

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF
LANCASHIRE COUNTY RUGBYFOOTBALL UNION
HELD AT TYLDESLEY RUGBY CLUB ON 11th AUGUST 2021**

President Gill Burns MBE welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Rob Briers, Malcolm Phillips, Peter Hughes, Noel Atkinson, Dave Hodgson, Tom Fitzgerald, John Greenwood, Gary Morgan, John Bullough, Ernie Haynes (Burnage), Mick Nichols (Burnley), Adrian Goulding (Wigan) Iain Crossley (Preston Grasshoppers), Brian Stevenson (Ormskirk), Kate Bennetta, John Jeskins (MADREFS), Alec Graham (Rossendale), Nick Ingham (Rossensdale), Mike Cornelia , Frank Morgan,

2. Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on Thursday 8th April held on Zoom.

All minutes have been circulated and they are on the Lancashire County RFU website.

3. Matters arising.

There were no matters arising.

4. RFU Representatives Report.

This report had been circulated and Ken Andrews and Dave Clarke spoke briefly. Although there had not been a lot of travelling it had been a very busy year and lots of decisions had had to be made. ! The report from the Council Meeting in June had been circulated as stated and showed that Rob Briers would be the RFU President in 2022/2023 which was also the World Cup year in France.

Ken also then went on to explain the various roles within the Council including a new Chair of the Management Committee as the ' Old Chair ' had had his six years .

5. County Rugby Report.

Howard Hughes reported that there would not be a County U15 side as it had been decided that the DPP was the best place for them at the moment.

There would be an U16 taken from the DPP.

The U15 Girls would play Yorkshire after Christmas and Mike Dale was not responsible for that section.

The U17 Male team would have three home games this season.

There was no National U18 team this year but there may be Divisional U18 teams.
The U18 Girls would play two games against Yorkshire.

It was hoped that The Royals would play but that would be dependent upon financial constraints.

Regarding the Male and Female U20s the RFU had yet to make a decision.

6. Election of three members to the Disciplinary Committee

John Rawsom

Steve Blackburn

Tommy Hughes

7. Election of Chairman and five members of the Cup and Competitions Committee

Chairman Mike Cornelia

Secretary Brian Hurst

Bill Lowe

Brian Minor

Tommy Hughes

Dave Clarke

8. Election of four members to the Club and Community Rugby Committee

Kate Benatta (Co opted)

Val Blackburn

Helen Duggan

Steve Blackburn

9. Election of two members to the Financial and Finance Committee

Chris Smail

Stephen Briers

10. Election of two representatives to the Schools' Committee.

Dave Herriman and Peter Hughes BEM

11. Election of two representatives to the Mini and Junior Committee

Ian Spivey

Allen Bower

The above Committees were all proposed and seconded at the AGM prior to this meeting and were ratified en bloc.

12. Election of Hon County Doctor

James Widnall has had to stand down due to work commitments. M. Downs thanked him for his services. The post was not vacant and would be filled by co option.

13. Election of Hon County Legal Advisor

John Bullough Proposed by Alan James. Seconded by Tommy Hughes.

14. Election of the Hon County Team Secretary

Steve Rigby Proposed by Ian Spivey. Seconded by Alan James.

15. Election of Hon Membership Secretary

Ann Marie Briers Proposed by Carol Baker. Seconded by Ian Spivey

16. Election of two representatives to the Northern Leagues Sub Committee.

Dave Clarke Proposed by Brian Hurst. Seconded by Mark Downs.

Ken Potter Proposed by Brian Hurst. Seconded by Mark Downs.

17. Election of one representative to the NOWIRL Committee

Tommy Hughes Proposed by Brian Stott. Seconded by Malcolm Worsley.

18. Election of one representative to the Colts League Committee

Tommy Hughes Proposed by Brian Stott. Seconded by Malcolm Worsley.

19. Election of Child Safeguarding Manager and two Deputy Safeguarding Managers

Carol Baker Proposed by Howard Hughes. Seconded by Mark Downs

Christine Spivey Proposed by Howard Hughes Seconded by Mark Downs

20. Election of County Webmaster

Anne Clarke Proposed by Brian Stott. Seconded by Steve Blackburn.

21. Correspondence

There was no correspondence appertaining to this meeting.

22. Dates of General Committee Meetings for 2021/22

Wednesday 24th November 2021 at Preston Grasshoppers RFC(Inc Financial AGM) 7pm

Wednesday 23rd March 2022 at Liverpool St Helens RFC 7pm

23. Date and time of next meeting 24th November 2021 7.00pm at Preston Grasshoppers RFC

24. AOB

There was a query regarding travel money to the IOM from Broughton Pk , is it guaranteed or does it have to be applied for ? DC said that the money for the IOM is guaranteed but he would check. There was some concern regarding the ferry as the timetable does not suit/fit in with the Rugby KO time etc, DC suspected that this may be the case for a while.

Ian Spivey announced that the U16 were trialling the 'High Tackle' rule to enable clubs to get involved with the new regulations. He was looking for clubs to participate.

