

LANCASHIRE COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

Minutes of the Board Meeting at Liverpool St Helens FC

Monday 12th December 2022

Present: D. Clarke in the Chair, & Messrs, J.T. Hughes, H. Hughes, K. Andrews, J.R.S. Greenwood, P. Deakin, G.J. Morgan, M.J. Worsley & M. Downs.

In Attendance: Mr. B.H. Stott,.

Apologies: Ms C.A. Baker, R.T.J. Briers, A. Soutar.

CB Relationship Managers Report.

See A Soutar written report, Appendix 1.

Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the Board meeting held on Monday 7th November 2022, (previously circulated) were accepted and signed as a correct record.

Matters arising.

There were no matters arising.

Written Reports.

RFU – Appendix 2.

There were no questions to written reports.

Open Discussion.

RFU County Championship – a tentative budget of £26k has been calculated for the U20s, Senior Womens & Mens County Championship campaigns. With Members income and RFU funding towards the Championships we should be looking at a deficit of £12k.

PD – is comfortable with a very top limit of £30k, we should aim to attract sponsorship to offset this where possible.

MD – to approach LANX Shoe company who appear to be very rugby focused with sponsorship deals with Sale, Leicester and Wigan RL.

PD – We should look to sell the players their playing shirts or new equivalents, this could bring in extra income

MJW – questions travel funding as coach for away game at Herts could be minimum £1250

HH – confirmed there no plans for overnight stays.

There followed a discussion of the relevance of the County Championship. It appears to be important to many of the senior counties as a development tool but not popular with the RFU paid staff at Twickenham.

There had been little recent contact with club champions regarding potential sponsor streams.

Board agreed to add County Championship funding to the agenda for each board meeting going forwards.

U20s Regulations

DC – Both Cornwall and Berkshire Clubs had written to Tim Miller (with no response) regarding their objection to the exclusion of players from Level 3 & 4 clubs from the County Championship.

DC to speak to both Cheshire & Yorkshire to see if we are to follow suit and ask clubs to write formally.

Women & Girls DPP

MD – An email reminder had been received from TW2 requesting update on our DPP planning structure to secure the funding.

KA – has suggested a meeting with HD along with HH & DC to discuss Womens and Girls.

HH – noted that we need the best qualified coaches we can get to coach in the DPP.

HH – RFU age grade affiliation stats show Boys game is up 12% where as girls game is down by 100% in Lancashire which seems to buck the national trend we are advised. This could be part and parcel be the effect of a very successful push by Rugby League and Soccer.

Our U18s Girls should have played Northumberland who refused to travel. Instead they played in a tri tournament in Yorkshire which also included Cheshire and they won both their games.

Papa Johns Cups

DC – National entry at approx. 50%. From an idea of Competitions Department at RFU they suggest a local competition for clubs who have not entered the national cups and for those who are knocked out in the first round.

Colts Regulations

Deferred.

Website

BHS – Struggles to find any information, certainly within “3 clicks” felt it was not very user friendly which agreed by all.

HH – Current site is now 10 years old and a re-vamp would be expensive.

It was agreed to form a review group to look at it and report back to the board.

Correspondence.

None appertaining to this meeting.

New Members.

No applications.

50:50 Draw

Dec 22	Value
CA Baker	£53.40
G Spenglar	£8.90
T Alexander	£8.90
M Cornelia	£8.90
M Cornelia	£8.90

Date of next meeting.

Next Meeting: 6:30 pm on Monday 9th January 2023 via Zoom.

Any other business.

KA – had approached Nigel Gillingham for resources for our Core Values Project to get the message across to Junior Coaches and Parents regarding respect and behaviour.

KA – confirmed that he was stepping down from Council due the end of tenure rules. The vote for his successor also coincides with the 3 year break in the term of DC which would potentially create a vote for both posts.

GJM – only 16% of clubs had complete the Risk Assessment.

MJW – Royals have a squad of 44 players from 17 clubs ready to play the AA's.

CAB – Mark Willis (Clitheroe) & Arthur Crabtree (Didsbury ToCH) had won Honda National Volunteer Awards.

GAB – There are 2 pairs of tickets available for the England v France Womens 6 Nations game at Twickenham available to volunteers within the Girls game.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:24pm

_____ Chairman Date _____

Area Managers Report**Financial Conduct Authority**

The RFU are aware that a number of clubs in Lancashire are registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) as a Cooperative and Community Benefit Society (formerly Industrial and Provident Society).

Aaron / John are contacting the clubs but wanted to make you aware as some of them haven't submitted their account for a number of years.

