

NC/RFL/COMMBOARD/03022016

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

HELD AT RFL NORTH WEST OFFICES ON WEDNESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2016

Present:

Clare Morrow (Chair)	RFL Non-Executive Director,
Nigel Wood (Chair in part)	RFL Chief Executive Officer
Fred Baker	Independent Member
Peter Moran	Independent Member
Pat Crawshaw	University and Colleges Rugby League
Martin Coyd OBE	Tiers 5 & 6 Adult Leagues (retiring)
Neil Ashton	English Schools representative
Steve Manning	BARLA
Jan Robinson	Tier 5 & 6 Youth, Junior & Primary
Stuart Sheard	Tiers 5 & 6 Adult Leagues
WO Damian Clayton MBE	GB Armed Forces Rugby League

Apologies:

Trevor Hunt	Tier 4 Conference Leagues
Sue Taylor	BARLA

In Attendance:

Jon Roberts	RFL Director Performance & Coaching
David Butler	RFL Head of Community Game Delivery
Dave Rotheram (in part)	RFL Head of Talent Player & Development
Paul Kendall (in part)	Sport England Relationship Manager
Sarah-Jane Gray (in part)	RFL Communications Consultant
Tony Fretwell (in part)	RFL National Player Development Manager
Kelly Barrett	RFL Head of Operations
Nicola Carass	RFL Secretary/Administrator(minute taker)

ITEM

ACTION

1.0 WELCOME & APOLOGIES

1.1 Welcome and Introduction

Mr Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted as above. Introductions were made for the benefit of Jan Robinson and Stuart Sheard who now join the Board and also Jon Roberts, Director of Performance and Development, who is now responsible for the Community Department.

In addition Mr Wood asked that condolences were passed on to Sue Taylor on her recent family bereavement.

Mr Manning relayed thanks from Ms Taylor for the flowers received.

1.2 Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct

The Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct were tabled as a refresher for members of the Board. There was a discussion around the time members can sit on the Board.

ALL

Mr Ashton stated that although he had been a member of the Board for less than a year only now did he feel he understood the role and purpose and felt that two year terms were too short to make a valuable contribution. Mr Baker agreed.

Mr Wood explained that the RFL Board members are appointed on three yearly terms and suggested that perhaps this could be considered for the Board. It was agreed that this will be picked up in the piece of work already in progress to review the Terms Of Reference for the Board.

Ms Morrow advised that the Board Code of Conduct document was not the final version and that a clause around collective responsibility had been added. Ms Barrett agreed to add this as part of the review work.

WO Clayton said there needs to be respect for confidentiality and anything said in the meetings should stay within the Boardroom. Ms Morrow agreed however there has to be a balance between confidentiality and information flow to the groups that members represent. Mr Manning said that one solution was to circulate the minutes to the members faster and Mr Sheard also suggested that a summary of the meetings with key points be one way of informing League representatives. Ms Morrow agreed that a summary of the key points could be the answer. Mr Roberts agreed the need to circulate the minutes within 2 weeks of the meeting.

2.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 Receive the minutes from the Community Board

Ms Morrow requested an amendment to minutes of the previous meeting, held on 7 October 2015.

CM

It was agreed that an addition to the first paragraph of 10.1 be inserted "The Community Board accepted Cumbrian Men's League's request to become an RFL Member League". Mr Butler circulated an email from Alan Davidson.

It was also noted that Trevor Hunt was in fact in attendance at that meeting.

With the inclusions of these additions the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

3.0 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Action Tracker

A discussion took place around the actions and amendments were made.

CM

Action 1: Mr Butler updated on the registrations from the winter season stating that there had been a decrease of 182 players in the Pennine League from the 2014/15 season to the 2015/16 season, and a decrease of 51 in the Hull & District League covering the same period.

Action 2: Mr Sellers replied to Mr Rimmer confirming that there were no plans to re-establish the Yorkshire ARL League.

All the other actions marked as complete were accepted as being complete and those not currently started or underway will be added onto the new action tracker attached.

4.0 STANDING REPORTS

Ms Morrow advised the Board that going forward the Standing Reports were primarily for information with time at the meeting focused on seeking clarification or asking questions rather than presentation or significant discussion on the contents of the reports. Items for discussion would be identified separately on the agenda.

4.1 Community Delivery

Mr Butler delivered his report to the Board.

Mr Baker suggested that Match Officials should be included in future reports as the number of games is increasing however we need to be confident that the number of match officials meets the demand. Mr Butler agreed to this suggestion.

DB

Mr Wood enquired as to what arrangements are made on re-arranging fixtures as he did not believe that the press portrayed an accurate picture of the results on a weekend.

Mr Butler explained that virtually all Leagues use the League Management System which allows for closer analysis of fixture completion rates however when a game is postponed the results sent to the press simply show postponements and not the rearranged dates. Mr Butler agreed to investigate whether a process could be added to the League Management System to capture when games are being moved to.

