern of meetings will ensure close communication between Club and School
- the programme of activities provided by the School on behalf of the Club will be carefully monitored by the Club committee
- significant financial reserves will ensure the long-term security of the Club

The AGM will provide an opportunity for further explanation of the proposed changes. In the meanwhile, if you have any questions, please email me on [oldipswichians@ipswich.school](mailto:oldipswichians@ipswich.school) and I will reply via the website to ensure that the maximum number of people understand why these changes are necessary and timely.

With every good wish

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas Allen". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

**Nicholas Allen**

Chairman

Old Ipswichian Club