

**Waitakere City Athletic Club Inc**  
**Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting**  
**1 July 2018**



On behalf of the Club Committee, I present this report for the 2017/2018 year:

**Committee / Leadership / Governance**

Following last year's Annual General Meeting, I was approached to take on the position of Chairman, while Clare Leon-Brown was asked to be Secretary. Clare and I assumed those roles as the year went along, although Clare eventually had to step aside because of family and work commitments. We thank her for the contribution she made. Of the committee elected last year, John Maka subsequently moved clubs with his family, while Peter and Ririn Grogan found they were unable to attend meetings. The remaining elected members of the committee have been very active and effective in their various identified roles and have generously given their time and talents.

Andrew Scott and Carl Gruebner have continued to represent the Club on the Trust Management Committee (TMC), while Fiona Yelas and Carl are the Club-appointed Trustees of the Rugby/Athletics (R/A) Trust. The TMC is still chaired by Cam Stokes, but he has communicated his intention to step down within the next month or so. Malcolm Marshall has also indicated he will resign at the Rugby Club's AGM later in the year, and they will need to replace him accordingly. Kel Ediss is the other Rugby representative on the TMC. Malcolm Marshall replaced the long-serving Rex Davy on the R/A Trust during the year. As noted last year, Rex has been with the Trust from its inception and was a key man in the negotiations leading up to the establishment of the clubrooms in 2004.

I wish to express warm appreciation of the members of the outgoing club committee:

- Andrew Scott is a treasurer other Clubs would kill for. Despite a busy professional and personal schedule, Andrew continues to provide us with financial reporting and advice of the highest standard. His work in applying for grants and in liaising with the

Trustees of our associated Athletes Development Trusts is particularly appreciated. In his role as an Athletics representative on the TMC, Andrew helped to back up the administrative roles Carl plays there, while bringing a broader perspective on the business activities of the R/A Trust. He also carried most of the burden in the renewal of the clubroom liquor licence.

- Fiona Yelas and Marty Mullins are the key people in the Club when it comes to club nights and interclub competition. Without them, nothing would happen in those areas – and after all, that’s what we’re here for. Given the time and energy they expend, it is understandable that Fiona and Marty wish to hand over the running of the “littlies” events from this year, while continuing their role with the older children and senior athletes. Fiona remains a delegate on the children’s side and a Trustee on the RA Trust.
- Rachael Keereweer is the welcoming face of the Club for registrations and uniform sales. The launch of the Club’s new website is one of our significant achievements this year, and largely Rachael’s doing. We will continue to build the content on the website and to make even greater use of Facebook as a key communications tool.
- Rob Davis has enjoyed further success in his own coaching this year, acknowledged widely for his expertise in the high jump. It was Rob who introduced us to Joshua Hawkins, who added a new dimension last season, working with a group of keen hurdlers on the stadium track. Rob’s contribution to our Club will be formally acknowledged later in this meeting.
- Despite the launch of a new business venture, Rob Taylor has found time to build the group of athletes in his training group and is a principal figure in the cross-club cluster activities that have emerged as part of the way forward for our code. Rob has shown great sensitivity in dealing with the off-track needs of his charges when required. As he concentrates on his coaching, Rob is stepping back from direct involvements on track nights. He will also be replaced by Rachael as a club delegate, after representing the Club capably for some years.
- Derek Williams has continued to give freely of his time in looking after the facilities and equipment side of our operations and in liaising with schools using the track. He has signalled that he will be pulling back from the schools liaison aspect in the next year, so the incoming committee will need to be aware of this. Derek is modest about the contribution he has made not only to our Club, but also to athletics on the wider scene. His name has recently been forwarded by Auckland President Murray McKinnon for inclusion on the list of long-serving contributors held by Athletics New Zealand.
- As Club President, Carl Gruebner has been well occupied in a number of areas – particularly in the week-to-week dealings of the TMC, but also in his R/A Trustee role and liaison with The Trusts Arena on bookings and wider issues. He has also continued to fill in as Chairman when I have had other commitments or been delayed in getting to meetings – and has on occasions acted as the fall-back minutes

secretary. In the coming year, Carl hopes to devote some time to updating the Honours Board and photos of Life Members, while considering the display of our memorabilia.

- Helen Gruebner has continued to fill the position of Health & Safety Officer from outside the committee. Helen and Carl intend to work together on further developing some aspects of the Health & Safety policy and procedures.
- Like Helen, Paul Lunny is not a current member of our committee, but gives his time and expertise in technical/electronic areas. Paul is the go-to person when it comes to photo timing. He has continued to make improvements in the way the equipment is stored and maintained – recently liaising with Auckland Centre personnel regarding the cleaning of lenses and recalibration necessary to keep things up to standard at our respective venues.
- Bill Booth's ongoing role as a skilled coach of Club athletes is acknowledged. His mentoring of his son Aaron resulted in significant success during the year, albeit that a final chance to qualify for the Commonwealth Games was frustrated by injury.

### **Financial Matters (including Membership)**

Andrew will shortly present his report on the Club's financial position, as well as non-financial measures of performance, including membership data.