There was a query from the floor regarding whether serious injuries should be reported to the RFU. Brian Stott thought that all serious injuries should be notified to the RFU but he would find out more.

Ian Scott Brown would replace Brian Minor as an Individual Members Rep.

The meeting closed at 7.57pm

Attendees

President	Gill Burns MBE
Senior Vice President	Brian Stott
Vice President	Brian Stott
Vice President	Alan James
Past President	Ernie Neely
Past President	Malcolm Worsley
Past President	Dave Herriman
Past President	Ken Andrews
Hon Secretary	Mark Downs
Hon Treasurer	Paul Deakin
Chairman of Finance	Chris Smail
Director of Rugby	Howard Hughes
Aldwinians	D Hardy
Aspull	S Bailey
Broughton Pk	A P Marsland
Broughton	M F Seers
Didsbury Toc H	C Smail

Firwood Waterloo	T Mc Clure
Fleetwood	S Doherty
Heaton Moor	D Todd
Littleboro'	B Hurst
LSH	D Woodcock
Lostock	A James
Manchester	T Harper
Nth Manchester	I Mac
Orrell	G Winstanley
Rochdale	S Blackburn
Warrington	G R Penks
West Pk	C Hilton
Widnes	M Griffiths
Wigan	D Clarke
Wythenshaw	D Birchall
Mini and Junior	I Spivey
Colts League	A James
Safeguarding	C Spivey
	C Baker
League	
	D Clarke
Finance	P Deakin
Individual Members	C Smail
Individual Members	I S Brown
	A Clarke
	J Griffin
	M Herriman



**LANCASHIRE COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION
GENERAL MEETING 11TH AUGUST 2021
RFU REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Lancashire RFU Council Members for 2021-22:

Rob Briers	RFU Junior Vice President
Ken Andrews	Chair- RFU Council Nominations Standing Committee Member of Education and Age Grade Sub Committee RFU Representative to ERFUSU.
Dave Clarke	Member of Adult Competition Management Sub Committee Chair- Community Competitions Appeals Group.

Notes from RFU Council Meeting held on Friday 11th June 2021

The virtual meeting was chaired by President Jeff Blackett
presentation

1. Introductions and Welcome

President welcomed the following observers to the meeting.

- Tom Ilube – Chair of Management Boards Elect
- Polly Williams -INED Elect
- Members for National Youth Council
- Newly elected Council members

2. Decisions made using Email Protocol since the last meeting:

- Mike Waplington was appointed as Chair of the NGB Review Group.

3. National Youth Council presentation:

- Work of NYC and its increased integration with Council Committees and Sub-committees
- CGB Project – Young Volunteers- keen to engage with CBs and Clubs
- PGB Project- understanding why some Academy released players are lost to the game.

4. CEO's Report- Bill Sweeney:

Six Nations

- a. Men- Review held following disappointing 5th place with several areas for improvement being identified. Coaching team to be refreshed.
- b. Women- 3rd successive Six Nations title. Preparations for RWC in New Zealand are being made.

Commercial:

- a. Broadcasting rights
 1. Six Nations- new four year agreement with BBC and ITV and BBC will provide full coverage.
 2. World Cup bid 2025 of Women's Six Nations
 3. Autumn Internationals-rights for 2021 Autumn is to be announced.
 4. Summer tests will be broadcast by C4

World Rugby:

Jonathan Webb has been elected to WR Executive Committee

Brain Injury Litigation:

A formal claim has yet to be received.

Return to Play:

Progress of Return to Rugby has been halted due to Government concerns re new Covid variants.
(**Post note-** return to full contact, scrums and mauls allowed after 19th July).



5. Women's Rugby World Cup Bid 2025:- Steve Grainger

- Formal process to bid for WRWC 2025 launched in February 2021
- RFU have made their first phase submission- France and USA have also submitted.
- Final bids to be made by January 2022.

6. Community Game Update- David Roberts

CGB key issues:

- a. Business plans & budgets
- b. Return to Rugby
- c. County Championship Review
- d. Project Touchstone (player affiliation)
- e. Girls Age Grade Band Review
- f. All Schools Review
- g. Safeguarding
- h. FCS implementation (in conjunction with Governance)

7. Community Game – Rugby Union Winter Survival Fund.

1. Loans- 123 applications received totalling £11.5 million
Applications being assessed by joint RFU/DCMS panel
2. Grants- 565 applications received with 512 awards to totalling £18.3 million made.
Sample audits are being carried out.
3. In total clubs have received nearly £30m from Government's Survival Fund.

8. Project Touchstone- Ben Lowe

Project Touchstone looks to deliver a new mandatory player affiliation process for adult community rugby players and the aim is to:

- Give players control over their own data records.
- Increase the ability for clubs, CBs and RFU to communicate with players more effectively.
- Provide better data to aid decision making.

Scheme will soft launch in 2021/22 and if successful a recommendation will be made to Council that affiliation become mandatory at all levels of the Community game in 2022/23.

