



Harleston Magpies Hockey Club  
Strategy & Development Plan – 2018 to 2022

Produced in April 2018

Approved by the Board 16 May 2018

## 1. Executive Summary

- a) A Strategy workshop was held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2018, to which all members and parents of junior members of the Club were invited to discuss the current status of the Club and its activities, as well as to help determine long term future direction. Output from this workshop has been analysed and the **Aim of this document** is to assess the status of the Club, review its Vision, Values and Objectives, update where necessary and produce a medium to long term Strategy and Development Plan to help achieve these Objectives.
- b) It is proposed to amend the **Club Vision (Object)** to :-

*“To provide and develop opportunities, facilities and programmes of activity that enable a life-long interest in hockey and physical activity to flourish, whilst allowing each individual to participate and contribute in a way appropriate to their skills, abilities and personal objectives.”*

in a manner which is consistent with the following **Values** :-

- **Pride and Ownership** - in/of our Club, our teams, our people, our facilities and ways of operating
- **Teamwork** – working together, being supportive, encouraging and making experiences enjoyable
- **Integrity** – doing what is right – openness, fairness and equity, maintaining standards, and championing inclusion and diversity
- **Respect** – recognising and accepting people as individuals, upholding and modelling high standards of behaviour. On the pitch winning and losing with dignity
- **Aspiration** – strive to improve, set stretching targets, recognise achievements. Celebrating success on and off the pitch, winning and losing with dignity

and in doing so, aim to achieve the following high-level **Objectives**

- Provide facilities and opportunities to enable participation, playing and training at social, club and elite standards.
- Ensure that the Club is inclusive, recognises people as individuals and offers a unique family friendly focus and environment.
- Offer young people the chance to learn to play hockey and develop life skills through an inclusive youth development programme.
- Recognise and support the rural community within which the club is located.

*NB – more detailed objectives are set out in section 7.*

- c) A detailed **Development Plan** will be put in place to assist in the achievement of these Objectives. The Development Plan will focus on the key People elements (Playing, Coaching and Umpiring) that will help the Club continue to success, whilst recognising the importance of other enabling factors that are necessary to support Club Members – such as access to first class facilities.
- d) The Board have reviewed and approved this document on 16 May 2018.

**September 2018**

## **2. Key Facts About the Club**

Harleston Magpies Hockey Club is one of the premier hockey clubs in East Anglia. We own our own facilities from which we offer excellent playing opportunities for men, women and children of all abilities from the age of 6 to over 68.

We have a growing membership and run a youth development programme. Our total playing membership is currently just over 480 people. This year we have fielded 13 teams in adult leagues, 2 junior (development) league teams, 12 cup teams from Under 14 years to Over 50's, 6 indoor teams and at least 8 mini hockey teams (U10s & U12s). The Ladies' 1st XI continue to be a competitive side in Conference East of the Investec Womens National League and the Men's 1st XI play in Premier A of the East League.

The Club is currently constituted as an unincorporated association and holds Community Amateur Sports Club status which provides some financial and tax benefits. The club constitution provides for a minimum of 3 Trustees, a Board and an Executive Committee. The Board deals with strategy and policy with the Executive Committee responsible for operational matters. The club is run by volunteers but does pay some coaches on a self-employed basis.

Over the past 40 years the Club has grown steadily, successfully funding and delivering the following major projects:

- Built (and later extended) its clubhouse in 1976
- Bought further grounds in 1982 and secured the freehold of the original hockey field in 2017
- Started Youth Development activities in 1988 both at its own facilities and in local schools.
- Put down a sand-based artificial grass pitch in 1990
- Put down a water-based pitch in 2002 – the first in East Anglia
- Re-carpeted the sand-based pitch in 2006

The Club has a proven desire and ability to plan, fund and sustain major developments to keep the Club at the forefront of East Anglian Hockey. Since 1986 the Club has invested over £1,000,000 in facilities with £350,000 coming from grants and the remainder raised by the Club, its Members and local businesses. All the facilities at the club are owned outright with no outstanding debts.

As hockey has evolved the Club have continued to be able to offer opportunities for all standards and ages resulting in considerable playing success and a vibrant club atmosphere. It is recognised that the Club needs to take stock and set out a clear strategic direction for the future which will focus attention on key development priorities.

## **3. Strategy Workshop**

A Strategy workshop was held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2018 to which all Members and parents of junior Members were invited to discuss the current status of club and its activities and set a long-term future direction for the Club. A proposal for additional facilities in the form of an indoor facility for hockey and other sports was also presented.