Once again, the Club's accounts record a relatively steady situation. The TMC representatives have continued to bring to our attention however the below-par results in the Rugby/Athletics bar operation – raising the future possibility that our Club may need to advance funds (as it has in the past) if other sources of income cannot be secured – something the incoming committee will need to take into account.

Our Club values the ongoing support of the Douglas Charitable Trust (following Sir Graeme's passing in 2016) which gives the Club some freedom that we would not have if we were relying on income from registrations and trading alone.

### **Competition / Achievement / Events**

The 2017/2018 season brought pleasing results for many of our athletes, as Fiona will later confirm and detail in her report.

Waitakere City continues to be a force in children's athletics in Auckland, while senior athletes have achieved significant results at national and representative level. The part in this played by the two Robs, Bill Booth and coaches outside the Club is gratefully acknowledged. Hopefully our hosting of cluster training, promotion of events based on that, and a renewed emphasis on senior club nights (to now be held on Thursdays) can build on the success. As mentioned earlier, the hurdles coaching of Joshua Hawkins has added to the mix on offer. We hope to repeat this and possibly extend opportunities further for a wider range of athletes.

This year, following a well attended clubrooms-based prizegiving for our juniors, we combined our senior prizegiving with a committee (and families) dinner at Tony's Restaurant in Henderson. This gave us a rare chance to come together as a core group, and the concept was well received by those who attended. Thanks, as always, to Fiona and Rachael for putting these functions together.

We want to continue building the social side. Towards this, we again had the kitchen and bar open on Tuesday nights during the summer season, underwriting this with a modest contribution to the TMC to ensure that the wages costs for bar staff were fully covered. We are planning a quiz night (with related entertainment) later this year, based on an idea from Rob Davis. Thank you to Rachael, in particular, for offering to give her time and to use her contacts to follow up on this.

We have a unique advantage in the support our athletes receive from the Athletes Development Trusts. We greatly appreciate the work of the Trustees, Paul Longdill, Howard Baker and Bryan Heron. Andrew will expand on the details of grants made in his part of the reporting.

### **Rights / Access / Usage of Facilities**

Carl recently initiated a meeting with the Stadium Trust Chairman, Tim Livingstone, TTA management, R/A Trust and TMC members to discuss the apparent non-functioning of the Leisure Precinct Co-Ordination Working Group (LPCWG) which was intended to include representation of Rugby and Athletics in the bookings process for outdoor events. There is a move to review and update aspects of the Charter documentation under which we operate, principally to ensure that consultation takes place in the way envisaged, especially given changed circumstances since the Charter was put in place.

In the meantime, some practical steps are underway with a view to relieving some of the conflicts that can cause frustrations – including expansion of Carpark 1 (to protect space for Rugby/Athletics users when large scale events take place in the Arena) and provision of more lighting for rugby training on the upper fields.

A possible move of the joint Rugby/Athletics clubrooms to the grandstand has been a separate (although related) matter of discussion. Our committee has agreed to this in principle, noting that such a change would bring us closer to other parts of our operation including spectator seating, photo timing and gear storage. In addition there would be greater autonomy for Rugby/Athletics, particularly if the enhanced carparking is provided. Discussions with the Rugby Club and TTA are ongoing.

Fortunately there were no hard-wearing concert events on the outdoor track over the past year. Football was a regular user over the summer, with some matches televised. There was relatively little disruption to our use of the track, although we campaigned successfully to

have a camera tower moved from near the pole line on the inside of the track to the small embankment outside the track by the back straight.

The NZ Flower and Garden Show held late last year on the upper fields did cause us some access issues. We will endeavour to alleviate these if the event is repeated.

The schedule for outdoor track usage for the next year, in terms of the Charter has been finalised – we will now have Tuesday and Thursday evenings as our nominated times together with Sunday mornings. The indoor track schedule is due for confirmation shortly – it is likely to be rolled over without change.

The TTA has provided improved signage to reinforce the Club's usage rights at the allocated times, although this will now need to be redone to reflect our Thursday use of the stadium track. There are some indications that boot camps and other groups are respecting our rights or, at least, conducting their activities in a way that does not affect us too directly.

### **The future ...**

The cluster concept can be built on. It promises to involve a wider group of athletes with quality training, particularly as they progress from junior to senior ranks. While we are happy to promote our code in a non-partisan way, as the host Club we need to maintain a degree of control and ensure that others do not take advantage of our position and our resources (human and otherwise).

We should always be looking to add to the coaching opportunities we offer – making full use of the facilities including the indoor track and gym. The high performance concept discussed between Peter Grogan and Tony Lafotanoa of the Rugby Club has yet to progress to reality. There is still scope to pursue something like that and to seek funding to support it – although we need to be aware of a wider community base that also needs to be served – ie not just potential elite athletes.

As mentioned earlier, we have the chance to build on the excellent structure for the upgraded website that Rachael has worked to provide for us. Accompanying this, astute use of social media is essential. We all have a part to play there, contributing ideas, images and content.

As also discussed, clubrooms relocation is a real possibility. If it proceeds, we will be working with other parties to make it happen – as we have in the past. We need to ensure that what we get is at least as good as, or hopefully better than what we already have.

We have some interesting opportunities. While working through them, we can look forward to the upcoming season with some confidence.

**Fabian Ukich**

**Chairman**