Society Name	Year of Submission
Fylde Rugby Football Club Limited	2018
Oldham Rugby Union Football Club Limited	2020
Ruskin Park Rugby Football Club Limited	2019

Age Grade Affiliation

Affiliation Demographic Breakdown – overall picture of Affiliation information in Lancashire

Affiliation Change By Club Detailed Table – breakdown of information into more detail

The below clubs have had follow up email from Aaron / John to see if they need help/support.

Aldwinians		Club Developer has sent individual email 7/12/22 - 57 down on last year
North Manchester	Cluster Meeting - virtual/f2f	Club have many age grade players CD and CBSM are working with club to make sure these players are accredited
Vale of Lune		Club Developer has sent individual email 7/12/22 - 57 down on last year

Colts drop support

Leigh	<i>Email sent - 23/09/22 - chased 03/10/22 - chased 10/10/22 +ClubDev. DW - Spoken with Chris, shared Transition Guide, waiting confirmation (10/11/22)</i>	
Southport	<i>Email sent - 23/09/22 - chased 03/10/22 - chased 10/10/22 +ClubDev. DW - Got hold of James Cooke - Colts coach, doesn't seem keen for support but waiting confirmation (10/11/22)</i>	
Liverpool Collegiate	Contact Karl is Manager, spoke with the colts coaches - Jnr & Snr joint team. Training mix in with adults but very well catered for. - chased for confirmation 10/10/22. 12/10/22 - Karl confirmed a decline to the offer	
Littleborough RUFC	<i>Email sent - 23/09/22 - chased 03/10/22 - chased 10/10/22 +ClubDev. DW - Got hold of Paul Deacon (27/10/22), chased again and waiting confirmation (10/11/22)</i>	

LSH	email sent 9/11/22 - reply that they want to be involved in the programme	Combined J&S Colts, squad of 26 with 20 at training. Two transition weekdns held with 5 players moving up to 2nds last weeknd. Looking at help with the transition of the players
Burnley	Emails from 27/10/22. DW - Spoken with Simon, shared Transition Guide, waiting confirmation for coaching visit (10/11/22)	

Course numbers

Below are course numbers as of 12/12/22

	Lancashire County RFU (CB)	
Template	Courses	Bookings
Emergency First Aid in Rugby Union (Full Day)	12	77
England Rugby Coaching Award	7	149
England Rugby Mentoring Award	1	19
England Rugby Referee Award	2	12
Kids First Contact Rugby	9	104
Kids First Tag Rugby	8	72
Play it Safe	7	65
Principles of Scrummaging	8	80
(blank)		
Grand Total	54	578

CB National Call – January

Thursday 8th January 2023 -

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUkfuyqrTwtGND7RzZEhyUMH3vEs-T9cA8G>

January CB Drop-in

The next CB Drop-In Sessions take place on Monday 23rd (7:00PM) and Wednesday 25th (12:00PM) November. Agenda to follow:

Please register using the following links;

- Monday 23rd 7:00PM, <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAud--gpj8iH92LJzAyjcQ8kVJaJminIZB>
- Wednesday 25th 12:00PM - <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYldu-pqjguGNW6xN5ZOE4X-GaIIAdUUlo7>

Targeted Delivery Funding

Update/report on progress to the RFU will be required in January 2023.

Constituent Body	Delivery of local playing opportunities to support adult male players to return to the Game e.g. mid-week fixtures using Game On, triangular fixtures	Delivery of local playing opportunities to support adult male players to return to the Game	CB led Coach Development	Supporting Clubs to establish links with Universities and be ready to welcome student players	Please provide a short description of the activity you are undertaking to grow the Women and Girls' game
Lancashire County RFU	Delivery of local playing opportunities to support adult male players to return to the Game e.g. mid-week fixtures using Game On, triangular fixtures	Delivery of alternative rugby to the traditional 15 a-side Saturday rugby. E.g. 10 a side midweek veterans ladies, touch rugby or walking rugby Etc etc	Repeat of our successful annual coaching conference. Continuation of our County Coaching led 'coach the coach' practical sessions held at different clubs across	Engaging those clubs within easy reach of universities with a view to holding welcome events.	Continuation and expansion of our schools engagement programme working with schools and clubs to introduce girls to rugby and provide a route in to club rugby. Pitch up and play sessions using different forms of the game ranging from full contact to touch rugby sessions

LANCASHIRE COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION LTD
Board Meeting 12th December 2022
RFU Representatives Report

Notes from RFU Council meeting held at Twickenham, Teddington on 25th November 2022