DB

4.2 Player Development Report

The report was taken as read. WO Clayton asked what the geographic location of the 64 accredited schools were. Mr Fretwell advised that Secondary schools in the North-East and with Wigan Foundation were where the biggest uptakes had been. However, there are a few clusters around the country, stretching as far as Devon, Cornwall and London.

With the U12-U13 and U14 development, a total of 2378 players accessed the Embed the Pathway programme through schools or community clubs, attending development days at professional clubs. 174 player development coaches have been accredited, with 38 accredited clubs and 64 fully accredited schools. This means that these schools have committed to delivering the Embed the Pathway curriculum at Key Stage 3 Physical Education, which could be received by 28,000 potential learners.

Mr Rotheram informed the Board of the process and purpose of professional club Academies being granted category 1 & 2 status. Academies have been issued with Service Level Agreements outlining what is expected of them by the RFL.

In brief, the Board was updated on Embed the Pathway (ETP) by Mr Fretwell and Mr Rotheram. Agenda point 5 (see below)

4.2.1 Player Development Sub Group Recommendations

Ms Crawshaw's paper was taken as read the Board felt that this was a worthwhile sub group and felt that the group should continue whether this be a formal meeting or via virtual medium. Ms Crawshaw agreed to work with executives to identify the best way for this work to continue.

PC/DB

4.3 Operations Report

The Community Board received an update from Ms Barrett on Operational matters. The Community Board noted the work that was to be undertaken by the Community Board Regulatory Group;

KB

- 1: Arbitration which will be introduced in the 2017 Operational Rules,
- 2: Discipline Process and Procedures are to be revisited with each of the Community Game Disciplinary and Appeals Chairs,
- 3: Affiliated Leagues Competition Rules which are to be reviewed against the Operational Rules to see if there are any conflicts.

The Annual Safeguarding Report was also received with the following actions noted.

Item 2.1.2 (Safeguarding in the Girls Game) to be added to the Community Game Risk Register.

Ms Morrow said that the Safeguarding case load had increased and asked whether there was any comparative data to other sports. Ms Barrett agreed to follow up.

KB

Mr Coyd asked about the progress on the Respect Campaign. Mr Clayton added that a relaunch was long overdue. Mr Roberts advised that Julia Lee was working on Respect. Mr Wood confirmed that this was a priority for the RFL Board and suggested an update at the next meeting.

JR

4.4 Marketing and Communication

Ms Morrow introduced Sarah-Jane Gray who updated the Board on progress with marketing and communications, mainly the development of the website.

Mr Sheard suggested that more Community RL news and results could be added to the RFL website which would reinforce the fact that the game is played nationally and has a wide reaching geographical spread at Tier 5. It was agreed that a toolkit of best practise be produced to help Clubs and Leagues to generate content for the site. Ms Gray agreed to action this.

SJG

Ms Gray advised all results are on the new RFL website listed under League or Competition and the new site was briefly demonstrated.

Ms Crawshaw said her first impression of the site was good but agreed Community news needed expanding. Ms Gray advised the Board that the project is a work in progress and any suggestions and ideas were welcome. The site is running concurrent with the existing one.

SJG

4.4.1 Mr. Butler presented his paper regarding Community events which included a generic communications and marketing plan for the identified events.

A discussion followed regarding promoting the different tiers and how to move forward. It was agreed that three or four events would be selected for 2016 to really focus upon, which would cover a spread of the game. This would be based on agreed criteria based on the impact these events had the capacity to deliver. SJG would bring the list of selected events back to the May meeting.

5.0 EMBED THE PATHWAY

Mr. Fretwell delivered his presentation to the Board.

The most salient points to note were as follows;

- More access to development days with possible multi club involvement.
- Various development days considering ages and capability.
- Two stands, Schools and Community Clubs, working in synergy.
- The quartile distribution of those attending matched the distribution of the playing population thus providing evidence of combatting Relative Age Effect.
- 2300 had attended Development Days. Over 2400 had an online profile.
- Schools and social media used to inform of events.
- Self-review process with Ofsted-type challenges; if accredited partners and schools do not comply they lose the accreditation.
- Target 270 schools. 64 already accredited with 38 Community Clubs.
- Broaden and upskill staff, increase confidence and feed community clubs.
- Interim reports conducted two yearly
- Continual progress, accelerated learning, age specific in a community setting. More talent from various sources, i.e. School only and other sports.

DR/TF

Mr Rotheram added that development days with access within the community was a better way to engage. Mr Roberts added that high performing players grow and develop at the events and are not left behind as some are. ETP offers a balance with development days built into any development plan, staff will be upskilled improving confidence and feedback into communities. Thanking Messrs Rotheram and Fretwell, Ms Morrow invited them to attend further Board meetings to update on ETP.

6.0 SKY TRY

Tracy Power was introduced as the Sky Try Programme Manager and has been in post since November 2015.

TP

Ms Power gave an overview of the Sky Try Programme explaining that the program is funded for 7 years by Sky with set KPIs over 4 project strands with an objective to introduce 700,000 more young people to Rugby League.