The morning session was led by an independent facilitator, Ann Leitch, and was attended by 78 Club Members and parents of junior members. Through group discussion over 600 responses to key questions were recorded. A small group of club members (Chairman, Playing Manager, Club Captains, Youth Strategy Manager, Youth Chairman and Boys Youth Development Officer) undertook the analysis of the responses and produced a summary of the key significant features. This is included in Appendix A.

#### **4. Meetings with Key Stakeholders**

Following the strategy workshop meetings were held with the Director of Health and Leisure at South Norfolk Council, the Strategic Leisure Advisor at Mid Suffolk Council, and the England Hockey East Region Relationship Manager.

These meetings provided a good understanding of the general health, well-being and leisure strategies for the local authorities and the current policy thinking of England Hockey (national governing body). The meetings also provided the opportunity to provide current information about the Club, discuss future potential developments, and gain advice about current trends and future priorities.

#### **5. Key Contextual Information and Data**

Appendix C and Appendix D provide detailed information about the age, gender and geographical spread of the current membership. In summary the following is important:

- Harleston Magpies is a large, successful and forward-thinking hockey club.
- It is located on the Norfolk and Suffolk border in a rural area without major centres of population.
- The major centres of population (Norwich and Ipswich) have strong hockey clubs with access to two artificial turf pitches with a clubhouse adjacent.
- 90% of players live within 20 miles of the club location
- The Club has a strong track record of providing high quality facilities and playing opportunities over many years.
- Harleston Magpies is one of only 10% of hockey clubs nationally that own its artificial turf pitches and other facilities. Many of this 10% do not own two pitches
- There are 458 active playing members from age 6 to 69 with a good balance between male (47%) and female (53%) members.
- Junior players 6-13 years of age account for 45% of the players (59% female; 41% male)
- Only 20% of players are 19-40 years of age (48% female; 52% male).
- Of those playing adult hockey in leagues 48% are female and 52% are male.
- Of those playing adult league hockey 41% are 14-18 years of age (53% female; 47% male).
- There are a further 25 associate members and club officials.

This geographic and demographic data and the location of competing clubs indicates that Harleston Magpies should concentrate its efforts on a sphere of influence within 20 miles travelling distance of the club base at Shortford Heath. In so doing particular account must be taken of the rural, disparate population within this catchment area and the relatively low levels of further education and employment prospects for people within the area (different from Norwich and Ipswich).

Magpies already have excellent facilities and a strong membership, but the club needs to maintain its membership numbers, playing strength and youth development programme to ensure that facilities can be sustainable in the long term (there are significant cyclical costs in resurfacing two pitches every 15 years or so and maintaining good quality clubhouse and ancillary facilities).

There is a clear inter dependence between the youth development programme and the adult hockey playing club. Youth development activities could not function without two good quality pitches, the skills/experience of adult members and the infrastructure of the club. Equally, the quality and range

of facilities would not be sustainable if weekend teams did not include the current level of young people playing (41% are 14 – 18 years of age) as number of teams and revenue would fall.

That this key inter dependence is recognised, understood and accepted by all associated with the club is critical to its future. Working towards this clarity in overall purpose for all strands of club activity is essential to the future health, success and development of Harleston Magpies Hockey club.

Key to achieving this will be:

- Strong and effective leadership;
- Distributed workload amongst many volunteers;
- Clearly stated and upheld common standards, values and norms;
- Well understood and embedded player pathway within the weekend team structure
- Excellent communication of key messages;
- Transparency in club finances, decision making and strategic goals.

## 6. Club Vision and Values

There are existing objects and vision included within the Club Constitution and the Clubs First 2012 - 2017 documentation. These are included in Appendix B.

Taking account of these existing objects and vision together with the analysis of the strategy morning responses a revised vision and a set of values are proposed as follows:

### Club Vision (Object):-

*“To provide and develop opportunities, facilities and programmes of activity that enable a life-long interest in hockey and physical activity to flourish, whilst allowing each individual to participate and contribute in a way appropriate to their skills, abilities and personal objectives.”*

in a manner which is consistent with **Club Values:-**

- **Pride and Ownership** - in/of our Club, our teams, our people, our facilities and ways of operating
- **Teamwork** – working together, being supportive, encouraging and making experiences enjoyable
- **Integrity** – doing what is right – openness, fairness and equity, maintaining standards, and championing inclusion and diversity
- **Respect** – recognising and accepting people as individuals, upholding and modelling high standards of behaviour. On the pitch winning and losing with dignity
- **Aspiration** – strive to improve, set stretching targets, recognise achievements. Celebrating success on and off the pitch.

