

MINUTES

COMMUNITY BOARD

Location:	Boardroom/Meeting Room One, RFL North West Offices, Quay West, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester, M17 1HH	Date:	Wednesday, 07 September 2016
Invited to Attend:	Alison O'Brien (In Part), Damian Clayton MBE (In part), Chris Rankin-Wright (In part) Dave Rotheram, David Raybould, Fred Baker, Jan Robinson, Jenny Baxter, John McMullen, Jon Roberts, Kelly Barrett, Neil Ashton, Peter Moran, Trevor Hunt (arrived 11.05), Sarah-Jane Gray, Stuart Sheard, Sue Taylor	Time:	10.30am -3.00pm
Apologies:	Pat Crawshaw, Nigel Wood	Chair Person:	Clare Morrow

Item No.	Agenda Item	Responsibility
1.0	<p>Welcome and apologies of absence</p> <p>Apologies were received by Mr Wood and Ms Crawshaw.</p>	
2.0	<p>Minutes from the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes from the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record. Mr Roberts stated the full minutes from this meeting will be uploaded onto the website as quickly as possible. The minutes are to be self-contained including brief content of the presentations and papers. It was agreed the minutes from the last 12 months will also be uploaded.</p>	Jenny Baxter
3.0	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>Mr Raybould stated there is nothing out of date on the Action Tracker due to items coming forward on the November meeting. In future, green action points are to be taken off after one Board meeting following their completion. Mr Roberts suggested the Action Tracker should not be colour coded and only the deadline date to be used.</p> <p>The November meeting will require updates on the November deadlines.</p>	

	<p>Mr McMullen was actioned to send Mr Sheard an update on Action point 9- 'To raise training with the match official's department on the completion of disciplinary report forms.'</p> <p>Jan Robinson and Mr Sheard requested an update on the RFL central database for invitations. Mr Roberts summarised the event invitation process. It was agreed more efficiency is needed. The central list to be checked and confirmed.</p>	<p>John McMullen</p> <p>Jon Roberts</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Staffing update</p> <p>Mr Roberts updated the Board on the recruitment of a Development and Participation Director. Mr Roberts described the role and stated that in the next few weeks he will have an update on the recruitment. Mr Roberts continued that David Butler's replacement will have a slightly different role than David had previously. After David Butlers departure, the Board were informed Mr McMullen will oversee NWC and the NCL. Mr Roberts is to update as the staffing structure develops in line with the revised strategy and budget planning process underway with Sport England. Discussion took place over changes and urgent stability of the RFL and how to assist during the transition period.</p> <p>Ms Morrow informed the Board Nigel Wood will chair the Community Board as of the next scheduled meeting. He would be joined by Chris Brindley as the responsible Non-Executive. Ms Morrow explained that she will be stepping down from the Community Board.</p> <p>Ms Gray suggested the Board need an update from Alison O'Brien on customer feedback at a future meeting.</p>	
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Standing reports</p> <p>The Board agreed Sky Try is to be included as a standing report within the community report section on the agenda in future.</p> <p>5.1 Mr Raybould introduced the Community Delivery report. Mr Sheard questioned item 6.4 regarding the number of games postponed and queried if this has increased significantly since last year. Mr Raybould stated the number of games cancelled has reduced since 2015 but is still high. Discussion took place to ensure the clear differences between cancelled and postponed games. This will be presented in the community report.</p> <p>Mr McMullen informed the meeting that a breakdown of statistics reporting games played, postponed and cancelled are reported geographically and will be presented at the end of the season. This will help provide clarity of where issues and improvements can be addressed. General concern was heard over fewer people playing however, reassurance was given these statistics will show that the number of games played was increasingly slightly. However, it was noted that this was not necessarily an accurate measure of the number of players playing.</p>	

Discussion with regards to cancelled and postponed games took place. Mr Hunt shared concern that he has seen high levels of cancelled games this season. Mr Roberts suggested, and it was agreed that evidence should be gathered to identify what is happening with player numbers and then decisions on an action to improve player numbers can be made. Mr Roberts explained that he felt an increase in confidence that we now have the data and insight to complete this task.

Ms Gray supported this and stated we have improved interpretation of our data and what is happening to enable us to make a difference and change any negative statistics.

Mr Roberts reported there is a gap in the education data and that reports should be centralised to make figures clear. He went on to state schools will be a primary target going forward. It was noted that individual areas and/ or schools need different approaches and this is drawn out by the insight. Ms Morrow added connectivity across all environments is needed to enable a build in capacity in Rugby League.

