

## LANCASHIRE COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

### Minutes of the Board meeting of the held at Liverpool St Helens FC on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Present: Mr D.N. Herriman, in the Chair, & Messrs P. Deakin, K. Andrews, J.B. Morgan, J.S. Greenwood, A.S. Kerboas, J.T. Hughes, Mrs C.A. Baker, M. Downs.

In attendance: Messrs S.R. Blackburn, D. Clarke, Ms H. Duggan, D. Southern.

Apologies: Messrs, R.T.J. Briers, T. Fitzgerald, M.J. Worsley B.H. Stott & S. Urquhart.

#### Presentation of Results of Lancashire Survey

HD reported:-

1. The survey was completed in the summer of 2017 with 500 respondents and therefore a lot of data to process. The 2 main conclusions were that there is great pride in the County and a recognition that there is growth within the County.
2. As this was the first time of surveying there would generally be more negatives than positives, but we can gain honest constructive points from the data.
  - There is a lack of connection with the Senior Mens XV, there is a disconnect with what the County do and what individuals do.
  - People see what we do but not that we do it.
  - A large proportion of respondents were male and over 50 years old
  - 15 respondents were from Universities
  - Approximately 40% were younger than 40 years old.
3. In the data analysis net promoter scores were looked at to remove outlying data points.
  - The biggest negative was transparency at -31%
4. Suggested action items from the survey data analysis
  - Draw up a list of jobs and the time involved in completing them.
  - Develop a communications strategy.
  - Club visits need to be more focused and not just for the Senior Mens games on a Saturday.
  - An online membership could increase the number of applications.
  - Run survey again in 2-3 years time to look for improvements.

#### RDO Report.

DS reported:-

1. A meeting had been held at PGH with representatives of the Northern Counties to discuss the issues of Lancashire clubs travelling to Cumbria. The meeting was felt to be positive with a plan to conference 2 leagues, 1 Cumbria & 1 Lancashire. Both Counties to take the plan back to their clubs and seek support.
2. Restructuring within the RFU was taking place with the W & G game being fully integrated. 6 WRDOs will be lost with their roles being shared to RDOs in place. Player Development Officers are to be reduced from 6 to 4. Universities shall take more ownership of their own game, with clustering being brought in and the offer of 50% of costs for an officer being offered.

DS left the meeting.

## Volunteering

ASK reported:

1. Leadership Academy – At the halfway point ASK & CAB had supported the Leadership Day with only 10 attendees (7 missing). None attendees will be removed from the academy.
2. Presidents Volunteers Evening – to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> April at Rochdale and Leigh respectively.
3. New volunteers are being identified. KA has been tasked with tracking down the previous Leadership Academy graduates.
4. For AOB – BARLA now have an 11 month long season, why is our structured season so rigid ? KA – regulations are being freed up to help.

## Minutes of the last meeting:

The minutes of the Board meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018, (previously circulated) were accepted and signed as a correct record.

## Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

## RFU Report

A written report was given to the meeting by KA as below:-

### **Nat West Six Nations Championship**

The Six Nations Championship is under way with two wins for England against Italy and Wales.

### **CEO Report - Steve Brown**

- **RFU** have agreed terms with Eddie Jones with his contract extended to August 2021.
- **Sue Day** has been appointed as the new Chief Financial Officer.
- **PRL/RPA and RFU** have been working together to finalize the domestic season schedule.
- **Ernst Young** have been meeting with all Championship stakeholders –report to follow.
- **Tyrell's Premier 15s** has been a great success and already we are seeing the development of a stronger/deeper pool of potential international players (7s and 15s).
- **National Rugby Survey** has now completed. SRU, WRU and IRFU have bought into the same NRS. A useful exercise for comparison between the four Home Nations
- **Artificial Grass Pitches** – 7 Rugby Turf and 2 Rugby Share pitches are now fully operational.
- **Community 7's Offer**- XRugby rules are now in World Rugby law books. Plans for initial implementation in the spring in 9 universities and from May at 6 AGP sites
- **Age grade to Adult Transition** – university work has continued to be a key focus and 6 university clusters have dedicated Development Officers and 21 Focus Colleges have plans to sustain participation through the 16-20 year old age group and transition players into clubs.
- **Project 15s**, the World Rugby working group established to look at the challenges facing the fifteen-a-side game will report in March
- **Technology** in coach education has continued. Facebook Live sessions and OMW Kids First Skills Sessions.
- **O2 Touch** centre numbers have risen to 430 with over 22,000 active players.
- **Aspirational Team** fixtures have been confirmed. U18s will play two matches against Ireland in Portsmouth - U20s will play two matches against Georgia in Tbilisi - England Counties will play three matches in Bucharest.
- **Headcase** training programme figures are up significantly year on year.
- **Council elections** following changes a comprehensive guide for CBs has been produced.

