

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING  
HELD AT CARRWOOD PARK, LEEDS ON WEDNESDAY 17 APRIL 2013**

**Present:**

Clare Morrow (Chair)	Non-Executive Director, RFL Board
Ralph Rimmer	RFL
Damian Clayton MBE	Armed Forces
Spen Allison	BARLA
Ian Swandzt	English Schools
Fred Baker	Independent Member
Peter Moran	Independent Member
Trevor Hunt	Tier 3 Leagues
Martin Coyd	Tier 4 Adult Leagues
Charlie Bray	Tier 4 Youth and Junior Leagues
John Piercy	Student Rugby League

**In Attendance:**

Stuart Prior	BARLA
Kelly Barrett	Community Game Services Manager
David Gent	Director of Participation & Strategic Partnerships
Jon Roberts	Director of Performance & Coaching
Matt Birkett	Head of Community Game Programmes
Robert Hicks (in part)	Legal & Compliance Officer
Jon Dutton (in part)	RLWC Operations Director
David Butler (in part)	Tier 3 and Tier 4 Competition Manager
Michelle Gibson (minutes)	Executive Assistant

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
1.0	
<b>WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
The Chair welcomed Mr Allison, Mr Rimmer and Ms Gibson to the meeting. It was noted that Mr Allison had replaced Malcolm Sellars as BARLA representative but was due to step down as BARLA Chairman; therefore this would be his last meeting.	
There were no apologies for absence.	
2.0	
<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b>	
The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2013 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.	
It was agreed that, going forward, minutes would be circulated within two weeks of meetings and papers would be distributed two weeks in advance.	<b>MG</b>
3.0	
<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>	
3.1 <b>Disciplinary Matters</b>	
Mr Piercy referred to a recent issue in which a player banned by Student Rugby League had been allowed to play in another	<b>DG/KB</b>

league. It was agreed that a formal letter would be sent to the league concerned, with a copy sent to SRL. If this transgression continued after seven days, the matter would return to the Community Board to issue the appropriate sanction.

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| 3.2 | <b>Equality and Diversity Presentation</b><br>The Board was informed that this agenda item had been deferred to the July meeting.   | <b>MG</b>    |
| 3.3 | <b>Risk Register</b><br>This was now complete and would be emailed to the Board after the meeting.  | <b>DG</b>    |
| 3.4 | <b>Sport England Governance Review</b><br>Sport England had yet to advise when they were available to work with the Board on the Governance Review as part of the Whole Sport Plan settlement. Mr Gent reported that there were other NGBs who required their urgent attention and would take priority.   |              |
| 3.5 | <b>Operational Rules</b><br>BARLA had agreed to the Operational Rules in principle, subject to some minor amendments, and the approval system. The final version of Operational Rules would be discussed further at the Community Board meeting in July and signed off in October.<br><br>Mr Prior pointed out that there were some rules on which not all leagues could agree, e.g. some leagues allowed dual registration whereas some did not. It was agreed that these cases would be dealt with under the competition rules.<br><br>Ms Barrett felt it was important to communicate to clubs that the Community Board had agreed this principle and process to ensure the RFL's intentions were not misinterpreted. It was agreed that a letter would be sent to all leagues which could be forwarded to their members. Mr Allison agreed to the inclusion of sentence from BARLA indicating they were in agreement with this process. | <b>DG/KB</b> |
| 3.6 | <b>Primary Playing Policy</b><br>Mr Hunt stated that a meeting on this issue had yet to take place.   | <b>KB</b>    |
| 3.7 | <b>Club Mark</b><br>The Club mark list was presently being updated, which would mean that the most current version would be circulated to the Board.  | <b>KB</b>    |
| 3.8 | <b>Financial Strategy</b><br>The Working Group was due to meet on 29 <sup>th</sup> April to discuss making the community game financially sustainable. A draft scheme to address this issue will then be presented to the July meeting of the Board.  | <b>DG</b>    |
| 4.0 | <b>RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP 2013</b>  |              |
| 4.1 | <b>RLWC Update</b><br>The meeting welcomed Jon Dutton, who presented an update on   |              |

activity surrounding the Rugby League World Cup (see presentation attached).