CEO Report-Bill Sweeney

- Bitterly disappointed with the result in the final of the Women's Rugby World Cup in New Zealand but immensely proud of our Red Roses for their performances throughout the tournament
- We are extremely focused on utilising the Red Roses' recent successes and the current spotlight on the women's game to drive the continued growth of the women's and girls' game and inspire future generations.
- 1.5 New Zealand have been fantastic hosts and this has undoubtedly been the biggest and best women's Rugby World Cup we have ever seen; however, we now look forward to picking up the baton and working with World Rugby to take it to another level in 2025.
- Tribute to Sarah Hunter, who, during the tournament, became the most capped England player of all time, surpassing previous record holder Rocky Clark (137 caps).
- Frustrating results in the Men's Autumn Series game with only one win, one draw and two losses. Following a review, Eddie Jones has now been dismissed. In the interim Richard Cockerill will take charge of the team whilst the search for a new Head Coach.
- Acknowledgement of Wayne Barnes' achievement of officiating in over his 100 international test matches.

Community Game Outlook

- A number of important community game-related matters will be covered at this meeting, including a discussion around the 'Community Game Future' and the next steps with regards to adult player affiliation.
- While the outlook for certain parts of the game remains challenging, there is evidence to suggest that interventions in the adult male game in particular are having a positive impact.
- Based on the latest match completion data:
 - a. Adult male league matches – we are continuing to see challenges in the south of England; however, weekly completion is running at 93% (in line with the end-of-season target). We know that this could be negatively affected by adverse weather conditions and other factors as we enter into the winter months, and therefore cannot afford any complacency.
 - b. Adult female league matches – currently tracking at 83% against a target of 80%. Again, we cannot afford any complacency and there is a long way still to go given the later season start.
 - c. Adult male merit tables – we set a realistic but challenging target of more than 60% of leagues being above 70% completion. This is currently at 59%, although good progress has been made over the past few weeks.
- In relation to age grade affiliation, we have almost hit the overall boys end-of-season target of 131,247 (currently at 98.7%) The girls figure currently sits at 17,737 (77% of target), but there is strong confidence that the overall boys and girls target will be achieved.
- The most recent updates on the Adult Male Recovery Plan and Match & Affiliation Data have been uploaded to the Council Hub (see Updates & Informals folder), and further updates will continue to be added as the season progresses.

Player Affiliation

Council approved the effective date for mandatory adult affiliation to take place from 1 August 2023, noting that there will be a graduated introduction of any sanctions framework (as per the age grade game) with Council being requested to approve this aspect by the end of 2022

Coach Succession Planning

- Nigel Redman would present a comprehensive update on the Coach Succession Planning process at the Council Informal in early December.
- This will allow greater time for Nigel to outline the vast amount of work that he and his team have done, and also enable more time for questioning and discussion.
- The initiative is on track from both a men's and women's perspective.

Newcastle Falcons Investigation

- Unfortunately, due to unforeseen personal circumstances, first draft of the independent KC report following the investigation at Newcastle Falcons., it is expected to be received before the end of November.
- Luther Burrell, Newcastle Falcons and the RPA have been kept updated with the progress of the report and the reasons for the delay.

Listening Forums

An 'inclusive conversations project' in collaboration with the RPA and PRL was instigated in the summer. Purpose Union, an external agency, were appointed to undertake 1- 2-1 interviews with female and male players representing England, AP15s and Premiership teams, seeking to understand and baseline the extent to which racism and classism are present in today's game.

HIPM Update

- An update on ongoing activity has been provided in the HIPM Subcommittee Report following the most recent meeting on 3 October.
- Council expressed frustration regarding the media's coverage of this area and it is recognized that the need to get the message out and create greater balance; however, this clearly has to be approached in a careful and considered manner, and it will be a long-term journey.
- Discussions with World Rugby and other Unions took place in Auckland during the Rugby World Cup,

DCMS Committee

Bill Sweeney (RFU) and Simon MassieTaylor (PRL) appeared in front of the DCMS Committee on 24 November following the entry into administration of Wasps and Worcester Warriors.

The session examined issues around the financial structure and viability of the professional game, and also looked at the RFU's and PRL's role in supporting clubs and ensuring the health of the sport. The RFU and PRL were severely criticised by the Select Committee for their handling of the situation, however, some criticism was unjustified.

Premier 15s

- Belinda Moore and Genevieve Shore have been appointed as CEO and Chair respectively of the new Premier 15s entity.
- The redevelopment stage is complete and the project now transitions into delivery, which includes establishing the Board of Directors.
- The Board will be made up of the Chair, CEO, 3 Club representatives, 2 RFU representatives in Conor O'Shea and Alex Teasdale, and 1 INED.
- The Tender process has now closed and the Tender Panel will be ready to announce 8- 10 clubs in December.
- The Club representatives will be appointed when the clubs have been selected, and the INED recruitment will begin shortly.