- **Safeguarding** A questionnaire to CB Safeguarding Managers for information as to the level and depth of the monitoring of processes in the community game-report in February.
- **Discipline** - World Rugby have launched a consultation on the new sanctions table.
- **Sponsorship**- Old Mutual Wealth have rebranded to Quilter. The May test will now be known as the Quilter Cup and the Autumn Internationals will be called the Quilter Internationals.
- **Museum** – World Rugby Museum has been completed and is sited above the Shop.
- **East Stand**- Considerable progress has been made with the construction. The project has committed 65% of the £65.5m budget with £21.0m spent to date and another £21.3m contracted, principally relating to the shell and core works. The vast majority of remaining spend relates to the fit out budget

#### **International Report- Ben Calverley**

##### **World Rugby**

- Amendments to Reg. 8 around eligibility if one or both of a player's parents are adopted.
- Changes to Regulation 20 agreed will mean that World Rugby can enforce doping and other bans given by other sports.
- Regulation 22 amendments were agreed that will give World Rugby powers to check accredited artificial pitches more regularly if problems are identified

##### **Rugby Europe**

- Main item on the Board agenda was a discussion on qualification for the 2020 Olympics.

#### **Six Nations**

- Looking for opportunities to engage with Romania and Georgia due to the limited window Unions have with U20s players. However, work will continue to support the development of these countries where possible.

#### **Financial Report- Richard Daniel**

- Overall performance for Q2 is £0.1m favourable to budget, with a retained profit of £17.7m
- Gross profit at £83.5m, is £0.5m favourable due to strong OMW series, U2 merchandising sales and TEL Conference and Event performance.
- Capital investment is currently at £20.1m with £19.3m of this spent on the strategic AGP and ESD projects including the museum.

#### **Payment of players- Chris Cuthbertson, Alys Lewis and Dave Stubley**

- Confirmation from Council that the supplemental ticket fund should be included in the definition of RFU Benefits to be withdrawn;
- Council's approved of the draft Payment of Player Regulations.
- Council delegated authority to Governance to finalise the drafting of the regulations.

##### **Feedback from Clubs**

- Over 60 clubs responded and the vast majority indicated their support for the payment of players initiative. Feedback has been reviewed and considered, and where appropriate, corresponding changes have been made to the regulations.
- A number of clubs raised the point that they did not believe the prospective loss of RFU benefits were sufficiently robust as a disincentive and queried why loss of international tickets was not included in the loss of benefits that could be withdrawn. This point was discussed in Governance and whilst valid, the recommendation of the Payment of Players task group was to not include international tickets within the loss of benefits list. The matter will be kept under review.

#### **Age Grade Rugby - Fred Batchelor, Alys Lewis and Mark Saltmarsh**

- The Age Grade regulations and changes to be aligned to a wider and developing landscape.
- Regulation 15 should open up a potential year round playing offer for Age Grade Rugby in to recognise and allow for differentiation between players playing regularly or occasionally during the season.

- A core playing season should remain but the off-season should enable the non-regular player to access appropriate opportunities as opposed to a blanket break for all players.
- The regulation should be accelerated to be able to implement the changes for summer 2018.

Council approved the change to Regulation 15.6 for implementation from May 2018;  
Council delegated authority to Governance to finalise the drafting.

#### **Nominations- Simon Collyer-Bristow**

Council approved the following nominations:

President:	Chris Kelly
Senior Vice President:	Peter Wheeler
Junior Vice President:	Jeff Blackett
Past President on Council:	John Spencer
Independent on Council Nominations Standing Committee:	S O'Hare

#### **Community Game Board: Rob Briers**

Presentations were received from:

Rugby Growth Sub Committee:	Stephen Pearson
Young Rugby Ambassadors:	Megan Cliff and Ross Meaghur

update to Council on recent research, ticket pricing strategy and process to be accompanied by a presentation during the Council meeting.

#### **Ticketing Update- Simon Massie-Taylor and Mike Cordell**

Council received an update on recent research, ticket pricing strategy and process. This was accompanied by a presentation.

The RFU commercial team have been working on a strategy for ticket pricing. The strategy is based on the following principles:

1. Present a two-year narrative building up to RWC 2019 that builds excitement and value around the RWC warm up games and provides an opportunity for all fans to come to Twickenham at a range of prices.
2. Position the 2018 All Blacks fixture as a "blockbuster" game that is priced as a premium to A+ fixtures
3. Increase (but not maximise) prices and optimise Cat B and C matches based on insight from SKP research
4. Standardise seat price categorisation across all full internationals and reduce price categories from seven to five. This was successfully experimented for OMW 2017 Cat B and C games.
5. Maintain a low price entry point for all fixtures and increase number of kids tickets available
6. Take into consideration recent legislation changes in credit card fee charges as well as future changes around handling fee charges
7. Launch Return to Rugby initiative for the annual Barbarians fixtures that targets lapsed players between 16-24
8. Explore playing England games outside Twickenham to provide accessibility for difference regions to England games

The April Council meeting to approve the final prices with the aim of announcing prices before the end of April.