It was noted that 60% of people purchasing tickets to date were not on the existing database and were from a new customer base, which was important in terms of the legacy the tournament could have on the sport in the UK.

Mr Bray requested information that could be included on league websites. Mr Dutton agreed to circulate the host login details for the World Cup website which would give members access to its contents and imagery, and the media team would give some thought as to how best to get content about the World Cup to the community clubs.

JD

Contracts with the BBC and Premier Sports TV, to provide coverage of the tournament had recently been signed. Mr Prior asked whether the BBC would be promoting it and noted that exposure on mainstream TV had been minimal to date. Mr Dutton replied that a meeting had been scheduled next week to discuss this further and the partnership with the BBC was considered an exciting opportunity for the sport.

The Chair added that discussions were taking place surrounding a World Cup event at Media City over the Challenge Cup Final weekend. Footage of the England team members was also being obtained in which they discuss which community club they originated from, which will hopefully be of benefit to the community game.

The Chair stressed that everyone involved with the game could play a part in spreading awareness of tournament and ensuring its success.

#### 4.2 **Festival of World Cups**

David Butler provided an update on preparations for the Festival of World Cups taking place in July (see presentation attached).

The Board was asked to utilise social media platforms and do everything possible to promote the Cups and attend matches.

Mr Baker enquired as to ticketing arrangements. Mr Butler replied that all events would be ticketed with the exception of the Armed Forces World Cup which would be free of charge. Other tickets would be good value at £4 (adults) and £1 (children) for each match and £5 (adults) and £2 (children) for Finals.

WO Clayton asked whether any higher level Match Officials would be allocated to the Finals to add credibility. Mr Butler stated that the Match Officials used on a weekly basis would still be involved but gave assurances that the appropriate standard of Officials would be in place for the right games.

Mr Moran suggested that squads could be promoted in community match day programmes once nominated to generate

interest from community clubs.

## 5.0 THE WHOLE GAME SOLUTION

### 5.1 Policy Review

Mr Rimmer outlined plans for the sport of Rugby League to develop a more integrated structure from 2015 onwards (see presentation attached). Policies under review included:

- Competition structures and game integration
- Super League Licensing and Promotion/Relegation
- Club sustainability and the appropriate level of RFL support for clubs
- Youth development and player production systems
- Expansion of the sport and RFL's responsibility for European development.

Consultation was due to take place throughout May/June with stakeholders and a document containing a series of recommendations would be distributed to stakeholders for their comments in May. Recommendations would then be put forward to the RFL Council meeting in July for sign off.

Mr Hunt felt it was important for the Community Board to have the same opportunity as the Super League and Championships clubs to debate the issues before the final document was circulated to ensure their interests were represented. This would ensure the community game didn't feel any changes were being imposed on them by the RFL.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Board would be reconvened within the next three weeks to specifically discuss the Policy Review.

**MG**

### 5.2 Player Development

Further to recent meetings of Super League, Championships and Community Board representatives, Mr Roberts presented an update on the player development pathway for 2013 and beyond (see details in presentation attached).

A list of the Focus Clubs for 2013 was tabled.

It was felt there was a significant opportunity for non-professional clubs to operate an Under 19 structure by working with the education sector through schools, colleges and universities and developing Centres of Excellence.

Mr Prior felt that the pathway was too focused on the professional game and targeting players aged 14 restricted the growth of the game and resulted in higher drop off levels. Mr Roberts explained that the pathway had been constructed based on evidence and was designed to meet the needs of the players.

It was agreed by the Board to consider this matter further at an extra meeting of the Board on 7<sup>th</sup> May to agree the player development model and confirm its role in the wider policy review.

## 6.0 **ARMED FORCES RUGBY LEAGUE**

WO Clayton presented a history of the Armed Forces Rugby League and some of the issues and challenges it encountered (see presentation attached).

One of the major issues affecting AFRL was maintaining progress following the loss of its Development Officer as a result of the Whole Sport Plan funding cuts. Sourcing investment for this post was considered essential. Mrs Barrett stated that Community Game Services would offer as much support as possible through Club and Competition Managers.

The Board thanked WO Clayton for his informative presentation.

## 7.0 **PUPIL PREMIUM FOR SPORT**

The paper circulated by Matt Birkett was taken as read. The Board felt the £150m investment in Primary School sport provided an excellent opportunity for the game to attract financial resource.

