

Minutes

Community Board meeting

Location:	Boardroom/Meeting room one, RFL North West Offices, Quay West, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester, M17 1HH	Date:	Wednesday, 21 March 2018
		Time:	10.30am - 3.20pm
Invited to Attend:	Pat Crawshaw, Peter Moran, Stuart Sheard, Sue Taylor	Chair Person:	Chris Brindley (Non-Executive RFL Board)
RFL Officers in Attendance:	Jenny Baxter, Marc Lovering, Robert Hicks, Mark Howorth (In part)		
Apologies:	Jan Robinson, Flt Lt Damian Clayton MBE, Fred Baker, Neil Ashton, Trevor Hunt		

Item No.	Agenda Item	Responsibility
1.0	<p>Welcomes and Apologies</p> <p>Mr Brindley welcomed the delegates to both the first meeting of 2018 and his first meeting as chairman. He went on to describe the importance of the community game and the wider game's challenges and direction. He detailed his other work which included detailing other boards that he is a member of and the experience he would bring to the role as chairman of the Community Board.</p> <p>Mr Brindley described his vision for future meetings. The Board would focus on strategy rather than operational elements of the community game. He stated the community game is the heart and the future of the game.</p> <p>He desired the board to use the new strategy focus to contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England winning the World Cup in 2021; a successful and vibrant community game is key to developing talent. • Having a great membership scheme. • Selling out the Challenge Cup Final. <p>Mr Brindley noted the importance of the sport's broadcast deal. Also, the importance of the sport developing 'Super Heroes' of the game for young players to aspire to. Finally, he outlined the importance of the new home for the sport and how this would allow Rugby League to grow.</p> <p>Ms Crawshaw shared her frustrations of previous governance of the board and stated how the board required better clarity and a stronger link to the wider game.</p>	

	<p>Mr Brindley noted that action, strategy and the board's values are essential to its success.</p> <p>The apologies were received, as noted above.</p>	
2.0	<p>Minutes from the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes were received as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting with the addition of Mike Denning to the attendee list.</p>	Jenny Baxter
3.0	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>The Volunteer strategy was discussed. Mr Lovering stated Ms Gray would be tasked with this as part of her new role. It was noted that there was a potential that Manchester Metropolitan University and Leeds Metropolitan University could be involved.</p> <p>Ms Crawshaw and Mr Rimmer were still to meet to discuss feedback regarding sustainability in the Girls Leagues.</p> <p>The location for the Champion School Final 2018 was yet to be finalised but Mr Lovering advised the decision was imminent.</p> <p>It was noted the timings of the Women's Final this season had been brought forward to assist attendees with the logistics of their day in attending Old Trafford.</p> <p>It was agreed the 12-18 review should remain on the action tracker as the consultation process was underway.</p> <p>It was noted the Sky Try end of year is in July so the data of all community clubs involved this year, in full, would not be available until after this date. Mr Hicks was tasked to receive the interim data before the summer.</p> <p>It was discussed an 'Interim Pack' could be provided to the board in place of receiving as many questions during this agenda item at future meetings.</p>	<p>Marc Lovering</p> <p>Robert Hicks</p>
4.0	<p>Standing reports</p> <p>4.1 Community Game Report and Sport England Reporting Update</p> <p>Mr Lovering began by presenting the Data and Insight update which is to be circulated post meeting.</p> <p>Mr Lovering explained capturing accurate, up to date data for the Participation and Development department was challenging.</p> <p>He went on to explain historically the data system had issue in reporting consistent data when a player had a birthday but had not changed their playing age, resulting in inconsistencies when reporting.</p>	Jenny Baxter