Stadium Masterplan -Mark Lynch, Director of Venue

- Twickenham Stadium generates a significant proportion of the RFU's revenues to allow reinvestment back into the game at all levels; it also remains our most visible physical asset.
- To ensure these revenues are protected for the long-term, the RFU has embarked on a process of developing an Outline Business Case for the future of Twickenham Stadium to fully understand the status of the current asset, and the optimum long-term stadium solution for the organisation to pursue.
- Mark Lynch, Director of Venue, presented to the Board a number of options and an assessment based on cost, feasibility, future revenues and our strategic aims.

Women's English Qualified Players (EQP) System- Conor O'Shea

The number of clubs meeting the EQP quota per season has reduced year on year, and the number of Non-English players in the league has increased.

AP15s 3.0, which begins in 2023/24, provides an opportunity to review the EQP requirements for the league to ensure they are in line with achieving the revised objectives of the league, and the following objective specifically:

Improve the overall quality of play and produce sufficient world class talent for the Red Roses.

Council **approved** the following:

1. EQP for Stage One of the AP15s for the 23/24 season is set at an average 13, increasing to an average of 14 in the 24/25 season and to an average of 15 in the 25/26 season (to be reviewed ahead of each season using available data).
2. EQP for the Knock-Out Stage of the AP15s is set at 13 per round for the 23/24 season, increasing to 14 in the 24/25 season and to 15 in the 25/26 season (to be reviewed ahead of each season using available data).
3. The removal of the foreign player cap from the AP15s competitions from the 23/24 season onwards.
4. Delegated authority to Governance to review, amend and approve the regulations to reflect the regulatory recommendations set out in this paper and such other changes as may be required.

Key Regulation Changes for 2023-24 Season - Premier 15s Remuneration Cap

- The Remuneration Cap Provisions have been in place in the Premier 15s league since 2020-21 starting with a non-mandatory cap of £60,000 in the 2020-21 season and increasing to £120,000 in the 2021-22 season and retained at £120,000 for the 2022-23 season.
- This paper outlines the data gathering and compliance exercise ahead of the proposed implementation of a mandatory cap for the 2023-24 Season, the consultation with clubs tendering for the Premier 15s 3.0 and player associations, and the regulatory proposals that are being put forward to Council for decision.

Community Game Future- Steve Grainger, David Roberts, Karen Hood

- The aim of this work is to develop a strategy for the community game over the next 10 years as we seek to deliver a safe, inclusive, thriving and sustainable game that unites local communities through the enjoyment of all formats of the game.
- It will directly support the existing RFU Strategic objectives, and particularly Flourishing Rugby Communities, Player enjoyment and Welfare and will also need to address the core elements of our work as an NGB.

A 4-step process has been designed to execute this work:

- a. Agree a Vision for the future of the Community Game – the foundations on which the strategy can be built
- b. Design a clear, measurable Strategy for the RFU's input into the Community Game that is owned and endorsed / understood by stakeholders within the Game.
- c. Develop the optimal Resourcing and investment plan / Delivery Model across the stakeholders in the rugby ecosystem and identifying where RFU financial investment should best be placed.
- d. Ensure delivery of the Strategy in the Community Game throughout the next 10 years

Professional Game Board- Phil de Glanville

Player Eligibility for England

PGB agreed the policy position around England player eligibility as follows:

- It remains a key principle that EQPs who play overseas are not eligible to play for England however, the timing of players joining/ leaving the Premiership needs to be carefully considered in relation to the RWC 2023
- If a current Premiership EQP contracts with an overseas club from 1st July 2023 (i.e. for the 2023/24 season) but does not play or train with their new club until after the conclusion of the RWC 2023, they shall be eligible for EPS selection and for RWC 2023 selection but will no longer be available for England selection immediately post RWC 2023. For the avoidance of doubt a player who has been in the wider RWC 2023 squad but has been released to their overseas club may be called back in as an injury replacement. However, a player who has not been in the initial RWC 2023 squad will be unavailable if he is contracted to an overseas Club.
- Any EQP currently playing overseas but who returns to the Premiership for the 2023/24 season ahead of the RWC 2023 shall be eligible for RWC selection
- Finally, should a Premiership club go into administration or cease to trade and any of their EQPs subsequently join an overseas club they shall be eligible for RWC 2023 selection due to these exceptional circumstances. They will not however be available for EPS/ England selection once the 2023 RWC has concluded.

KA/DC/RTJB

05.12.22