## 7. Club Objectives

In order to provide focus to achieving the club Vision a more specific group of objectives are set out below:

- i) Ethos: Ensure that the club is family focussed, welcoming, inclusive, recognises the contribution of each person as an individual and upholds common norms, standards, and values.
- ii) Playing Formats: Provide high quality playing formats that recognise a variety of motivations for wanting to take part, ensuring there is an appropriate balance between elite, club and social playing opportunities with all people having an equal chance to participate and achieve.
- iii) Youth Development: Encourage in young people a life-long interest in active lifestyles through participation in hockey, enabling them to realise their potential through a comprehensive youth development programme.
- iv) People: Develop and invest in coaches, umpires and other volunteers, recognising that well trained, skilled and motivated people are the key to successful and enjoyable experiences for all.
- v) Communication and Marketing: Establish and maintain effective communication channels, using appropriate digital tools, both internally, for all connected with the Club, and externally, within the wider community.
- vi) Facilities: Provide excellent facilities that will support the achievement of the vision and aims of the club, ensuring that new and existing facilities are sustainable through strong financial planning and operational management.
- vii) Operation and Management: Ensure the club is led and operated in a business like and professional manner, whilst recognising and valuing that much is achieved through voluntary efforts.
- viii) Community Involvement: Become an integral and valued part of the local community within which the club is located, recognising, and supporting the rural nature of the area.
- ix) Working with Others: Recognise the importance of other stakeholders and partners, including schools, other local sports clubs, sponsors, governing bodies, local authorities, other funders and local organisations.

## 8. Development Plan

A more detailed development plan needs to be produced setting out an action plan within each objective. The broad areas for development are outlined in the following sections and with the broad actions highlighted in **bold**:

### i) Ethos

A very strong message from the Strategy Morning was that the club has a strong family focus and cares about people as individuals. This must be at the heart of how the club operates. Creating a family friendly environment in the clubhouse is a priority and providing **child friendly facilities should be considered when the social and ancillary facilities are refurbished and expanded.**

The social aspects of playing or being associated with the club and providing regular opportunities for social gatherings is greatly valued by club members. Offering good hospitality to all visiting teams and visitors is also seen as important. **The Social Committee should be separated from the fundraising function to focus on delivery of social activities and opportunities without raising funds being a primary objective.** Activities should aim to appeal to active players but should recognise that different events will appeal to different age groups. **Consideration should be given to developing family friendly social events and activities on a regular basis that do not necessarily include playing hockey.**

The age spread of active players (age 6 to 68 years) and a balance between female (53%) and male (47%) participants is a strength and shows the Club does offer opportunities for all. **The Club currently has limited data on diversity or access (disability) and this should be rectified in future membership data captures.**

The location of the Club requires participants to travel by car and this is certainly a barrier to participation for sections of the local community. The cost of participation must not be seen as a barrier to participation. **Whilst the Club does reduce fees for those in education, a more formalised and comprehensive concessionary charging policy needs to be established and publicised for all strands of activity.** Ways should be sought to overcome barriers to becoming truly inclusive.

Ensuring that the values of the Club are clearly stated, widely understood and consistently applied is critical to the health and success of the organisation. **Development of a simple set of norms, standards and values for all strands of club activity is essential.**

## ii) **Playing Formats**

The club offers a variety of playing standards through local Norfolk Leagues, East Regional Leagues and National League and Cup Competitions for men women and children of all ages. There is also a well established programme of coached training sessions throughout the week run by qualified and experienced coaches. **These league and cup competition opportunities and regular coached training sessions should continue to be the major playing formats.**

A clear statement of the Club expectations of all playing regular club hockey is required, together with an equally clear statement of what players of all ages can expect from the Club. **The development of this set of Playing Expectations is of paramount importance to the culture and ethos of the club.** Players of all abilities should understand how progress through playing standards is managed and what they need to do to progress. Positive management of this should be based on the **establishment of a clearly defined Player Pathway (selection methodology) that links to both coaching sessions and playing in teams.** Ensuring that Playing Expectations and Player Pathways are well understood, and consistently applied is the key to enjoyable, successful playing experiences for all. They will be key tools for maintaining and improving playing standards and growing participation and membership.

Managing the transition for young people from the youth development programme into playing in regular club teams is of critical importance and the Playing Expectations and Player Pathway are key to this integration being smooth. Whilst team captains and parents have an active role to play in aiding this integration the Club **should consider setting up an informal mentoring/buddy system** using senior players to support young players moving into regular Saturday team hockey.

Opportunities for social hockey such as the long-standing May Day Hockey Tournament run by the Club should be maintained and where possible expanded. Taking part in playing formats outside the regular league programme offers opportunities to get to know other club members from different playing strands. **As a club we should look to promote more social playing opportunities** whether this is by organising tournaments, attending tournaments or developing small sided off season leagues for club members.