<p>Both Mr Lovering and Mr Hicks detailed current issues with the system, historical data issues and merging the data on the system and that required by Sport England reporting.</p> <p>Ms Crawshaw suggested the high staff turnover of staff within the organisation could have contributed to the issues on the Sport England submissions and the current issues with the data system. Mr Hicks suggested when implementing the data system, the needs and future requirements of the system were not fully explored and this was the contributing factor behind the issues now being experienced.</p> <p>It was noted the Community Board did not observe much of the Sport England reporting submission or the reporting process during the last submission.</p> <p>Mr Lovering detailed 'measured' settings and how the marrying of Sport England and the RFL reporting had affected the edits required of the dashboard.</p> <p>It was requested the finalised, most recent Dashboard is brought to the next meeting.</p> <p>The end of year Sport England reporting was discussed along with the Sport England reporting being in line with the RFL end of year reporting. Mr Lovering reiterated how imperative the consistency of future reporting was.</p> <p>Mr Lovering noted the data system does not give the detail the Participation and Development Department require of its data, such as a breakdown of teams within clubs.</p> <p>The Board viewed the layout of how the Dashboard would look, to which Mr Lovering noted there would be an addition of a direct comparison to the previous year's total participation figure.</p> <p>The accountability for data within the community game, the risk of this system, such as teams and clubs not using the system was discussed.</p> <p>The use of the live Dashboard and how the Board could use this strategically was discussed, along with how it can be used to gain knowledge to assist in affecting and influencing the figures and to gain rational behind a rise or fall in playing numbers.</p> <p>It was requested if the Academy player tracking can be viewed by the board to use to story board and track the information.</p> <p>Mr Brindley suggested an announcement detailing the live data system as a good news story. He suggested, as we now have access to this, it should be seen as an achievement. He suggested setting a date for this to be released.</p> <p>It was noted that the North West do not fully utilise the system. It was agreed that a full up to date report of where each League was within the implementation process would be provided to the Board.</p> <p>Kelly Barrett/Richard Donlon are to be asked to present at the next meeting regarding the roll out of the system in different and widening locations.</p>	<p>Marc Lovering</p> <p>Marc Lovering</p> <p>Marc Lovering</p> <p>Kelly Barrett</p> <p>Robert Hicks</p>
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	<p>Mr Brindley suggest an open and honest approach with Sport England regarding the baseline data and for them to be requested to judge the data on growth from this point on.</p> <p>It was agreed the Youth and Open Age figures needed addressing which Mr Lovering confirmed would be covered by the 12-18 review.</p> <p>It was discussed how the affiliate leagues not being members would affect what strategic changes the board could influence.</p> <p>Mr Lovering noted the 2017 headlines showed growth but were below the 5%/2% targets; he suggested the key was retention. The RFL retention strategies were defined as the 12-18 review and an Open Age review.</p> <p>It was requested the 12-18 review findings were presented to the Community Board to review before it was presented to the RFL Board.</p> <p>Mr Brindley stated the 2017 headlines mirrored those of other team sports.</p> <p>Mr Sheard suggested the Masters game was key to improved retention figures and briefly shared his personal playing experience. Mr Brindley suggested utilising Andrew Burnham in a social playing strategy.</p> <p>Mr Lovering stated an ambition was to capture all playing activity across the game in future reporting. He stated PDRL and the registration of these players would be captured in future reporting as well as being part of a social playing opportunity strategy.</p>	
4.2	Operations report	
	The paper was read by delegates premeeting and no further questions were received.	
4.3	Player and Coaching Development Report	
	Mr Moran suggested the quantity of players within the appendices attached to this report were higher than suggested in the Operational Rules. Mr Hicks was tasked to speak with Dave Rotheram and receive an answer for Mr Moran within 14 days.	Robert Hicks
4.4	Marketing and Communications	
	It was noted the PowerPoint presentation and the videos would be circulated post meeting.	Jenny Baxter
	Oliver Roby and Brogan Shaw were praised for their recent work for the community game as viewed in the presentations.	
4.5	Sky Try Report	
	The paper was read by delegates premeeting and no further questions were received.	

<p>5.0</p>	<p>2018 Calendar and Events Update and Discussion</p> <p>Mr Lovering discussed and explained the events calendar. He clarified that the document was live and specified the criteria for the Tier one events was still being worked through due to some events now being streamed and these requiring full branding.</p> <p>Mr Lovering explained the department Intern positions and the event support they would all offer.</p> <p>The Tier one event package was viewed and explained. Within Tier one, there was to be a mix of both multiple locations and settings covered.</p> <p>Ms Crawshaw suggested the key people needed to receive invitations and the invitation process should operate smoother than previously.</p> <p>Mr Lovering was tasked to share the relevant sections of the calendar to the board.</p>	<p>Marc Lovering</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Match Officials Strategy Update</p> <p>Mark Howorth introduced himself and his role to the board.</p> <p>Mr Howorth stated the figures of active MOs was as accurate as possible but not all MOs were computer savvy and would not be included in these figures.</p> <p>He went on to explain the tiering of MOs and how there is a nomination process by the societies between tiers 4 to 3.</p> <p>Mr Howorth explained changes in departmental staff, the change in process of the recruitment for MOs and the implementation of a new database system explained the lower figures of active MOs in 2017.</p> <p>The new recruitment of MOs strategy was described as;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting ownership back to the societies in recruiting MOs, • A redesigned course, of which the RFL own the content, • A consistent fee for courses to deter mass recruitment in one area, • The course and new process is more socially focused. <p>After the course, the RFL have a strong support process and follow up process for all new MOs. The RFL receive all the paperwork following courses and subsequently own these details.</p> <p>Mr Brindley suggested a promotional video be explored to promote the recruitment of more young MOs which detailed the story of a young, newly qualified MO. He went on to explain the recruitment strategy of young MOs in football.</p> <p>Mr Howorth described separate locations' strategy trials in Barrow and St Helens and differing strategies working in different areas.</p> <p>Mr Howorth noted the 5% target in recruitment of MOs had already been met this year.</p>	