## 8.0 **RFL COMMUNITY TEAM STRUCTURE**

The paper circulated by Mr Gent outlining the staffing structure of the RFL Community Department was taken as read. A paper was tabled listing the Club and Competition Managers and which leagues they were associated with.

Mr Coyd felt that the sport was too dependent on Sport England funding and it was important to consider other areas of the sport that could be exploited to generate funding. The Chair felt more could be done commercially at a community level, particularly if the World Cup generated a bigger profile for the sport. Mr Rimmer added that this was why a whole game solution was crucial for the sport.

## 9.0 **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### 9.1 **Community Board Regulatory Group Update**

The Board discussed the paper circulated by Kelly Barrett.

Feedback from Leagues indicated that the Primary Choice Policy was creating some issues and causing confusion. Therefore, the Board agreed to the recommendation to revert back to the transfer system from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014 where appropriate. Individual cases would be referred to the Community Game Regulatory Group to resolve.

In the event that a League/Management Group/Competition refused to sign up to the Operational Rules, it was agreed that they would no longer be recognised as a sanctioned Rugby League competition and would lose the associated benefits as follows:

- Protection under any RFL policy, including safeguarding.
- Strategic development and administrative support from the Governing Body.

- Insurance for the teams within that Competition. This would include cover for all match officials officiating in that competition or any games sanctioned by that Management Group.
- Membership of the relevant Management Groups
- Protection, support or liability cover in any litigation or court proceedings.

It was agreed that these amendments would be drafted into the Operational Rules for agreement at the meeting in July.

RH

### 9.2 **Discipline of a Community Board Member**

The Board discussed the proposal that the section within the Community Board terms of reference referring to disciplining of members be updated to reflect the relevant sub-groups now represented on the Board.

Mr Moran asked that there be further clarification on the definition of “persistently” refusing to comply with the Community Board terms of reference.

RH

With regard to “Right of Appeal”, Mr Prior felt this should take place via an independent arbiter rather than the RFL, such as the Sports Recreation Alliance or the All Party Parliamentary Group.

The Chair explained that there are already established in the Professional Game clear and independent processes for appeal which would be used in the Community Game.

It was agreed that the relevant section would be redrafted and included within the Operational Rules for final sign off at the July meeting.

RH

### 9.3 **Community Dual Registration**

Further to the paper circulated by Chris Thair, the Board accepted the recommendations contained therein and the approval of a formal consultation taking place. The results of the consultation would be issued to the Community Board Regulatory Group, with final policy to be agreed by the Board in October.

### 9.4 **Academy Under 18 Policy**

The Board was asked to approve the Under 18s Dual Registration proposal as circulated.

It was felt that item 2.1 should be redrafted as follows:

*“Any U18 player attached to a club participating in the Tier 1 Academy competition may be Dual Registered with the Community club **at U18** from which they signed professional.”*

It was agreed that this should be reissued to the Community Board meeting in July for approval and any further possible regulation should be discussed by the Regulatory Group.

## 10.0 **COMPETITION**

### 10.1 **Recognition of Community Leagues**

The paper circulated was taken as read. It was agreed that the following members would be formally recognised under the Community Board:

- West Cumbria Primary League
- Cumbria Men's ARL
- Yorkshire Juniors & Hull Juniors summer based 16-18 competition
- Conference League South
- West of England Men's League
- South West Men's League
- Conference Youth League to be disbanded for 2013 and discussions to take place with NCL for a NCL Youth League in 2014 at tier 3

The Board did not approve the Yorkshire Youth Combination League's winter based competition for 12-15 year olds, as the right to hold the winter based competition programme was with the Yorkshire Youth and Junior League.

### 10.2 **Community Board International Group**

Mr Gent reported that the next meeting of the Group was scheduled to take place at 4.00pm later that day.

Items for discussion included the international calendar for the English Lions and BARLA representative teams, together with the proposal for the Community Development Department to take responsibility for Wheelchair and Women's Rugby League after the World Cup as opposed to the RFL's Performance and Coaching Department.

Mr Gent stated that no funding was available within the budget from 2014 for the English Lions and they would be required to make a financial contribution to play at this level going forward.

## 11.0 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2013

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.00pm.