England Hockey research after their 'Back to Hockey' campaigns identified that many people wanting to come back to or start playing hockey are doing so for the social and active lifestyle benefits rather than a desire to play in competitive leagues on a regular basis. There is scope to extend activities outside the regular playing season (May -July) and offer training sessions allied to

general fitness based around hockey skills. **Consideration should be given to offering different playing formats that would appeal to those who do not wish to play competitively in a league team on a weekly basis.** This should include taster sessions and quick formats of the game to appeal to new or returning entrants to playing.

The club has a strong tradition of playing indoor hockey and has had much success at a national level over recent years across adult and age group competitions. Facilities for training and playing are far from ideal and require travel to remote venues which is both expensive and time consuming. This does create some inequality in access. There is a clear benefit in technical skill acquisition and player development from indoor hockey exposure. Many of the techniques are transferable to the outdoor game but have to be much sharper indoors due to the reduced pitch size and speed of play. As teams have fewer players it also allows the club to be competitive at national level against clubs with much greater playing resources. Using indoor facilities for young children would also offer an ideal environment in which to play during the winter months which would lead to a more enjoyable experience and better skill acquisition. **The club should continue to develop indoor hockey playing and training opportunities and review how best to secure regular affordable facilities close to the club base and compare this to building its own facility.**

### iii) Youth Development

Given the geographical location of the club and its catchment it is essential that a comprehensive and progressive youth development programme is continued and improved. Current youth development activities provide regular playing and training opportunities for 220 children and involves a large group of committed parents and club members who take coaching sessions, undertake administration, manage teams and organise fundraising.

Running the youth development programme is still highly reliant on two volunteers as Boys and Girls Youth Development Officers. With one of these relinquishing the role at the end of the 2017/18 season it is necessary to review how best to develop and manage the youth development programme in the future. Research has demonstrated significant latent demand for delivering hockey coaching and playing opportunities in local primary and secondary schools which the Club cannot satisfy due to lack of available coaches. Such activities would also make a major difference to the community involvement of the club within its immediate catchment area and create strong links between local schools, parents and the Club. Effective links with local schools would undoubtedly lead to increased numbers of young people joining the Club. Both to make secure delivery of the club programme of youth development and to develop strong links with local schools, **consideration should be given to the appointment of full time paid Youth Development Officer (employed by the Club).** Initial investigation has shown there to be opportunities to gain grant funding for establishing the post, provided it can become sustainable within two years from participant income, fundraising and sponsorship. A funding plan is being established that to show how this can be achieved without using existing club resources. The Youth Development Officer post would be responsible for youth activities for young people (under 14 years) until they start to play in adult league teams. **The Youth Committee should then have a defined role** to support the Youth Development Officer, be responsible for welfare and safeguarding, fundraising to support youth activities and organisation of U14, U16 and U18 indoor and outdoor teams.

**There should be strong links between youth development activities and both playing and coaching systems (Playing Manager and Coaching Manager)** through Player Pathway, the mentoring/buddy system and coaching programmes to ensure successful integration of young people into regular league hockey.



There is a need to ensure that young people have the opportunity to develop a full range of hockey skills. This will be through a combination of technical skills coaching and learning through game play which must in all cases be enjoyable and fun. **Consideration should therefore be given to the development of a youth coaching syllabus with associated materials and resources** for use by coaches to ensure equality of exposure to the full range of technical skills. This will require a close working relationship between the Youth Development Officer and Coaching Manager.

iv) **People**

a) **Coaches and Coaching**

To provide the number of regular coached sessions and access to good quality match day input the club requires a large number of appropriately qualified and experienced coaches. Great progress has been made during the past year to put in place access to coaching courses and supporting newly qualified coaches. **The club is now paying the costs of coaching courses for people in return for a commitment to provide coaching at the Club and this should be continued.**

Where coaches are responsible for leading a regular coaching session then a fee is offered on a self-employed basis but not all coaches are paid nor are expenses covered. On the same basis fees are paid to first team coaches on a self-employed basis. **The Club should review its policy and practice on coaching payment and expenses and ensure clear communication of the agreed policy to all members.** There would not be an assumption that everybody coaching would receive remuneration and the policy would need to take account the financial resources available.

