

BUCS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES



Date Tuesday 9 December 2025

Scheduled Time 10:30 -12:00

Location Online - Teams

Mentions

Amanda Broderick (AB)	Chair of the BUCS Board of Trustees
Carrie Stephenson (CS)	BUCS Board Trustee
Will Roberts (WR)	BUCS CEO
Simon Wilson (SW)	BUCS Board Trustee
Adrian Van-Schalkwyk (AVS)	BUCS Business Services Manager
Rebecca Rolfe (RR)	BUCS Finance Officer
Chris Campbell (CC)	Nottingham Trent University
Dave Parry (DP)	University of Essex
Phil Steele (PS)	University of East Anglia

Item

1. Welcome

AB welcomed everyone to the AGM and noted that representation from one third of member institutions is needed for quoracy. It was confirmed there was representation from 85 (54%) Member Institutions, therefore the meeting was commenced at 10:33am. AB thanked members for their attendance and outlined the purpose of the AGM, noting the essential business functions contained within the agenda. This includes updates on the activities of BUCS over the last year, including strategy and performance, the annual report and financial report.

AB also set out the methodology of the voting process for the proposed resolutions and subsequent verification of the votes received. In this, she outlined that CS (BUCS Board Trustee and Chair of the Governance & Nominations Committee) would validate the results.

2. Apologies

No apologies were noted.

3. Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 17 July 2025 and matters arising.

AB noted that the minutes of the EGM held on 17 July 2025 have been made available for comment and review on the BUCS website since the meeting last year and were circulated with the papers for the meeting.

AB proposed Resolution 1 which was to receive and approve that the minutes of the EGM held on 17 July 2025 can be adopted as a true record of the meeting. Member representatives were asked to indicate their desired vote.

Outcome: APPROVED by ordinary resolution (86% of votes cast for the resolution).

4. Chief Executive Officer Update

WR provided an update on the work of BUCS during the period of August 2024 to July 2025 and highlighted the following key aspects:

The 2024/25 season was one of significant progress both in terms of delivering high quality business as usual and in driving transformation in how BUCS operates and engages with Members. There has been

significant governance change and based on student and Member feedback; there is increasing trust and satisfaction of the collective commitment to exceptional student sporting experiences. WR thanked Members for their support through the governance change process.

The remainder of the report on the activities of BUCS in 2024/25 focused on BUCS three organisational objectives.

Participant Value – to provide excellent student experiences and value through delivery of a high-quality sports programme, driving demand for university sport.

- WR reflected that by aligning BUCS goal to collaborate with Members to support 1 million students per year to be active by 2030, has ensured focus on the whole active participation offer provided by Members to the nearly 3 million students across the UK. This goal provides BUCS with a stronger platform through which to represent Higher Education with policy makers.
- WR added that data and insight is currently indicating that ~462,000 students are currently meeting activity thresholds through member provided programmes, and the Complete Universities Guide completion rate is incredibly important to BUCS in being able to articulate our collective reach and impact. He noted the growing impact of the UNIversal programme across Member institutions, with 85 universities now engaging, who collectively have gym memberships of ~240,000 students annually.
- WR noted the addition of rounders and wheelchair tennis to the BUCS Competitions Programme had brought added value to students in 2024/25. He added that Net Promoter Score for the 2023/24 season was +20, acknowledging an increase to +31 in the league and knockout programme, +41 in BUCS events +57 in BUCS development programmes in the 2024/25 season.
- He informed the meeting that 2024/25 had been a busy season internationally, with competition in the FISA World University Winter and Summer Games, World University Championships, the BNP Paribas Tennis for GB Students, plus exceptional representation at the EUSA competitions from university teams that qualified through BUCS domestic programme. He added that representation of students from a broad range of institutions continues and is testament to the commitment of the BUCS Members to support talented athletes to study and perform as part of their dual career approach, something mirrored by BUCS signing a new partnership with the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme in July of 2025.

Member Value – to provide excellent member value advocating for university sport and increasing our capability to provide leadership, service and support through non-member derived income.

- WR recognised the challenges facing Members in the HE sports sector and the need for BUCS to advocate on behalf of the sector. He added a note of thanks to the Members for their feedback through the BUCS Members Survey, helping BUCS to better its member engagement in shaping the modernisation of the organisation and its governance, most notably through the Articles of Association, Subscription Fees and elements of the general regulations.

Organisational Health – to ensure that through strong governance and strategic clarity BUCS is a trusted partner for our members and stakeholders and is a great place to work for our staff.

- WR set out that during the year, BUCS undertook an independent pay and benefit benchmarking exercise and are now implementing a number of recommendations to ensure that BUCS remains a positive and attractive place to work.
- WR explained that in 2023/24, BUCS commercial income was ~£250,000 and in 2024/25 BUCS set about growing this to ~£500,000. He noted the commercial partnerships with AHDB and Subway alongside growth in ticketing and sustained long standing smaller partnerships had underpinned an excellent year where the required margin from commercial income was achieved.
- He added that this had been a transformative year in BUCS governance with the changes to the Articles of Association and that full compliance against the Code for Sport Governance was achieved in Autumn 2025. It is a particularly significant milestone of the growing credibility of BUCS, not just with Members, but also with important third-party stakeholders.

5. Annual Report and Accounts

AB noted that Resolution 2 is to receive the Company's annual accounts for the financial year ended 31 July 2025 together with the directors' report and auditor's report on those accounts. No vote was required on this resolution.

