

# MINUTES

## Community Board meeting

<b>Location:</b>	Boardroom/Meeting room one, RFL North West Offices, Quay West, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester, M17 1HH	<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 20 March 2019
		<b>Time:</b>	3.00pm – 7.00pm
<b>Invited to Attend:</b>	Fred Baker, Stuart Sheard, Jan Robinson, Pat Crawshaw, Trevor Hunt, Sue Taylor, Peter Moran	<b>Chair Person:</b>	Chris Brindley (Non-Executive RFL Board)
<b>RFL Officers in Attendance:</b>	Marc Lovering, John McMullen (in part), Kelly Barrett, Dave Rotheram (in part), Charlotte Clynch		
<b>Apologies:</b>	Neil Ashton, Flt Lt Damian Clayton MBE, Lois Forsell		

Item No.	Agenda Item	Responsibility
1.0	<p><b>Welcomes and Apologies</b></p> <p>Mr Brindley began by welcoming the delegates to the meeting. Apologies were received by Neil Ashton, Lois Forsell, and Damian Clayton.</p>	
2.0	<p><b>Minutes from the previous meeting</b></p> <p>The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.</p>	
3.0	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>The action tracker was viewed and analysed.</p>	
5.0	<p><b>Player Development Policy</b></p> <p>The agenda item was moved forward to allow Mr Rotheram, whom was attending in part, to complete his presentation without waiting until late into the evening.</p> <p>Mr Rotheram started by explaining that he had had a positive meeting with the NCL management group on the Monday evening, ahead of Community Board. The discussions were around a paper that he had prepared for the RFL Board on the Player Development Policy.</p>	

	<p>Academy licenses have been extended to fit in line with the end of the current broadcast deal, and fits into the RLWC and Sport England cycles. The work on the restructure will allow for better talent development to occur, with the plan being to launch the new framework in 2020.</p> <p>The main ideas making up the competition framework beneath first grade will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-order of Academy Championship to Under-18s</li> <li>• Reserve competitions for all (English) Super League Clubs, (English) Clubs with an existing licenced category 1 academy and any other clubs who in the opinion of RFL meet specific criteria.</li> </ul> <p>The main idea is to give players more playing opportunities and game time, through an amateur registration, which will allow the free movement of players between the professional and community game. There will be amended limitations attached to this, which are proposed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow registration of up to 10 amateur players per League 1 Club and up to 5 amateur players per Championship Club.</li> <li>• Superseded (and therefore abolishes) the ability for Clubs to register 'Reserve Terms and Conditions' players. The rationale behind this is to protect the Community Game.</li> </ul> <p>Mr Rotheram explained that the paper would go to the Championship and League 1 Regulatory Group in May. Mr Hunt suggested that an observer from the Community Game attend this meeting to ensure that the Community Game was protected.</p> <p>Mr Lovering questioned whether the 10 or 5 players would count in terms of the maximum 40 registrations Clubs are allowed. Mr Rotheram confirmed that any amateur players would count as part of the registration numbers.</p> <p>Mr Hunt asked how this would be regulated and monitored. Mr Rotheram stated that this will form the next steps within the process.</p> <p>Mr Brindley questioned time stipulation in terms of commitment. Mr Rotheram specified that they will currently be looking for a 1-year commitment from all parties.</p> <p>Mr Rotheram then went over the Academy Licencing proposal.</p> <p>Mr Brindley asked if there was a different way of doing things. Mr Rotheram specified that there was the potential to be flexible in approach to this, but again the proposal is at an early stage.</p>	
<p><b>7.0</b></p>	<p><b>HIVE</b></p> <p>As Mr Rotheram was also presenting on the HIVE platform, this agenda item was moved ahead of scheduled time.</p> <p>Mr Rotheram demonstrated his presentation to the Board using the HIVE platform, so all had a visual representation of what the platforms capabilities are, and how the platform may well look. HIVE will be accessed via Our League and will be linked to Leaguenet where qualifications and training are recorded.</p>	

	<p>The online platform will be available via an app on phones or tablets, as well as on desktop computers or laptops.</p> <p>Mr Rotheram explained how the modules can be set up for any aspect of the game from Match Officials to Coach Development, to Volunteers or Marketing. The platforms will offer the chance to be collaborative, effective and efficient.</p> <p>Mr Brindley asked how much control will the RFL have over the different versions of content put out across the app. Mr Rotheram explained that the layout, style and feel of the platform will be consistent throughout each 'tile' or module.</p> <p>Mr Moran asked if the introduction of HIVE will make qualifications cheaper for coaches. Mr Rotheram explained that the app will be free to access at the start, however payments for future content should be expected. Mr Brindley added that entry level for all content should be free, but the more additional content which people wish to access could in the future incur a membership cost.</p> <p>Ms Robinson raised the issue of cost for the Community Game, would this be accessible for all socio-economic participants. Mr McMullen commented that as a Governing Body we are still cheaper than most other NGBs, and there is funding available to subsidise these costs.</p> <p>Mr Rotheram reiterated that with regards to the CPD qualification, the platform will be used as a support tool. Mr Hunt asked whether the platform could be used to reassess or re-educate coaches. Mr Rotheram replied that use of the platform will be incentivised and recorded, through links to our LeagueNet system alongside Our League.</p> <p>Mr Baker commented that he thinks the platform will be ground-breaking for the Community Game, especially in relation to the younger generations whom may connect better to what the app can offer. He also asked what the potential was to have a link to Club Matters within the platform. Mr Rotheram again reiterated that the potential was there, yet the platform is still in the early stages.</p>	
<p><b>8.0</b></p>	<p><b>Match Officials</b></p> <p>Mr McMullen presented to the Board with an update on Match Officials, following on from the away day in January.</p> <p>Mr McMullen explained that a part-time Match Official Recruitment Officer has been introduced, to create and implement a new strategy around Match Officials. This will include the use of social media, technology and volunteers within the game to drive forward growth.</p> <p>Mr McMullen explained that quarterly reports would be made available to the Board, as well as verbal updates being given at the relevant meetings.</p> <p>Mr McMullen then gave a brief update on recruitment, including a huge increase in the number of the female referees being recruited.</p>	