**There is a solid foundation from which to establish a comprehensive Coach Development Programme and this should be actively pursued.** This could include: access to coaching courses and qualifications; mentoring for new coaches; access to coach education sessions using both experienced in house coaches and external coach educators; and provision of coaching materials and resources through a secure on line portal (see the communications Section). **There will be a requirement for new funding to establish and operate an effective Coach Development Programme. The club should produce a costed implementation plan and seek appropriate sources of funding from external bodies.**

b) **Umpires and Umpiring**

The requirement to provide umpires for the majority of regular home league fixtures at weekends and the additional for age group competitions, mini tournaments and some adult cup competitions means that during the season umpires must be found for in excess of 350 matches. Whilst the Club has over 40 qualified and registered umpires many are not actually umpiring, which causes a regular shortage of people available to umpire which is a major issue for the club.

There is no doubt that this scarcity of umpires impacts adversely on the recruitment of team captains and also new people being willing to take an umpires course. Umpiring numbers are currently only being met though a small number of people umpiring two and three matches in a day, a situation that is both unfair and unsustainable. Active players need to solve this issue as it is they who need umpires. **The club needs to create a culture where umpiring is a natural part of being a player and move towards a position where most people umpire at some stage during the season.**

This is a long term objective and will require: all players to engage with valuing and respecting umpires; effective support and mentoring being provided to club umpires; introduction of Junior Leader Awards and Introduction to Umpiring Courses within the youth development programme; support for people to take umpiring further to pool appointments and beyond; umpire education

sessions and access to basic qualification courses funded by the club. **To achieve consideration should be given to creating the role of Umpire Development Officer with a budget for umpire development activities.**

### **c) Volunteer Development**

The club relies on volunteers to undertake all the roles necessary for the successful operation of what is a complex and wide ranging organisation. Whilst it has many skills and talents within its membership, it is reliant on a relatively small number of key people in comparison to the total membership numbers. Involvement of more playing members in the management and administration of the club is important to distribute the workload more widely. **The club should consider introducing a policy of one role or position per member within a 3 year timeframe.**

Allowing Executive Officers to enlist the help of others by breaking down their roles into smaller elements may encourage more people contribute and see that they can make a difference by volunteering in a way that fits their other commitments. The club organisational structure would need to reflect this and recognise that succession planning is a vital activity. **These matters should be considered as part of changing the legal and organisational structure of the club.**

Given that volunteers make the club function, the work done in establishing role profiles over the last two years has created the foundation for clear assignment of responsibilities and communication of this to club members. It is, however, important to demonstrate that volunteers are valued by: providing opportunities to learn new skills; offering effective support systems; highlighting contributions; and celebrating achievements. **The Club should consider providing a budget to enable induction for new volunteers, ongoing training and periodic events to share experiences and knowledge.**

### **v) Communications and Marketing**

The club has for many years relied on traditional methods of communication using a basic website, email, paper systems and verbal. In recent years there has been use of Dropbox for team management and storing key information. In preparation for the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations in May 2018, much work has been done to create a secure and accurate method of collecting, storing and using membership data. Over the past year the Club has begun to embrace the use of social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Whats App) as a means of communication both with members internally and to promote the Club externally within hockey and the wider local community.

At the Strategy morning a very strong message was that communication within the Club was fragmented and often ineffective. There was a desire to embrace the use of electronic systems for much club communication and administration, including electronic methods of providing information and making payment. It was stressed that key information needs to be easily accessible to all club members and that the website needs to be an interactive tool for managing the Club. **The club should therefore develop a communication strategy with the aim of producing a 'digital ecosystem' based around a re-designed website.** This will be a major piece of work and will take an extended period of time to achieve. The Commercial Manager has the skills and knowledge to drive forward this strategy but does not have the time to undertake the work. **Additional resources and/or funding will be required to implement the 'digital ecosystem.'** Whilst electronic communication is clearly important the Club should still value face to face communication of key messages and recognise that this connection between people is an important part of the social interaction valued by members. **Production of a members information manual (electronic) where**

**key policies, procedures and methods of operation can be accessed is also vital to a well informed and knowledgeable membership.**

Communication of key messages about what the club stands for and offering needs to be communicated within the wider hockey world and the local community in which the club is located.

**To achieve this, a marketing plan should be produced and consideration given to the establishment of a Communication and Marketing Manager position.**

#### **vi) Facilities**

The club is in a very strong position as it owns all of its facilities and sufficient land for any scale of future development. The size of the club dictates that two pitches are required and it is of paramount importance that the playing surfaces are high quality. **Ensuring the sustainability of two pitches with high quality playing surfaces must be the highest facility priority for the club.** The current financial model underpinning operation of the club recognises that there is a significant cyclical cost to replacing the artificial turf pitch surfaces every 15 years that requires an annual contribution to a sinking fund. This is broadly being met, but additional annual revenue is required to ensure long term sustainability. It is likely that the water based pitch will require re-carpeting in 2020/21 and the sand based pitch in 2024/25.

