

NF/RFL/COMMBOARD/04.02.2015

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING

HELD AT RFL NORTH WEST OFFICES ON WEDNESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2015

Present:

Clare Morrow (Chair)	Non-Executive Director, RFL Board
Ralph Rimmer	RFL Chief Operating Officer
Martin Coyd OBE	Tier 5 & 6 Adult Leagues
Pat Crawshaw	University and College Rugby League
WO Damian Clayton MBE	Armed Forces
Fred Baker	Independent Member
Peter Moran	Independent Member
Trevor Hunt	Conference Leagues
Sue Taylor	BARLA
Charlie Bray	Youth and Junior Leagues

Apologies:

None

In Attendance:

David Gent	Director of Participation
Andy Sorby	Management Accountant
Natalie Flint (minutes)	Executive Assistant

ITEM

ACTION

1.0 WELCOME & APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ms Morrow welcomed everyone to the meeting and Mr Rimmer welcomed everyone to the new North West Offices. Mr Rimmer advised that this office accommodates the Commercial and Marketing quadrant which is led by the Super League General Manager, Blake Solly. Further, Mr Rimmer advised that the permanent move to Media City was part of an RFL Board strategy to develop a triumvirate of bases across; Leeds, Manchester and London.

2.0 COMMUNITY GAME STRATEGY 2015-2021

2.1 Discuss what the priorities should be for the 2015-2021

Ms Morrow explained that at the end of the recent Strategy Sub-Group meeting, each delegate had been asked to consider their strategic priorities, for the sport in terms of programme and interventions. The RFL Community team will then gather all the information and go away to work on drafting the Strategy.

The individual Board members were then asked to rank the programmes which they thought would drive growth in the sport. At the end of the ranking exercise the list of the programmes were ranked with 1 most important to 13 least important;

1. Primary
2. Junior
3. Secondary Schools
4. Youth
5. Community Club Support
6. Adult Tier 5 & 6
7. Universities & Colleges
8. Adult Tier 4
9. Armed Forces
10. Women & Girls
11. Touch & Tag
12. Wheelchair
13. Masters

The Board members were then asked to apply their chosen most effective interactions in each programme. This information was then collected by the Executive.

A discussion took place around promoting and expanding Masters RL. Mr Coyd advised that Masters doesn't need much to promote, and would benefit from a little PR (assistance from RFL).

Mr Baker suggested that Community Club Support should be the no.1 priority. Mr Bray added that consideration should be given to what areas actually required funding (e.g. Coaching qualifications, safeguarding etc.) as areas such as the adult tiers, can be self-funded.

Ms Morrow asked that members send in any further comments to assist in the forthcoming days. It was noted the above 13 programmes remain as provisional at present until further work is undertaken.

ALL

2.2 Discuss if any changes need to be made to the overall vision, mission and purpose

Ms Morrow requested that the members feed in any comments to Mr Gent, via email, which will be discussed further at the next meeting.

ALL

2.3 Receive an update on how the next stage of market segmentation will be undertaken

Ms Morrow advised that unfortunately, Mr Birkett was unwell and therefore unable to attend the meeting, however, Mr Gent would present on his behalf. Further, the Board asked that their thanks be passed on to Mr Birkett for his work within Rugby League and wished him well in his new position with England Athletics.

Mr Gent gave a presentation update on Market Segmentation and advised of the next steps (presentation attached for reference). This presentation included 5 draft segments, which now require Phase 2 consultation, which need to be completed in the summer 2015 to complete the Strategy.

2.4 Agree a timetable to produce the Strategy

Mr Rimmer presented the process timeline to September 2015.

3.0 **SPORT ENGLAND ACTIVE PEOPLE RESULT**

Mr Gent gave a brief verbal update and advised that Sport England had recently announced our Active People result of 32,500, which represented a significant fall in participation. This fall however is not reflected in the RFL's own analysis, which indicates modest growth.

A discussion took place on how Community Game growth is calculated.

Ms Morrow asked the members their view on whether the move from winter to summer had been successful. Mr Bray advised that for the Junior Leagues, it had been very successful. In addition, Mr Moran added that there has been far less match cancellations with the change.

