

MINUTES

Community Board Meeting

Location:	RFL, House of Sport, Gate 13, Rowsley Street, Manchester, M11 3FF Parking - M11 3DU	Date:	Wednesday 11 th September 2024
		Time:	4.00 – 7.00pm
In Attendance:	Neil Ashton, Fred Baker, Jake Brook, Mark Cordeaux, Steve Curtis, Martin Coyd, Tony Fretwell, Anji Gardner, Lt Col David Groce (in part), Steve Langrick (in part), Tracey Leung- Fullerton, Nick Leigh, Stuart Prior, Sue Taylor	Chair:	Sandy Lindsay MBE
RFL Officers in Attendance:	Kelly Barrett, Marc Lovering, Robert Hicks (in part)	Invited Guests:	
Apologies:	Trevor Hunt, Lee Mitchell		

Item No.	Agenda Item	Action
1.0	<p>Welcome & Introduction Ms Lindsay welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Lee Mitchell and Trevor Hunt (who had sent comments in advance of the meeting, which Ms Lindsay fed into the discussions).</p> <p>The Community Board (Board) was informed of the unfortunate news that the Warrington Wolves and England Lions PDRL player Mike Addison had tragically passed away the night before. The Board passed on their thoughts to his family.</p>	
2.0	<p>Minutes of the July meeting There were two amendments to the minutes as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Club accreditation referenced in section 5 - Wording amended in section 8 in relation to the Y7 champion schools' final being a boys only event <p>The minutes of the 9th of July 2024 were then agreed as a true record of the meeting.</p>	
3.0	<p>Matters Arising The Action Tracker review was shared with the group. Ms Barrett presented on each individual action.</p> <p>1) Community Board Terms of Reference – An agenda item for the</p>	

	<p>meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Game Wide Review Refresh – Community Board members have been invited to sit on the working groups. 3) Regulatory Group Role & Purpose – A paper was prepared and circulated. 4) Competition Structure Update – An agenda item for the meeting. 5) Match Officials Strategy - Work on the long-term strategy and vision for the recruitment, retention and development of Match Officials remains a priority. With the assistance of Marc Lovering, a draft framework linked to the sport’s wider strategies has been created. 6) Coaching Strategy - Awaiting the appointment of the new Director of Performance for their input. 7) Meetings and Events around the Community Game - WhatsApp group is utilised. 8) Trophies at the Champion Schools Final – New trophy purchased, and we will be reviewing the medals given to players. 	RFL
4.0	<p>Community Board Governance</p> <p>The terms of reference were circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Due to Mr Hunt not being able to attend he had submitted questions which Ms Lindsay and Mr Hicks read out and his answers are included in the below points.</p> <p>3.1 – Wording to be amended to ensure that schools are included.</p> <p><i>Running community clubs, managing competitions, playing, officiating, coaching, volunteering, disability sports and other settings of the Community Game and Education settings.</i></p> <p>3.3 – Mr Hicks clarified that BARLA and Armed Forces are independent bodies separately constituted. Both organisations are protected under the unification agreements. They will retain their voting rights at Council.</p> <p>3.6 – Wording to be amended to reiterate that members can serve a maximum of 9 years on the Board but not necessarily in 3-year terms to allow for greater flexibility when Board members would retire.</p> <p><i>Save for the Chair and the Nominated Representatives, members will be appointed for an initial term of 3 years and may serve for a maximum of 9 years subject to re-election or re-appointment by the Board. The Nominated Representatives will be appointed from their respective constituent bodies for as long as they hold the relevant position within that organisation.</i></p> <p>3.7.1 – Wording amended to confirm that proportional representation will be used.</p> <p><i>The Community Game will have twelve votes at the RFL Council, two of which are for BARLA and the Armed Forces. The remaining ten votes will be allocated to the Community Board. Where a Council resolution is to be voted upon, the Community Board remaining votes will be apportioned according to the way the Community Board itself votes at a meeting before any vote. This will be done by proportional representation.</i></p> <p>3.7.2 – Mr Hicks explained that moving to proportional representation will increase the influence of the Community Board and Community Game, ensuring that the Board is the place where debate about community matters takes place. The increase in size of the Community Board means it is</p>	