WR talked to the consolidated annual accounts highlighting the sources of income and expenditure, the summary of movement between FY24 and FY25, as well as the following key points:

- BUCS achieved a surplus above the budgeted sum.
- Increases in free reserves above the minimum reserve limit offer opportunity to improve key services.
- Into FY26, the competition entry fee (1%) and subscription fee (3.2%) increases were below inflation, countered by further commercial growth to 216% the level in 2023/24.
- Initial planning for FY27 is already underway by BUCS SLT, aligned with BUCS 2030 Business Plan presented to Board in July 2025.
- Director of Business Operations joined the team August 2025.
- Weekly operations include: financial headlines presented to the Director of Business Operations from the Finance Team; commercial pipeline review to CEO with Director of Marketing and Commercial and agency.
- Monthly operations include: reforecasting through budget holders which is reviewed by the Management Team.
- Quarterly operations include: presentations to Finance, Audit and Risk Committee; review by the Board.

WR handed to SW who thanked WR for the comprehensive run through of the figures. SW set out that he had been Chair of the BUCS Finance, Audit & Risk Committee for five years and is a qualified accountant. SW provided assurance the meeting that BUCS is financially well managed and identified three key areas that supports this:

- Setting a minimum free reserves level that is appropriate to the organisation, adding that BUCS current levels of free reserves are not high in comparison to organisations of a similar size and structure.
- BUCS has effective financial controls – with the production and review of monthly accounts by the Senior Leadership and Management Teams. The accounts produced are accurate and have been audited by an external auditing firm who are content in the financial operations that BUCS undertakes.
- BUCS utilises its finances wisely ensuring a key focus on providing service to its Members from the subscription fees. The governance changes implemented in the past 12 months have also enabled BUCS to secure grant funding and inward investment from a number of sources.

SW extended his thanks on behalf of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee to WR, AVS and RR. SW also noted his thanks to the auditors. SW noted that the good performance of BUCS at audit. SW reinforced that BUCS is a stable financial organisation and noted the provisions in place that promote security in BUCS' financial performance.

6. Annual Subscription Fee

WR provided an overview of the work to review the BUCS Subscription Fees in the past 12 months, and the options being presented to the Members and highlighted the following key aspects:

- The process has been based on the following principles: Value of Membership, Informed Decision Making, Transparency, Sustainability & Annual Review. He added that these principles were created to provide confidence to Members and articulate the value of membership.
- The changes to the Articles of Association had retained the requirement for Member approval on subscription fee levels and also removed the association to UK inflation, instead requiring the provision of multiple options. He added that inflation remains an important reference point in the proposals to BUCS in its financial forecasting.
- He informed everyone that the subscription fee proposals had been shared in advance of the meeting and that in all of the proposals, BUCS is required to make the same level of efficiencies to reduce core costs, and that will be achieved through a combination of changes to the services we procure to secure reduced costs and making changes to our ways of working
- Option One (3.7%) – Reduce. Below inflation increase in subscription fees. Will require BUCS to generate efficiencies in its core business operations, reducing expenditure in the face of rising costs.
- Option Two (5.1%) – Protect. Retains all the efficiency requirements of option 1. Includes additional costs: the Head of Governance & Integrity role to avoid the risks associated with a structural deficit.
- Option Three (8.2%) – Respond. Retains all the efficiency requirements and structural deficit avoidance of options 1&2. Includes actions that members have indicated they would like BUCS to pursue.

WR encouraged Members to support Option 2. He added that should none of the three proposed options be adopted by the Members, BUCS would convene a small working group composed of the Member Trustees who sit on the board to come back with a revised proposal.

AB thanked WR for his work on the Subscription Fees. On behalf of the board, AB recommend Option 2 for Members consideration, enabling us to both fulfil our fiduciary responsibilities of financial sustainability, but also fundamentally Members.

AB proposed Resolution 3 which was to determine the subscription fee increase to be applied to the subscription fee calculus for FY27. Member representatives were asked to indicate their desired vote.

Outcome: APPROVED by ordinary resolution Option 2, 5.1% increase approved by single transferable vote (56% of votes cast for Option 2 as 1st choice).

7. Member questions and any other business

No other business or questions were submitted to BUCS in advance of the AGM and so AB opened the floor for questions from the Members relating to the content delivered in the AGM.

CC – asked for an explanation as to why the consolidated accounts indicate a significant loss on BUCS Conference, but WR stated it made a £5,000 surplus. WR responded that the BUCS Conference made a surplus, but the other Member events did not, hence the position in the accounts.

Digitally, further questions were also posed regarding the operating surplus.

DP – asked for a comment on the operating surplus in 2024-25, and what this means for a projection for surpluses in 2025-26 and 2026-27 and how might this relate to the ask for increased membership subscription fees above inflation for 2026-27?

PS - Can you outline what the future year(s) projections are for Sponsorship? If you are projecting growth will continue, how is that reflected against the projected fee increase scenarios in next year's financial forecast? What is being planned / could be planned to drive this even harder?

WR responded that the 2024-25 surplus was in part generated through improved commercial performance, and that it is not the intention for BUCS to utilise commercial revenue to cover off the need for increases to Subscription Fees. Instead, it will be used to suppress the need to increase Subscription Fees, noting that at the centre of all proposals in this meeting was a commitment to a below inflation increase in the running costs of the organisation.

WR added that it would pose too high a risk for BUCS to use commercial revenues to supplement core services provided through the subscription. WR added that BUCS will continue to increase sponsorship revenue in coming year, within a challenging financial environment, and will include this in the FY26 budget and beyond. WR set out that whilst increases in commercial revenue has seen significant it would be irresponsible to anticipate that BUCS could move faster than that and could jeopardise the financial stability of the organisation.

AB thanked Members for their attendance and the AGM was declared closed at 11:27am.