

## **RFL COMMUNITY BOARD SUMMARY – 3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2025**

Dear Community Game Colleagues,

We're excited to share the latest progress from the Community Board meeting held on 3rd December, where we discussed two important but separate areas of work:

1. The ongoing development of the National Community Rugby League (NCRL) framework.
2. The annual review of Our League Active (OLA) membership fees.

### **Building the Future of Community Rugby League Together**

The NCRL brings together Primary Rugby League, Youth & Junior, Women & Girls, and Open Age under a single aligned approach, ensuring our game is fun, safe, inclusive, and sustainable from tag through to Open Age competition.

Throughout 2025, over 30 meetings, webinars, and forums have been held to develop the NCRL framework and ensure broad consultation:

- Formats: Online webinars, board meetings, regional forums, and club visits.
- Geography: Yorkshire, North West, Cumbria, Hull, Southern Regions, and national youth forums.
- Levels of the game: Open-age clubs, juniors, volunteers, coaches, safeguarding leads, and management committees.
- Engagement: Through management groups including NCL, NW Leagues, Yorkshire Juniors, Barrow & District, Hull Youth & Junior, and Southern Regions.
- Consultation: Club representatives, junior voices, and safeguarding leads included alongside open-age concerns, demonstrating genuine representative consultation rather than tokenistic outreach.

Below is a summary of progress across each area.

### **Primary Rugby League (U6–U11)**

Primary Rugby League continues to focus on fun, participation, and early skill development. Regional groups in Cumbria, Yorkshire, North West, and London continue to deliver fixtures and welfare support.

PRL is now embedded within Youth & Junior management groups, ensuring consistency and streamlined governance. Regional leads will feed into the new National PRL Steering Group, chaired by Tyrone Oliver (formerly Chair of the Yorkshire Junior League), and updated Terms of Reference now formally include PRL responsibilities.

PRL will remain simple, safe, and fun, helping more children fall in love with rugby league as we finalise regional leads, confirm fixture coordination, and prepare for 2026 delivery.

### **Youth & Junior (U12–U18)**

The Youth & Junior framework is now firmly established across the regions, with new management groups in Cumbria, North West, Yorkshire, and Hull, supported by strong Chairs and appointed roles.

Each group operates under shared Terms of Reference and competition rules, respecting regional nuances while ensuring overall consistency. Competition rules have been drafted and are close to final approval, supporting fairness and transparency.

Youth & Junior competitions are moving toward a consistent, supportive, development-minded structure where everyone can thrive, as work continues to finalise competition rules and align calendars for 2026

### Open Age (Men's Game)

Significant progress continues in shaping the future of Open Age competitions. A tiered structure has been confirmed:

- Tier 3: National Leagues & National Conference League
- Tier 4: Regional Leagues

The Cumbria Men's League is transitioning to a single management group, with recruitment underway, while North West and Yorkshire Men's Leagues have established management groups using standardised Terms of Reference. Competition rules for Tiers 3 and 4 have been drafted, covering minimum standards and fixture requirements.

The RFL will also be meeting with the National Conference League Management and Clubs on Saturday to discuss the future Tier 3 competition structure and ensure alignment within the NCRL framework.

### Governance & Next Steps

The NCRL Management Group will be established in early 2026 as a subgroup of the Community Board, setting rules, standards, and minimum requirements. Beneath this will sit Management Groups for Men's, Youth & Junior, and Women's competitions. Minimum standards have been shared with Tier 3 and 4 clubs, supported by development plans to help them progress, and the governance framework is now aligned across all formats, providing consistency and clarity.

### Looking Ahead

The NCRL is about working together to build a system that supports everyone involved in our sport, from young children picking up a ball for the first time to adults enjoying competitive rugby in their local communities.

We're proud of the progress made in such a short time and grateful for the ongoing feedback and collaboration from clubs, leagues, and volunteers.

### Our League Active (OLA) Membership

Our League Active (OLA) is Rugby League's participation membership scheme, supporting the development of the Community Game. The Community Board has reviewed the membership structure annually since the introduction of OLA. This process is separate from NCRL governance reform.

OLA fees fund the essential services that keep the Community Game safe, sustainable, and well-governed, including:

- Regulation & Governance: Developing and enforcing rules whilst safeguarding players
- Administration & Community Game Services: Running registration systems, operating platforms, and providing general support to clubs and competitions.
- Match Officials: Staffing, training, and supporting referees and other officials.
- Central Services & Data: Managing data, systems, coach administration, and customer service to ensure smooth operations across the sport.

### New Fee Levels for 2026

From 2026, OLA membership fees will rise modestly by £2–£3 per category to ensure the continued delivery of essential services. The new fees are:

- Adults: £27 → £30
- 12+ Players: £21 → £23.50
- Primary (U6–U11): £15 → £17
- Social: £18 → £20
- Wheelchair: £15 (new category for 2026)
- Development Leagues: £18 → £20

NCRL focuses on governance and competition structures, while OLA ensures membership and long-term sustainability. Both are essential to protecting and growing the Community Game.

#### Looking Ahead

Together, these updates show how we are building a stronger, more sustainable future for rugby league. NCRL provides the framework for competitions and governance, while OLA ensures the resources and protections that underpin safe, inclusive delivery.

Finally, the Board recognised and thanked Trevor Hunt, the Tier 4 Adult Club representative, who has served his tenure and then some. Trevor has been a member of the Board since its inception, and I thank him for his contributions over the years.

Regards

Martin Coyd OBE  
**RFL Community Board Chair**  
**RFL Executive Director**

Mobile: 07766441974

Email: [Martin.coyd@rfl.co.uk](mailto:Martin.coyd@rfl.co.uk)