Mr Ashton shared his concern that strategy changes for the benefit of Sport England targets may have stifled natural progression in the school game. Mr Roberts reported Ebony Giblin will commence the thinking and discussion on Sport England funding for the schools and the development of Education plan.

Mr Baker asked for further detail regarding item 7.5 a project that has raised over £17,000 for defibrillators to be placed in Community Clubs. Mr Raybould explained the project and the predicted figures in November would be 46 out of 48 Community Clubs will have a defibrillator and how this is a nominal figure. It was requested that an extension of the project would be beneficial subject to funding.

Mr Baker voiced his concerns over item 9.0 regarding turning Touch and Tag Rugby into Leagues. This was noted. The programme of touch and tag will be reviewed in the context of the customer insight that is developing.

5.2 Player Development

Mr Rotheram drew attention to Item 3.4 regarding London Broncos continuing exemption from the Operation rules. It was agreed the Board approve this. Mr Rotheram was requested to write to the London Broncos confirming the decision.

David Rotheram

Mr Rotheram updated the Board on recent Coaching activity. Following the extensive report on coaching it was decided coaching activity is to be a standing report at Community Board meetings in future.

Mr Rotheram explained the new signing date for Scholarship players will be moved to before the exams results day. This was supported. Mr Hunt reflected concerns over losing payers at scholarship level who are not selected. Mr McMullen agreed we need to understand our players and their journeys better. Mr Roberts agreed work needs to be undertaken with the NCL to gain figures and reason why we lose players when we do and to assist with player development and helping players to carry on playing. There was a lot of discussion and debate on player retention to the point it

	<p>was felt more detailed discussion was required. Therefore, it was agreed that a working group needs to be convened in order to look specifically at the retention of players in community clubs.</p> <p>Mr Rotheram to send a list of Accredited Community Cubs to Mr Moran.</p> <p>5.3 Operations</p> <p>An amendment on the paper was noted that it should reflect the Primary Rugby League rules, not Operational Rules.</p> <p>Ms Barrett explained the new ID card system and stakeholder management plan. Ms Gray noted that a single customer view will help with knowing our players and coaches better. Ms Barrett stated the Stakeholder plan is to be distributed in the November meeting along with a demonstration of the new system.</p> <p>5.4 Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Ms Gray presented on recent activity. She stated communication to support grass roots activity has recently increased. She went through updates on a number of campaigns, club of the week, our local club and growing our game. Ms Gray informed the Board that Brogan Shaw is currently offering the re design or format adjustment of logos to Leagues. Ms Gray talked the Board through the Womens Grand Final media presence and Championship School's positive feedback, which Mr Ashton added his positive thoughts about the media content on the day and post-game.</p> <p>Ms Gray went on to update on the grass roots content of the RFL website and explained the consolidation of Twitter handles so they will be centralised.</p> <p>There was very positive feedback received from the Board on general marketing and communications of late.</p> <p>A discussion took place to establish who is responsible for inviting the media to central and community events. Ms Gray explained depending on the event it was either herself or carried out centrally. It was agreed key events should be collated and publicised as it was felt this currently is not done.</p>	<p>Dave Rotheram</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>PRL Research Programme</p> <p>Mr Roberts introduced a paper that requested approval for the development of research project to evaluate and evolve Primary Rugby League (PRL.) It was clear that a number of formats of the game have developed under the umbrella of the PRL. Mr Roberts reported that there was a growth of participants in PRL and as this was a critical age for introduction to the game, a full and longitudinal review was required. From this the framework for PRL can be developed. Ms Morrow expressed how there are several ways to grow Rugby League at this age and careful thought needs to be given to not formulate only one solution but to promote different approaches to different clubs and Leagues as this will be more efficient.</p>	