9. Financial Report & Business Plan – Sue Day

a. RFU Financial Model-

The need to plan over a four year Rugby World Cup cycle, highlighting that 80% of the revenues are dependent on the playing of Men's England games at Twickenham

b. Financial Report:-

- Covid pandemic has had significant effect on Union's revenues with the Autumn matches and Six Nations matches being played behind closed doors.
- This has resulted in a forecast loss of £25m compared to an anticipated profit of £10m in a normal year 2 of a RWC cycle- Loss would have been higher if action to reduce cost base not been taken.

c. Business planning-

- This has been exceedingly difficult due to the uncertainties as to the short & long term impact of the Covid pandemic.
- 2021/22 plan has been prepared on the basis, on average, attendance will be 50% of normal (returning to 100% in 2022/23).
- Therefore cost base must be reset. Average expenditure over a RWC cycle should be reduced from £160m to £140m

Should revenues recover more quickly, expenditure levels will be revisited.

- d. Borrowings:-
-RFU's borrowings peaked at £65m and are currently at £60m with a further £50m of contracted facilities available.
- If the situation does not worsen, it is anticipated that the Union will be debt free again by 2024.
- This does not assume receipt of the Union's share of the sale of the minority stake in the Six Nations to CVC.
- e. Conclusion:
- The Union remains financially resilient and is well placed to ride out the current financial storm caused by Covid and recover in the short to medium term.

10. Professional Game Board- Conor O'Shea

- a. *Academies*
Since the cancellation of the Premiership Cup there has been a lack of meaningful competition for younger players. 'Second team' matches between Premiership clubs are currently being arranged on an ad hoc basis.
- b. *PRISP Report*
Key focus on:
- Match injury severity reducing through WR law change
 - Match concussion incidence reducing through WR law change
 - Training injury risk
 - Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) extending the moratorium on new AGPs
- c. *Premiership Rugby & Minimum Standards Criteria:*
- Discussions continue with Premiership and Championship clubs on the best way to 'Reset and Recover' over the next three seasons.
 - The final decision on the structure of the Premiership and Championship rests with Council and an additional Council meeting has been called for 29th June for decision.
(Post note- Council approved the proposals for the interim structure of the Premiership and Championship for the next three seasons.
- d. *Championship Working Group.*
A working group has been set up to consider the future of the Championship, its role and competition format. The group will start work in July and submit its report in December 2021.

11. World Rugby Update - Deborah Griffin

Council received an update on World Rugby's role and structure

12. Governance Standing Committee Report- Chris Cuthbertson

Council approved the changes and delegated final drafting to Governance:

a. Regulation 3 – Membership

The requirements for clubs to become voting members of the Union have been clarified and simplified.

b. Regulation 9 – Player Safety

Requirements for pitch side first aid provided by clubs and match organisers have been increased. Regulation will not become mandatory until 2022/23 but clubs are advised to adopt the provisions as soon as possible.

c. Regulation 15- Rules of Play

Tackle height has been reduced to the armpit for the U15 to U18 age grades in line with the rest of the age grade game.

Governance approved a trial whereby the height of the tackle is further lowered to waist height in specified in U16 to U18 age grade competitions.



d. NCA

Council approved a request from the National Clubs Association (NCA) to change its name to National League Rugby (NLR). The new name to be adopted in the 2021/22 regulations.

13. Board Nominations Committee Report- Dominic Proctor

The following recommendations were approved by the Board:

- National Members on Council: Maggie Alphonsi and Martin Corry
- Chair of Rugby Football Foundation: Kirsty Marlor
- Remuneration Committee Members: Naomi Sutcliffe (Independent) and Simon Wakefield
- Women & Girls Representative on Council: Louise Latter.

14. Council Nominations Committee Report- Mike Waplinton & Ken Andrews

Council approved the following Distinguished Members of the Union:

Malcom Caird (Surrey), Jim Chapman (Yorkshire), Simon Collyer-Bristow (Gloucestershire), David Ewing (Cheshire), Steve Guy (North Midlands), Danny Hodgson (Northumberland), Ron Jones (Dorset & Wilts), Rob Udwin (Middlesex), Mike Waplinton (NLD) and Malcolm Wharton (England Colleges).

15. Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Working Group- Genevieve Glover

Council were updated on the work of two of the task groups:

- Diversity awareness training for Council & CBs- Matt Webb
- Guidance to CBs & Clubs to support inclusive practices- Ralph Knibbs

16. Chair of the Board- Andy Cosslett

Andy Cosslett will step down as Chair of the Board on 31st July. He will be replaced by Tom Ilube whose appointment was confirmed at the AGM.

17. Valette- Jeff Blackett

The President paid tribute to Andy Cosslett and Helen Weir who are both stepping down from the Board and also to the Council members who are leaving the Union including those awarded with Distinguished Membership plus Chris Smith (Buckinghamshire) and Mo Jackson (Devon).

The meeting was followed by the Annual General Meeting.

KA, DC, RTJB. 20.06.21