#### **Update on the Diversity & Inclusion Working Group - Genevieve Glover**

The terms of reference of the working group are clear in that two members are to come from Council, one from the National Youth Council, two from the game and two Independents.

Maggie Alphonsi, Peter Howard, Cameron Taylor, Adam White, Sally Burns, Chris Ratcliffe, Anne Murphy

The first meeting will be on February 12<sup>th</sup> 2018

**Reports from:**

**Professional Game Board**

**Governance Standing Committee**

Finance & Funding Report

PD presented the Board with the Balance sheet and profit and loss account for the year to date.

RDC Report

TF presented a written report to the meeting:-

1. Manchester Student 10s – Sponsored by the Lancashire RFU Rugby Development Centre. Approximately 80 University Students plus a number of student referees, introduced to what the County can offer them and they were actively encouraged to join a club to compliment their rugby experience at University. The host club, TMv, will keep the CB informed of any new student players recruited as a result; student organisers were also briefed on other clubs in their immediate vicinity of their universities. The RFU University RDO will continue to provide university students details of County and Club rugby opportunities and actively encourage them to take advantage of them. Feedback from students has been very positive. There is interest in Lancashire hosting a University 7s tournament in April/May.
2. Lancashire RFU Rugby Development Centre - Coaching Group for Coaches from Adult Teams. Pilot Scheme – meeting based, exchange of ideas and problems programme – is in pre-launch phase, hoping to be rolled out next month. This will replace some of the practical pitch based coaching sessions delivered by the Development Centre and funds will be diverted from the practical sessions to cover the costs of meetings and administration - TF has alerted the Treasurer (PD) to this and budgets will be monitored by the Treasurer to ensure that spending remains acceptable within the PFR budget.
3. Medical Steering Group. James Widnall, the recently appointed Hon. Medical Advisor, has begun work on reviewing medical cover for County Squads, competitions and festivals. Setting up a Medical Steering Group to advise the County and clubs is high on his priority list. Dr. Widnall will also work closely with the County Rugby Safe Officer (JM) and the County Safeguarding Officer (CB). TF will meet Dr. Widnall in mid-February to discuss projects.
4. North Division U18 Squad – ten members of the Lancashire U18s squad have been selected to represent North U18s.

Club and Community Rugby

SRB reported:

1. The Merseyside cluster meeting had been well received with 4 presentations given.
2. The County Annual Dinner had been put back to 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018

Cup and Competitions

DC reported:

1. Broughton Park would play Burnage in the Trophy Final.
2. Ormskirk would play Eagle in the Bowl Final.
3. Senior clubs had been asking about the Lancashire Cup.

## Governance & Safeguarding

CAB No report:

**Governance** – Nothing brought to my attention at this stage for reporting.

### **Safeguarding**

1. Safeguarding to address and look into the increasing reports of racially motivated abuse of players, in collaboration with Lancashire Discipline secretary BS.
2. National Safeguarding conference is planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2018. At Lensbury Hotel in London. Carol Baker, Christine Spivey to attend as in previous years. CAB wishes to invite a pro-active and long-standing club CSO to attend.
3. CAB has spoken to a volunteer who is very experienced and highly qualified safeguarding officer in her paid employment, about her joining the county safeguarding team. She is VERY interested indeed. Succession planning for the county.
4. Two Play it Safe course delivered this month within the county, Wigan and Aldwinians 51 candidates in total.
5. No safeguarding incidents reported this month.
6. CAB spent the morning with the National coach educators and safeguarding Team at Twickenham, last week. Day three of the consultation and re-writing/updating of the National training for safeguarding. (Play it Safe and In Touch - RFU safeguarding courses).

### Discipline

JSG No Report.

### Correspondence.

There was no correspondence appertaining to the meeting.

### New Members

J Kollard & P Ribchester approved as Annual Members.

### 50:50 Draw

Jan 18	Value	Feb 18	Value
D Welsh	£53.10	H Henderson	£53.10
P Hanson	£8.85	M Brennand	£8.85
G Spenglar	£8.85	D Matthews	£8.85
G Spenglar	£8.85	S Knowles	£8.85
P Hanson	£8.85	M Cornelia	£8.85

### Date of next meeting:

Next Meeting: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018

### Any other Business

1. KA – Due to unavailability at next RFU Council meeting MD will deputise.

2. KA – As Chair of a group considering succession planning RFU are looking at a CB volunteer welcome pack.
3. MD – sought approval for a change in the format to board meetings where written reports would be sent and short questions asked if required. Thereafter there would be discussion of important future topics and planning. Board accepted.
4. JSG enquired about next Board meeting being in North of County.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:20pm

 Chairman Date 5 March 2016