The figures given by Ms Power were questioned. Ms Power explained that the data generated is inputted into Upshot by the delivery partners.

The most salient points of Ms Power's presentation were as follows;

- Consistent looking brand with branded kit.
- Thorough monitoring and evaluation.
- All delivery partners must demonstrate good governance.
- Opportunity for girls to access RL and increase profile.
- Stronger partnerships with professional clubs, schools and community clubs.
- New delivery programme with dedicated managers delivering additionality rather than replacing existing delivery.

Mr Wood added that the Sky Try project presents a significant opportunity however there is some refinement needed including the exit routes from the delivery.

Mr Sheard asked how the clubs/foundations will be monitored moving forward. Ms Power explained that all delivery partners will be closely scrutinised using their data uploaded to Upshot as well as observations of their delivery.

Ms Morrow invited Ms Power to report at future meetings to provide further updates.

7.0 DCMS/SPORT ENGLAND STRATEGY UPDATE

Ms Morrow introduced Mr Kendall from Sport England. Mr Kendall presented to the Board on the government's strategy for sport, which included a review of the Department for Culture and Sport (DCMS) strategy which was released prior to Christmas and an update on the progress with the writing of Sport England's own strategy. Slides from the presentation will be circulated to the Board.

Key points to note are as follows:

- Links to positive change with a consumer approach
- Measurable outcomes, with 23 KPIs identified in the DCMS strategy.
- The age remit has been lowered to starting from 5 years of age outside of school.
- All partners will need to adhere to good governance, as has been the case for NGBs up to now.
- Inclusion agenda for Physical Activity to widen.

Mr Kendall advised that Sport England are now at a consultation phase with their strategy, which has included meeting with key people from a number of organisations, including Chief Executive Officers of National Governing Bodies.

There is also an online consultation which members of the Board are invited to complete and can be found at: <http://sportengland.org/consultation>

Mr Kendall updated that a new measure, provisionally titled “Active Lives” will be used which will be more encompassing than the Active People Survey currently in use. More information will follow on Active Lives in due course.

Ms Morrow thanked Mr Kendall for the update and suggested that Mr Kendall be invited to attend further meetings of the Community Board to continue a close working relationship between the RFL and Sport England.

8.0 RFL COMMUNITY STRATEGY

8.1 Update on the Progress of Forming and Reforming Sub Groups

Mr Butler presented a paper explaining the progress on establishing or reviewing Community Board Sub-Groups.

Specifically he explained that a meeting had taken place between himself, Mr Roberts, Ms Morrow and Ms Crawshaw to identify possible members of the Women’s Game Strategy Group.

Ms Morrow said that the remit for this group was not just to write a playing strategy but to understand the role and value of women in Rugby League more broadly as spectators and volunteers. Messrs Moran and Sheard agreed with the importance of this.

Further Mr Butler explained that there is no need to establish a Sub-Group for Armed Forces as this is already in place with the Great Britain Armed Forces Management Board and that discussions were to take place at the GBAF AGM on 12 February on how to improve communication with the Community Board

Mr Butler explained that the Wheelchair Rugby League Management Group currently exists to manage the Competition and that he would be discussing the expansion of this remit to cover the wider disability agenda with Mr Coyd in the coming months.

Finally Mr Butler drew the Board's attention to changes proposed to the UCRL Board detailed in the paper. Ms Crawshaw confirmed that she is supportive of the proposals and as such the Board approved the recommendations.

8.2 Consider the Community Strategy and Discuss Prioritisation

Owing to time it was decided to postpone this item to the next meeting.

9.0 COMMUNITY GAME GAMBLING POLICY

Ms Barrett presented a paper on the implementation of a Community Game Gambling Policy which would be created by the RFL's Legal Department.

The need has arisen as more bookmakers are offering odds on markets that involve Community Game Clubs.

In particular the National Conference League would need to insert a rule into their Competition rules stating that club officials, volunteers and players should not bet on any matches within a Competition that their Club plays in, or provide any information about squads of other match related information to third parties that they believe could be used for betting purposes.

The Board agreed with the implementation of such a policy.

10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

WO Clayton raised the issue of Armed Forces players also being permitted to play for Professional Clubs in the Challenge Cup Competition and cited a previous discussion where the Board had agreed to look into this.

Ms Barrett confirmed that discussions did take place on this matter however to simplify the regulations on players playing in the Competition it was decided that players could only play for one club in the Challenge Cup

WO Clayton felt that this restricted the opportunity for Armed Forces players.

Mr Butler asked why there is difference between Armed Forces players and players who play in the Great Britain Police or one of the Student teams all of which may contain players who also hold a professional contract.

Mr Wood expressed reservations to players playing for more than one Club in the Competition.

Ms Barrett agreed that any changes to the rules around the registration of players would be better communicated for the 2017 Competition in the early rounds guide.

As there was no further business the meeting concluded at 15.09pm

11.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

25 May 2016