	<p>reflective of the game at that level as a whole and makes it more rather than less democratic – this was agreed with strongly by members.</p> <p>It was noted that Mr. Hunt and Mr. Baker had served more than the maximum term, however, as an exception to the terms of reference, they are asked to stay on for an initial transitional period of 12 months to help new Board members’ induction. This is to be communicated with Mr Hunt. Mr Baker agreed that it is good practice to rotate Board members and agreed to stay on for the additional 12 months.</p> <p>Mr Hicks stated that the Council votes would be further discussed by the RFL Board and RFL Council, so the terms of reference are subject to change and asked the Board to remember that this is confidential at this stage. The Board understood this and agreed that these be moved to a final version.</p> <p>Mr Hicks left the meeting.</p>	<p>Mr Hicks</p> <p>Mr Hicks</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>More than a Sport – Mid Year Strategy Update</p> <p>In advance of the meeting the “More than a Sport” Mid-Year Review for 2024 had been circulated.</p> <p>Mr Lovering provided an overview of the activity undertaken by the Development Team up to the end of August against the objectives set out in the Community Strategy. This included reporting on the number of participants currently playing Rugby League.</p> <p>A summary is detailed below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of active participants has remained consistent with mid-year 2023. - Our commitment to Brain Health recommendations has not impacted participation. - While men's competitions and teams remain stable, we are dedicated to addressing the decrease in players to enhance the overall experience. - WSL has been restructured, we have seen a 22% increase in girls' participation, including the introduction of a new U18's league, - Our ongoing efforts in schools have resulted in an impressive 18%+ rise in participation for both Champ Schools and IB9's girls, highlighting the growing interest and engagement in our programs. - Significant progress has been made in university settings, with the establishment of a men's national league and increased women's activity, underlining our commitment to fostering talent at all levels. - Our renewed focus on specialized offerings across Wheelchair RL, LDRL & PDRL underscores our dedication to providing tailored experiences for all participants. - We are proud to report that our Volunteer Strategy is yielding positive results, with an increase in volunteers and greater recognition for their invaluable contributions. - The publication of the RFL's National Community Facility Strategy marks an important milestone in our efforts to create thriving and sustainable community spaces. <p>Mr Lovering then provided an update on OurLeague Life and the Charity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The RFL Community Trust is awaiting final approval from the Charities Commission, which is expected before the end of September. - Seventeen foundations have submitted minimum standards to participate in consortium bids. - Our main activities will be focused between international tests. - Then a full week of activities to highlight the social impact of rugby league. - A new video will be released. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matchday activities will include videos, LED displays, and pitch side interviews. - The website will then be going live. - We will continue to deliver programs through OuRLeague Life, including Inspiring Futures, On the Same Team, Lead the Game, and Community Wellbeing Hubs. <p>Mr Lovering then talked through the learnings and priorities for 2024.</p> <p>The RFL Council will receive an update at their meeting next week, following which it will be shared with the Community Game.</p>	Mr Lovering
6.0	<p>Competition Structure Update</p> <p>Mr Lovering provided an update on the application process that has been running to select a new club to join League 1 and the potential for a wider pyramid structure.</p> <p>The Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of movement between competitions.</p> <p>The RFL Board will discuss this next week, and it was agreed that a working group should be set up to share and discuss new ideas and approaches going forward.</p>	Mr Lovering
7.0	<p>Our League Active</p> <p>In advance of the meeting a paper was shared with the Board.</p> <p>The Board discussed the revenue generated by the Our League Active scheme in 2024 and the costs associated with supporting the Community Game. These costs have increased, reflecting wider pressures on our communities, and led to a healthy debate.</p> <p>There is a significant and growing gap between the scheme's income and the costs of supporting the Community Game.</p> <p>The Board agreed in principle on the need to increase fees in 2025 but requested a more comprehensive communication plan to explain what OLA is and how the money contributes to the running of the Community Game. Additionally, we must continue to promote the work that the RFL does.</p> <p>A portion of the scheme's revenues comes from donations, which have accumulated over the past two years and are earmarked to be reinvested directly in the Community Game. The Community Board will further consider the distribution of these funds at the next meeting.</p>	Ms Barrett
8.0	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There were no items raised.</p>	
9.0	<p>Meeting Close</p> <p>The meeting closed at 7.00pm.</p>	