With two pitches there is still some capacity to increase the number of teams but further growth would need to be achieved by extending use of the existing pitches through more flexible scheduling of activities.

There is a clear acceptance that the club has outgrown the current clubhouse and ancillary facilities, which are overdue for refurbishment and expansion. The social facilities are not large enough to accommodate the volume of players and spectators and the changing accommodation is inadequate for the number of pitches. There is also an opportunity to increase the size of social spaces to allow income generating activities and provide more family friendly accommodation. Refurbishment of the clubhouse will require a specific fundraising drive with only a limited amount of grant funding available.

Provision of an indoor hall capable of accommodating a full size indoor hockey pitch, which could also be available to other local sports and organisations, is currently under investigation. This would be a major undertaking but is an opportunity that would provide real benefits in: developing a lifelong interest in hockey and active lifestyles; increasing participation and technical skill development within the Youth Development Programme, allowing all club members to experience playing indoors; and provide a focus for club indoor competition at a regional and national level. **Provision of an indoor facility should be given serious consideration, taking into account local need, alongside renewal and expansion of existing clubhouse, ancillary and viewing facilities and such a development must be financially sustainable without requiring ongoing revenue support from the Club.**

**Increasing the footfall and use of the facilities outside of the traditional hockey season should be considered, provided that the activities are complementary and the organisations share similar objectives and methods of working.** Currently, discussions are being held with Topcroft Cricket Club who would like to use the grass area next to the water based pitch to establish a cricket square and outfield to act as a satellite operation for some of their age group activities and as a home venue for their 3<sup>rd</sup> XI and Women's Team. This would not adversely affect delivery of hockey but would make use of the facilities during the off season. Such new activity would introduce a wider audience to the Club facilities and would help with community engagement. There would need to be long term

commitment to the arrangement from both parties and it could not be seen as a purely commercial landlord and tenant arrangement.

#### **vii) Operation, Management and Finance**

Existing as an unincorporated association with Community Amateur Sports Club status allows the Club to operate with a minimum of statutory regulation, whilst gaining some financial benefits. It is not, however, a sustainable model for the future as it requires the club to have Trustees who take personal responsibility for the liabilities of the Club. The Club needs to change its structure to assume its own legal entity through incorporation (setting up some form of limited company) to remove the personal liability of Trustees. There are a variety of options available, including whether or not to adopt charity status, and complex financial and legal considerations. As part of this process professional advice is being sought to ensure that the implications of changing the legal structure are fully understood and offer the best financial efficiency in terms of VAT, tax, gift aid and raising funds. **The Board is committed to bring a proposal for the new legal structure to an EGM in September 2018 for implementation immediately thereafter.**

Changing the legal structure will require new ways of working and place new demands on the club through additional statutory regulation. **As part of this process the organisational structure should be reviewed** to ensure that there is a clear chain of command, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined; there is not duplication of function and levels of delegated authority to act are confirmed. It must be recognised within this review that much of the work is undertaken by volunteers and ways of working must be flexible enough to fit around other life commitments.

Currently the Commercial Manager has the widest portfolio of responsibility of the Executive Officers. It is suggested that this is considered as part of the organisational review, perhaps creating a new Communications and Marketing position as a separate role. There may also be a need to have an Administration Manager role to cover general administration, membership, company secretary function and contribute to the current Secretary duties.

With the change in legal structure there will be changes required to the financial management and reporting for the Club. There is a clear desire from members to improve financial transparency and availability of information on how the club is financed. This should be a priority in setting up the revised financial systems. **The club should consider setting a detailed budget for each financial year across functional areas and ensure that a system of regular reporting of income and expenditure against budgets is available.** This would enable delegated spending authority for budgets to relevant Club officials with monitoring of financial performance against budgets becoming a routine function of the Executive Committee. It is also important to get a better idea of the income and costs associated with different strands of playing. Preliminary examination of this with the Treasurer has identified that this is possible with a modest reorganisation of the chart of accounts and fuller use of the reporting functions within the finance software. **A medium term financial plan should be produced and maintained** to ensure that resources for key objectives are available when required. These additional higher level financial functions and financial planning would fall within the job role of the Finance Manager.

There is a clear need to identify specific projects and strands of work that require additional funds and to focus fundraising efforts specifically towards these projects. **Consideration should be given to the development of a Fundraising Plan** which identifies project funding requirements, matches these to appropriate funding sources and sets target for income generation.