Mr Moran suggested an analysis of the registered players from the winter season format and whether they had been retained. Mr Gent advised that this work is being looked at and will report at a further meeting. Ms Morrow advised that some robust stats should be communicated.

DG

4.0 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The minutes of the following meetings were accepted as a true and correct record;

- Community Board held on 18 November 2014;
- CB Player Production Sub-Group held on 15 January 2015;
- CB Strategy Sub-Group held on 15 January 2015.

5.0 **MATTERS ARISING**

5.1 Receive the Action Tracker and note the actions taken to resolve the matters arising

5.2 Primary Rugby League

Mr Coyd asked for an update on the adoption of Primary League in the member leagues as it had been discussed at a recent Primary RL Management League meeting. Mr Gent confirmed that all leagues had now agreed, with the exception of NWC who remained in dispute. Mr Bray added that it was appropriate to continue with the format for all. It was agreed the RFL should undertake further work in the North West to explain the benefits of the revised format.

DG

5.3 Receive the Community Game Scorecard

The Scorecard was taken as read and it was noted that the narrative was useful. It was requested that the 2015 scorecard should contain the end of year results for both 2013 and 2014. WO Clayton OBE asked if the Scorecard can be included in the Annual Report.

DG

5.4 Receive an update on the actions proposed on the Safeguarding Approach

Mr Gent gave a verbal update and the timeline of was also agreed.

5.5 Receive an update on the possible introduction of a membership Scheme

Mr Rimmer noted that it was not the intention of the RFL at this time to introduce a membership scheme but the RFL is seeking to develop a method of communicating directly with individual players and customers. The RFL is developing a resource which will allow it to build direct relationship with clubs and players and will give it an ability to commercialise this community data and develop income back into this tier. The RFL is working alongside SKY to help explore these options.

Ms Morrow added that a meeting had taken place with the RFL Commercial team who had advised that our commercial value of the community game is currently quite limited, and that was one of the drivers which had prompted the review of the situation.

6.0 RISK REGISTER

Mr Gent noted that although there had been a previous request for the Board to review the Risk Register, after discussions with the Risk Manager, it had become apparent that this was inappropriate as the extensive document spanned the whole game.

It was determined that the most suitable way to review the Register was through a Risk Champion who should be selected to keep the Board updated as appropriate, which should be one of the two independent members of the Community Board. Subsequently, Mr Moran was asked to undertake this role which he welcomed the suggestion and accepted.

7.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Community Dual Registration

In advance of the meeting, Mr Hunt had sent an email to the Board members which, due to his unavailability, Mr Moran articulated.

Mr Rimmer added that he would be happy to discuss the issue with the National Conference League, if Mr Moran and Mr Hunt thought it would be useful.

7.2 Armed Forces Registration Issue

WO Clayton OBE informed the Board that two RAF players in the previous week had Challenge Cup dual registration complications as they were both also registered with Oxford. He stated that this would be a recurring theme and complication for Army Forces players.

Mr Rimmer said the position would be dealt with in the 2015 competition and made clearer in the Operational Rules for next season.

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7.3 Broadcast Times

Mr Coyd MBE highlighted the lack of suitable broadcast times for Rugby League fixtures compared to Rugby Union fixtures which makes it difficult for children to view.

Mr Rimmer replied that although he recognised the position, the

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broadcast rights were entirely at Sky's discretion, and their focus was on televising of live match broadcasts and attracting the most viewers to those slots. This was a formula that had proved very successful for them although, Mr Rimmer did however commit to quiz Sky harder on the offer though.

7.4 Match Official Reward and Recognition

Mr Baker asked what the present situation was for the recruitment, reward and recognition of referees.

Mr Rimmer responded that he recently compiled a paper for the RFL Board on the urgent requirement to recruit and retain more Match Officials. Further, Mr Rimmer expressed his concerns that the Match Officials generally felt disenfranchised and that he had set out a strategy to address these issues which would be launched with a conference imminently.

There being no further business to report, the meeting concluded at 14:55pm.

8.0 Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 10 June 2015