	<p>Mr Brindley asked whether there should be an investigation surrounding the retention of referees and the reasons behind the numbers. Mr McMullen explained that this was currently being looked at but did stress that the recruitment officer was only a part-time position.</p> <p>Ms Crawshaw raised the issue of negative experiences meaning we lose some referees and asked whether more mentoring or help could be made available to counteract this. Mr McMullen recognised that being critical of referee decisions can become an issue, however the Enjoy the Game campaign should bring attention to this.</p> <p>Ms Robinson asked if referees would have access and modules across HIVE. Mr McMullen confirmed that this was live on the platform and would be launched alongside a face-to-face event later this year.</p>	
<p><b>4.0</b></p>	<p><b>Sport England Update</b></p> <p>Mr Lovering presented to the Board a wider presentation around the work and priorities of the Development department.</p> <p>The Community Game currently has four strategic pillars in Sky Try, RLWC2021, Sport England and Performance.</p> <p>Mr Brindley asked whether all pillars were connected to one another. Mr Lovering explained that to a degree they are, but the issue is that we are tasked to deliver specific objectives set (differently) for each pillar.</p> <p>Mr Lovering also went into more detail to explain the target set by Sport England, alongside our contractual and secondary indicators.</p> <p>The organisation chart for the wider Performance &amp; Development Team was shown, alongside a more detailed version of the Development Team. Ms Robinson asked if a copy of this could be made available to the Community Board, via their SharePoint. Mr Lovering agreed, and will make the updated version available.</p>	<p>Marc Lovering</p>
<p><b>6.0</b></p>	<p><b>Enjoy the Game</b></p> <p>Ms Barrett presented to the Board with an update on the Enjoy the Game Campaign.</p> <p>Ms Barrett explained the background to why Enjoy the Game was being launched, and the aims of the refreshed campaign. Community Clubs will be able to access marketing materials which can emphasis the campaign to all, as well as workshops focusing on Positive Coaching, Parents and Clubs.</p> <p>The Game Day Manager course will be delivered via the HIVE platform.</p> <p>Ms Robinson asked when this course would be going live. Ms Barrett explained it would be available through HIVE from the end of April.</p>	

	<p>Ms Crawshaw asked if all the workshops would be available on HIVE. Ms Barrett explained that the workshops would be a two-pronged approach, so some will be across HIVE but others will be in-person workshops.</p> <p>Ms Barrett then went on to show the NSPCC version of the Magic Shirt Video, in which the Board agreed it was impactful, but not necessarily relatable for Rugby League fans. Ms Barrett and Mr Lovering agreed to investigate re-making the Magic Rugby League Shirt Video.</p>	Kelly Barrett
9.0	<p><b>Community Game Strategy and Communications</b></p> <p>Mr Brindley began discussions on the Community Game strategy and Communications, by explaining he believes that the Community Game is undervalued in comparison to all the work that goes on.</p> <p>A Community Game Manifesto needs to be created, to look at the strategy for the Community Game into 2025 and beyond.</p> <p>The Board also held discussions around a communication strategy.</p> <p>Ms Robinson and Ms Crawshaw both pointed out that there were issues with the Community Board section of the website. Mr Lovering pointed out that it would perhaps be worth knowing who visited this section of the website to discover whom the Board wanted to target.</p> <p>Ms Robinson also asked whether putting stories in the press would be an idea. Mr Lovering responded by saying there are several different positive stories featured in the press, website and social media around the Community Game, and the Development team have set up an action tracker to show this.</p> <p>Mr Brindley questioned whether it would be useful to put together a Communications Calendar for direct and indirect communications, across the Community Game to be planned into the year. The use of Influencers and giving Community Board access to the new stories or posts going out was also raised.</p> <p>Mr Baker raised the issue of Community Board being invited to Community Events. Mr Lovering explained that there was a spreadsheet on their SharePoint site which would allow them to view upcoming events and register their wish to attend.</p> <p>Ms Taylor asked whether contacts for the Community Board could be uploaded to SharePoint. Mr Lovering said this could be arranged, alongside the upload of Development staff contact details.</p>	<p>Marc Lovering</p> <p>Marc Lovering</p> <p>Marc Lovering</p> <p>Marc Lovering</p>
11.0	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p><i>Meeting Closed at 7.15pm</i></p>	