#### viii) **Community Involvement**

The fact that the Club has for many years been located a mile outside the town of Harleston and in a different county has historically led to little contact the local town and the Club. This lack of community focus is compounded by the large sparsely populated rural area that is the club's primary catchment area. Being a major provider of sporting activity in the local area **it is important that the club is engaged within its local area both as a provider of opportunities and facilities for physical activity and to better understand how best to meet the needs of a rural population.** Appointment of a Youth Development Officer to work with and in local primary and secondary schools is a tangible way of delivering opportunities to local people which should create stronger links within the local community and greater awareness of what the Club offers and provides. **Developing links with other local organisations offering the use of the club facilities for community events and visits should also be considered.**

**More effort should be made to publicise the facilities of the town of Harleston to visiting teams and spectators,** many of whom have travelled some distance to visit the club for fixtures and events. This is particularly true of the many events, tournaments and training sessions for young people where parents have provided transport and are then on site for an extended period of time. **The Club certainly has an economic impact within the local community and efforts to quantify this should be made.**

Becoming embedded within the local community is a long term objective and is about being visible, approachable and willing to help. Many of the benefits are intangible but do warrant consistent effort over an extended period of time.

#### ix) **Working With Others**

Identifying the key external stakeholders and partners who can actively support achievement of the Club Vision is both necessary and beneficial. **Developing positive and mutually beneficial relationships with these external stakeholders should be a priority.** Regular communication with them about club activity and periodic meetings with them are essential to build trust and understanding of both parties objectives. The Club should also actively keep informed about stakeholder's key initiatives and new developments. Cultivating contacts with key personnel in these organisations is equally important and **specific club members should be identified as primary contact person for each body.**

Clearly, local authorities at district level covering the catchment area of the Club must be included (South Norfolk, Mid Suffolk, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney) together with Weybread Parish Council (as the Club is in their area) and Harleston Town Council (as the nearest centre of population). The National Governing Body, England Hockey, is an important partner as are Active Norfolk and Suffolk Sport as County organisations responsible for supporting grass roots sports. As funding relationships are developed, good quality communication about progress and achievements is critical as well as formal evaluation of projects. The same principle applies to commercial sponsorships where regular news, updates and 'adding value' are essential activities.

### **8. Success Criteria**

The following success criteria will be expanded upon as part of the detailed Development Plan :-

- Maintenance and/or growth in number of playing members
- Growth in number of non-playing members
- Membership diversity

- Number of teams in Leagues
- Number of teams in National Competitions
- Age range of teams
- Financial health
- International representation
- Promotions, team honours
- Member satisfaction
- Number of umpires, coaches

## **9. Next Steps**

The Strategy Document has been presented to the Board and Executive Committee. The Board has responsibility for the strategic direction of the Club and has accepted the report and its general strategic objectives.

The more detailed planning and implementation of the Strategy will be undertaken by the Executive Committee and smaller groups of Executive Officers, with regular review of progress made by the Board.

## **Appendix A: Analysis of Strategy Morning (27 January 2018) Responses from Club Members**

### **i) Strengths & talents**

- Real family friendly focus
- Strong history and track record of achievements
- Success on the hockey pitch and a nationally recognised hockey 'brand'
- Own all our facilities (2 excellent pitches, clubhouse and grounds sufficient for future developments)
- All age groups represented with a good balance of male and female members
- Cater for all playing abilities – Elite/Club/Social
- Welcoming, good hospitality and a strong social aspect
- Wide range of volunteers involved in running and supporting the club
- Well regarded Youth Development Programme
- 'Punch above our weight'

### **ii) Weaknesses**

- Geographic location and demography affects recruitment and retention of members
- Outgrown the clubhouse, changing and ancillary facilities which require major improvement
- Lack of transparency and information on how the club is financed
- Reliance on key individuals
- Need for clarity over roles and responsibilities
- Lack of (available) umpires
- Lack of co-ordinated and effective communication with members and the local community
- Little brand and ethos recognition or awareness locally
- Lack of community involvement (particularly schools)
- Lack of centralised indoor facilities

### **iii) Improvements**

- Develop the coaching structure to ensure quality coaching for all players
- Increase the number of available umpires
- Review Club organisational and legal structure
- Distribute leadership and workload through valuing, encouraging and supporting volunteers
- Develop an effective communication strategy for internal (members) and external (promotion) use
- Remodel and extend the clubhouse to provide sufficient quality social, changing, ancillary and viewing space for the levels of activity
- Ensure cyclical refurbishment of both pitches is a key priority
- Consider provision of additional facilities, including an indoor hall
- Establish a set of club values, standards and norms relevant to all players, coaches, umpires, volunteers, parents and supporters
- Clarify player pathway (selection) with identified routes for progression which take account of both playing in teams and coached sessions

- Become embedded within the local community

**iv) What does Harleston Magpies want to be known as?**

- A welcoming, family friendly, caring club
- A 'Winning Club' – aspirational, successful and with a 'brand,' recognised nationally within hockey
- Inclusive – offering opportunities across all abilities, ages, gender and race
- A centre of excellence for coaching, umpiring, youth development and valuing volunteers
- Having high quality facilities
- Being a key part of the local community within which the club is located

A discussion was also held about possible development/updating of the Clubhouse including the possibility of indoor facilities.



