



ENGLISH RUGBY COUNTIES ASSOCIATION

Counties in Membership

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Cheshire
Cornwall
Devon
Durham
Eastern Counties
Essex
Gloucestershire
Hampshire
Hertfordshire

Lancashire
Middlesex
North Midlands
N.L.D.
Oxfordshire
Somerset
Staffordshire
Surrey
Sussex
Warwickshire

Associate Members

Derbyshire
Lincolnshire
Nottinghamshire

MINUTES of the meeting held at Fiveways Old Edwardians RFC at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday 21st June 2015

Counties represented:

Peter Rhodes	Cheshire	Norman Robertson	N.C.A.
Alan Mitchell (Treasurer)	Cornwall	Colin Baldwin	Oxfordshire
John Drew	Devon	Paddy Gregan	Oxfordshire
Peter Williams	Gloucestershire	Rob Forsyth	Staffordshire
David Herriman	Lancashire	Frank Edmonds	Sussex
Brian East (Secretary)	Middlesex	Roger Edmundson	Sussex
Peter Grace (Chairman)	North Midlands	Ken Nichols	Sussex
Steve Guy	North Midlands	Charlie McGinty	Warwickshire

1. PRELIMINARIES

Peter Grace welcomed all to the meeting and requested that we should all contact the members who had not been able to attend to encourage them to come to the meetings. He stated that he was going to write to Jonathan Dance congratulating him on his year as the President of the RFU and to Peter Baines for his elevation to Senior Vice-President of the RFU. He would also write to congratulate Jason Leonard on his Presidency of the RFU.

Colin Baldwin reported that Malcolm Wharton is open to attending ERCA meetings.

Brian East reported that Rob Briers was unable to attend.

Brian East apologised for the short notice for the change of date. This was due to a mistake made by him in making the booking for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES were received from:

Jonathan Dance	Berkshire & RFU President	Gordon Roulinson	Derbyshire
David McAteer	Berkshire	Ivor Smith	Essex
Anthony Flack	Buckinghamshire	Rick Scott	Hampshire
Richard Simeons	Cornwall	Jed Stone	Hampshire
		Peter Baines	Hertfordshire

David Roberts	& RFU Junior VP Hertfordshire	Bill Beaumont Malcolm Wharton	RFU Chairman RFU Chairman of CGB
John Greenwood	Lancashire	Malcolm Caird	Surrey
David Hodgson	Lancashire	Andy Shorney	Somerset
Rob Briers	Lancashire	Des Chalmers	Somerset
Charlie Hemmings	North Midlands	Jim Bambrick (President)	Warwickshire

3. MINUTES of meeting held on 25th January 2015

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

4. Matters arising from previous meetings

4.1 CB Reserves

Peter Grace reported on the matter of CB reserves. The matter is to be left to each of the CBs to determine their own policy on the amounts to be kept for their own purposes although the recommendation from the CGB is for each CB to reduce their reserves to a recommended value over 5 years. The recommendations from the RFU should be considered as a guidance only, this is not an RFU policy.

Peter Williams said that Gloucestershire's policy is to ensure that all PFR funding is spent with no surplus being carried forward. The PFR cultural change on delivery is taking time to bed in.

4.2 Payment of Players Task Group

Norman Robertson spoke on this topic and reported that he was a member of the task group which reported to the CGB. The NCA were not in favour of the recommended policy and were against the principle of a salary cap. They prefer that effort and money was put into improving ground standards to an agreed standard. There are standards in place for the Premiership clubs and a plan exists to set minimum standards for championship and level 3 clubs. Level 4 clubs were waiting for the Adult Competition review report. The Player Payment task group will be making recommendations to be agreed by the CGB but not implemented until the Adult Competition review has been completed.

4.3 Rugby Football Foundation

Peter Grace gave an update on the RFF and said that the grants and loans were on target. Leroy Angel is retiring after many years of service in assisting clubs throughout the country to improve their facilities. He will continue to serve on the loan panel. Malcolm Wharton will be replacing Leroy as Chairman of the RFF Trustees.

4.4 CB Roles and responsibilities

It was agreed that ERCA will maintain a watching brief on this topic.

4.5 Medical Provision

Charlie McGinty reported that the situation had not changed.

Peter Rhodes asked whether we should provide better medical facilities at our clubs. He is going to prepare a report on concussion for Cheshire and he agreed to circulate it to members.

Norman Robertson said that NCA had recommendations for their clubs although the issue of clubs that fail to maintain the expected standards has not yet been resolved.

Colin Baldwin said that the RFU Governance Committee met on 18th June and agreed a regulation for the provision of doctors at Championship level. Other levels were not covered. Steve Guy stated that this was a recommendation and was not yet mandatory.

5. **County Championship Review Group**

- 5.1 Steve Guy indicated that the initial recommendations had been circulated by Rob Briers but they had not yet been placed before RFU Council. There are apparently no changes for the 2015-2016 season. The meeting agreed to wait until the revised recommendations are issued and further agreed that if there are RFU Competitions they should be properly funded.

6. **Adult Competition Review**

- 6.1 Colin Baldwin reported that the external review will be starting in September 2015. The RFU Council had agreed the questions to be reviewed before the survey commences. The process will be open and transparent and CBs will be involved in the process. The intention is that the findings of the review will be ready for the January 2016 RFU Council meeting.

7. **RWC2015 – reports from members on Legacy projects; the Pack (volunteers)**

- 7.1 Peter Grace reported that the Area Legacy groups are to be stood down in Spring 2016.
- 7.2 Charlie McGinty reported of on the success on the RWC2015 tour in Donegal in the previous week. He recommended that each CB should take responsibility for promoting their own activities.

8. **Future Direction of ERCA**

- 8.1 All agreed that

- The meeting schedule is acceptable
- The steering group meetings were working well
- Communications could be improved with perhaps a newsletter every 2 months
- Involvement of more members from the CBs was to be encouraged.

Peter Williams said that the momentum of ERCA should spring from the steering group

Colin Baldwin emphasised that ERCA represented the views of geographic CBs and that we need to widen our horizons to understand the views from the game.

9. **Any other Business**

- 9.1 Norman Robertson spoke about a rumour that the Premiership was to be ring fenced and this met with disapproval from all present.
- 9.2 Charlie McGinty reported that there may be changes to the International ticket pricing and that details were to be available shortly

The meeting closed at 12:30 with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

The A.G.M. then took place and is minuted separately and covered the meeting schedule for 2015-2016

Signed by Peter Grace, Chairman, as a true record of the meeting

_____ Date _____