	<p>Qualified MOs making themselves available for games was discussed. Mr Howorth suggested the game had enough MOs in the community game but them making themselves regularly available was the issue. A survey was noted as a good tool to find out why MOs are not active once qualified.</p> <p>A cultural shift being required and how the values of societies potentially being traditional was discussed.</p> <p>Mr Howorth noted the focus of the recruitment strategy moving forwards is the retention and activation of new MOs.</p> <p>Mr Sheard suggested referees could feed into the development and improvement of the RESPECT campaign. Mr Howorth explained a standardised referee reporting system was being development and will be implemented once finalised and how this should assist with this. Mr Brindley suggested utilising technology for referee reports and assisting with the RESPECT campaign and how if MOs feel they are heard, recruitment would increase.</p> <p>Mr Howorth was thankful to Mr Brindley for his suggestion of assistance with the recruitment strategy and gaining more knowledge of similar issues other sports face.</p>	
<p>7.0</p>	<p>Governance Presentation</p> <p>Mr Hicks discussed the presentation and indicated it as the first time the new look structure had been viewed by the board.</p> <p>The most salient points of note were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Board needed to be forward thinking but mindful of history. • The RFL officers would give more information premeeting to assist with the agenda’s timings. This would assist the board in looking forward, not to what had happened in the game over the past months/season. Questions asked at the meeting would receive an answer within 7 days. • Working smarter and not having as many meetings. • The board must assist the RFL achieve its corporate goals. • The board must be united. Members must discuss and test the new governance structure within meetings but out in the game must show solidarity. • Representatives needed to be current in the game and chair sub-groups, where applicable. <p>It was discussed what the Community Board can affect when most affiliate leagues were where growth could be most obviously achieved.</p> <p>Mr Hicks was tasked to circulate the related PDF.</p> <p>Ms Crawshaw reiterated the function of the Community Board required clarity.</p> <p>Mr Brindley suggested the structure was currently in a good place and just required streamlining. He suggested the behaviours and actions of its members were key.</p>	<p>Robert Hicks</p>

<p>Mr Sheard suggested the Community Board needed to avoid from elected members who could have a personal agenda for being a member of the board, which he suggested elected members could have. An application process inclusive of an interview and a job specification for a member could be received by applicants were discusses as a process for appointing new members in place of elected members.</p> <p>It was discussed the new governance structure needed to focus on making clubs and participants feel members of the RFL and have better connectivity to the current game.</p> <p>Mr Hicks detailed further the appointments in the new structure;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 RFL officers; 1 having accountability of the minutes and papers. • For the independent members to be genuinely independent to the game or specific areas of the game. • A participant who would be aware of current on field issues and could assist with the RESPECT campaign, safeguarding and other issues as observed by a participant. <p>Timings of the meeting would require amending to allow working delegates to attend. Mr Brindley suggested meeting 6 times a year, 2 full days and 4 as currently diarised or evenings to allow differing members to attend. He suggested this would allow more issues to be discusses in the detail they required and to allow more and better strategic thinking in order to allow more decisions to be made.</p> <p>Mr Hicks stated the new governance structure was not a drive to remove delegates but to allow more strategic thinking and outcomes. Mr Hicks requested members to call or email him privately on their thoughts as soon as possible.</p> <p>Mr Hicks suggested CBIG should produce a paper for the reference of the Community Board in order to check and challenge.</p> <p>Mr Hicks suggested a change in structure to UCRL meetings and a rename.</p> <p>Mr Moran requested to view the Memorandum of Understanding sent to the YJL regarding the governance restructure which was due to be signed in the coming months. It was noted Mr Moran could have sight of this only when it had been signed.</p> <p>A big change in governance could be implemented if leagues did not comply or refuse to grow the leagues in the correct way. The accountability of leagues' behaviours and the governing body taking action was discussed. Ideally leagues would embrace the RFL's change in governance but an ultimatum to leagues was discussed and having an alternative to their current operational methods must be put in place before these discussions took place.</p> <p>Mr Sheard suggested a Men's advisory group which could be an opportunity to share ideas and to discuss strategic issues.</p> <p>Mr Brindley suggested a 1-hour conference call to conclude the day's conversation regarding governance. This is to be organised after Mr Hicks had spoken with BARLA, NCL and Y&J leagues.</p>	<p>Delegates</p> <p>Marc Lovering</p> <p>Robert Hicks</p>
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	<p>It was agreeing in the upcoming RFL Board meeting, 23 March 2018, Mr Brindley would verbalise today's discussions of the new governance structure. Then, in the June Community Board meeting the governance structure would be agreed, this would then go to the RFL Board in June in a more formal format. Finally, in September the new structure would be finalised at Community Board.</p> <p>The new structure was agreed in principle, minus the Lion/Lionesses Captain suggestion for the Participant member.</p> <p>It was agreed the new structure should consist of 6 meetings, 2 full days and 4 similar to what was currently diarised but day or evenings dependant of the new member's schedules.</p> <p>The sub groups of UCRL and a Men's group were to be considered.</p> <p>Ms Crawshaw suggested the two Women's group roles should be defined further.</p> <p>Mr Lovering advised Tracy Power's role was widening to include managing Inclusion; the incorporation of an Inclusion advisory group was suggested by Mr Brindley.</p>	
<p>8.0</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Mr Lovering stated David Raybould's role was under review and could include 3 days in the Participation and Development department to work on new initiatives.</p> <p>The new department's organisation chart was to be circulated once finalised.</p> <p>Mr Moran questioned the player numbers as detailed in item 4.3.</p> <p>During the meeting, Warrington was confirmed as the 2018 Champion Schools Final location.</p>	<p>Marc Lovering</p>
<p>9.0</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>5 June 2018</p>	