## **Appendix B: Existing Club Object and Vision**

### **Existing Object of the Club as per the Current Constitution**

*“To bring together persons of all ages and abilities interested in sports, principally hockey, and to actively encourage, promote and develop facilities and opportunities for them to be played in the area of Harleston. The Club shall ensure that Sports Equity (i.e. fairness) is practised in all areas of the Club’s operation. This will include ensuring that opportunities are provided irrespective of age, race, gender and disability.”*

### **Existing Vision of Club from Clubs First Documentation 2012 -2017**

*“To continue to be at the forefront of hockey in this area providing a friendly, sociable and safe structured environment for men, ladies and children of all ages.*

*To continue to provide opportunities for all players to progress through our playing and coaching programmes and to encourage each member to reach their potential whether as a player, coach or umpire.*

*We aim to be a club where all members contribute to our success, however small, to make it a competitive yet social hockey club for them to be proud to be a part of, and also strive to encourage new membership in all categories to enable us to continue to provide excellent hockey facilities to Norfolk and Suffolk.*

*In the next few years to restructure our existing clubhouse to provide better changing facilities for all and to create a welcoming entrance area.*

*To pursue excellence on the field of play but not to the detriment of those who wish to play social hockey and to look for constant improvement throughout the club.”*

# APPENDIX C: Membership Age and Gender Breakdown 2017/18 Season

	Females							
Age (years)	Adult Playing	Concession Playing	Occasional Playing	Associate	Club Official	Inactive	Social	Total
6 - 8	0	24	0	0	0	0	0	24
9 - 10	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	26
11 - 12	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	37
13	0	34	0	0	0	0	0	34
14 - 16	0	36	0	0	0	2	0	38
17 - 18	0	14	0	0	0	1	0	15
19 - 21	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	6
22 - 30	19	1	0	0	0	4	0	24
31 - 40	15	0	2	0	0	4	0	21
41 -50	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
51 - 60	8	0	0	0	4	1	1	14
61 - 70	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
71+	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Not Given	15	0	1	0	0	5	0	21
Total	63	177	3	1	4	17	1	266

# APPENDIX C: Membership Age and Gender Breakdown 2017/18 Season

	Males							
Age (years)	Adult Playing	Concession Playing	Occasional Playing	Associate	Club Official	Inactive	Social	Total
6 - 8	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	15
9 - 10	0	18	0	0	0	0	0	18
11 - 12	0	36	0	0	0	0	0	36
13	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	15
14 - 16	0	30	0	0	0	1	0	31
17 - 18	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	15
19 - 21	2	1	0	0	0	3	0	6
22 - 30	16	6	1	0	0	3	0	26
31 - 40	19	0	1	0	1	5	0	26
41 -50	15	0	4	1	3	0	0	23
51 - 60	10	0	4	5	4	1	0	24
61 - 70	3	0	0	1	4	1	0	9
71+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not Given	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	6
Total	69	136	10	7	12	16	0	250

# APPENDIX C: Membership Age and Gender Breakdown 2017/18 Season

	Total							
Age (years)	Adult Playing	Concession Playing	Occasional Playing	Associate	Club Official	Inactive	Social	Total
6 - 8	0	39	0	0	0	0	0	39
9 - 10	0	44	0	0	0	0	0	44
11 - 12	0	73	0	0	0	0	0	73
13	0	49	0	0	0	0	0	49
14 - 16	0	66	0	0	0	3	0	69
17 - 18	0	29	0	0	0	1	0	30
19 - 21	4	5	0	0	0	3	0	12
22 - 30	35	7	1	0	0	7	0	50
31 - 40	34	0	3	0	1	9	0	47
41 -50	17	1	4	1	3	0	0	26
51 - 60	18	0	4	5	8	2	1	38
61 - 70	5	0	0	1	4	1	0	11
71+	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Not Given	19	0	1	0	0	7	0	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>516</b>

## Appendix D: Membership Distribution by Postcode

1 Blue = Female    Red = Male