	<p>Mr McMullen stated there needs to be a greater understanding why there has been growth in different Rugby League areas. We need to use research and statistics to assist us to grow our game. Mr Raybould then stated retention is key in PRL and this was unanimously agreed upon.</p> <p>Mr Roberts explained the research is to identify the learning and challenges followed by a review of the framework problem, implement research and how the change will evolve PRL.</p> <p>In conclusion, it was agreed retention of players is key and research is needed to understand how we can improve our retention percentages as well as increasing player number. This will be monitored with research and insight. Differentiation not sameness was agreed as important and the national philosophy must be adhered to but implemented in slightly different ways to meet the need of local environments. Mr Roberts is to circulate and outline the proposal describing the research programme and studies by email to the Board for final approval.</p> <p>The research proposal was agreed in principle.</p> <p>Mr Clayton MBE Left meeting 1.15</p>	Jon Roberts
<p>7.0</p> <p>7.1</p>	<p>RFL Community Strategy</p> <p>Discuss findings of lapsed player research</p> <p>Ms O'Brien produced to the Board her presentation regarding lapsed players. During which she described the segment tool the insight team use.</p> <p>There are 11,500 registered Youth and Junior players where retention is a critical issue. Adult player retention in last 3 years is only modest. Detailed retention research has taken place to understand why players leave. It was noted that understanding attitudes of these players was key. It was noted these results are similar to Australian results. Research found U16s are competitive and will drop out of Rugby League if they are not as good as their peers. The research also found coach behaviour and player selection are a strong reason for loss of players. It was noted volunteers were not included in Ms O'Brien's research.</p> <p>It was noted there are still gaps in the research. Ms Gray reported some statistics on player opportunities within the NCL. Mr Hunt suggested that further work could be done and expressed his encouragement of tracking down further statistics to encourage growth and retention.</p> <p>In conclusion, Mr Roberts will convene a working group to discuss how to increase participants over next 4 years. This group will then present to the Board prior to presenting to Sport England. The group will discuss coach attitudes and how this could be responsible for lapsed players and how to encourage player retention. The group will also discuss a pilot to develop improved ways to encourage coach development and the structure of competitions to encourage player retention.</p>	Jon Roberts

7.2	<p>Mr Moran expressed interest in seeing statistics only for Youth and Junior without adult statistics included.</p> <p>Comment upon proposed Performance measure for Community Strategy</p> <p>Mr Roberts delivered his presentation.</p> <p>To enable the measurement of 5% growth, the definition of Rugby League activity and ‘regular’ playing need to be clear to enable an accurate measurement. Ms Gray expressed confidence the statistics can be gained quickly. It was agreed the core measure should be addressing regular playing and training.</p>	
8.0	<p>Sport England</p> <p>Mr Roberts reported the next step is to define and confirm their core market, then a further meeting will take place in December with Sport England. The Board will receive a further update at the November meeting. The working group will include updates on Sport England.</p> <p>There was subsequently a discussion of 5% growth and 2% retention and how the targets can be achieved between now and 2021. Ms O’Brien is to show insight of baseline.</p>	
7.3	<p>Comment upon Women’s framework draft</p> <p>Ms Gray circulated her paper to all members.</p> <p>The paper described a framework of improvement on the whole game co-ordination with a wide approach to women in Rugby League. This includes players, watchers, supporters and influencing. The document is a Statement of intent.</p> <p>The Board will be presented a further draft at a future date. Board members were asked to provide any feedback.</p>	
7.4	<p>Update on Sport England decommissioned project</p> <p>Mr Rankin-Wright updated the Board on the decommissioned project. He explained he is working with Ms O’Brien and her team to understand feedback. Operational review feedback has been gathered recently and Mr Rankin Wright will forward these findings. It was decided this should be a regular slot at Community Board.</p>	
8.0 8.1	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Mr Roberts, on behalf of Pat Crawshaw reported problems with BLK. Mr Roberts stated that these issues had been brought to the attention of the RFL Head of Partnerships. It was agreed Ms Crawshaw is not a single voice and the issues will be escalated.</p>	

<p>8.2</p>	<p>Mr Baker stated he is unsure of the benefit of the BLK contract to the Community Game. Mr Roberts explained how the BLK contract helps funding into community sport whilst acknowledging the issues raised and committed to sharing the agreement details with BLK to the Board.</p> <p>Women’s Association Cup</p> <p>Mr Roberts, on behalf of Pat Crawshaw, explained the need for an annual review of Associations Cup. In the past, the Associations Cup fixtures have been integrated into the RFL Women’s League fixtures. Since the Women’s League calendar will be put together in the near future there is a need to confirm the future structure of the programme. It was explained the England Women’s programme will now recruit players through other mechanism of talent identification in addition to the Associations Cup. This will open the selection up to the players that can be successful within the programme leading to the RLWC17. The Board noted the position of the recruitment process for the England programme.</p> <p>Sky Try document and RESPECT update document are to be circulated.</p> <p>It was agreed in future there will be a 10-day minimum deadline but an aim for 14 days before the Community Board for the distribution of Agendas and papers.</p> <p>Mr Hunt, on behalf of the Board thanked Ms Morrow for her time as chair. Ms Morrow reciprocated her thanks to the Board.</p>	
<p>9.0</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>9 November 2016</p> <p>3.20pm Meeting Closed</p>	